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**What is the Spirit of our Gathering?  
Self-Determination and Indigenous Sport Policy in Canada.**

by

Braden Paora Te Hiwi

A Thesis  
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies  
through the Faculty of Human Kinetics  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree of Master of Human Kinetics at the  
University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada  
2009  
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## ABSTRACT

In this study I examined how government policies relating to sports and physical activity played a role in promoting self-determination for Indigenous Canadians. Firstly, I investigated eight recent sport policies and documents at the federal/national level (1992-2005) to help understand how sport policy is affecting self-determination. Drawing upon Chalip's (1995) critical policy analysis, I argued that sport policy affecting Indigenous peoples both promoted and constrained self-determination. Although the policy documents have led to an increase in opportunities to direct sport for Native peoples, they have done so by undercutting a rights-based argument for Native self-determination.

Secondly, I conducted six interviews with Native sport policy makers in order to explore their thoughts and experiences about self-determination within sport policy development. My analysis of these discussions showed that Native identity is crucial to self-determination, and that building relationships with government officials presents a key basis for the development of effective sport policies for Native Canadians.

## DEDICATION

To my grandparents – grandma, nana, and koro –  
to whom giving back is such a privilege.

Me te aroha nui ki a koutou katoa



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Although some people might see a thesis as an individual project, I see it as a necessarily collective endeavour - albeit channeled through myself. It is guided by and lived through the histories of those before us, the lives of those I connect with, and those who are yet to come. It is a process necessarily held together by many sets of relationships, all contributing to this work in ways I could never fully know. I feel this work thus has many co-contributors, of whom I will only name a few. Yet, to be sure, I am the only one who holds the responsibility for this work. I would like to acknowledge my ancestors, grandparents, uncles, aunties, cousins and friends, and in particular my mum, dad and sister who have always provided me with the support and belief to be the person I am today. All of your contributions have been both small and significant, and I appreciate them all greatly.

And I would like to thank those who remain at home, keeping the ahi ka burning, for without you there would be no home for me to do the work I do abroad.

Without you, this work would not be possible.

I would like to thank my wife, Jennie, for all of her support in allowing me to move down my own path. Giving me the gift to grow as a person is the kind of gift that can never be repaid, yet this will not stop me trying.

Without you, this work would not be possible.

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Without you, this work would not be possible.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFN	Assembly of First Nations
ASC	Aboriginal Sport Circle
AWG	Arctic Winter Games
CSP	Canadian Sport Policy
DIAND	Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development
NAIG	North American Indigenous Games
NIB	National Indian Brotherhood
NISC	National Indian Sport Council
NSRP	Native Sport and Recreation Program
NWT	Northwest Territories
P/TASB	Provincial/Territorial Aboriginal Sport Body
RCAP	Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
SCPAPPS	Sport Canada's Policy on Aboriginal Peoples' Participation in Sport
TEST	Territorial Experimental Ski Training Program

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## TRANSLATION AND DESCRIPTION OF MAORI WORDS

**Aotearoa** is the Maori word for New Zealand.

**Kaupapa** has multiple usages, but is predominantly used in this research as meaning the rules or guidelines based upon traditional teachings and values. Mereana Taki (1996) understands Kaupapa as ‘ground rules, custom, the right way of doing things’ (p. 17), and she goes further to explain that it stems from the principle of the descent of Creators/spirits, the principle of the descent of the power within land and environs, and the principle of people and their relationships with each other as passed down through the generations.

**Mana** can be understood as the power and spiritual authority bestowed upon a person, place, treasure, or state of being. It is present (or potentially present) in all things at all times, and consequently is a powerful force that is an important part of Maori customs and behavior.

**Maori** is a generic word that is used to describe the Native peoples of Aotearoa. It means the normal, commonplace, usual, or ‘natural’ way of things in the Maori language and is the popular term used to categorize the Native peoples of New Zealand (Hokowhitu, 2003).

**Pakeha** was the word used by Maori to describe the British people who first came to Aotearoa and is now used as a term to describe European or white New Zealanders.

**Tino rangatiratanga** commonly refers to Maori sovereignty, self-determination, and independence, and speaks to the rangatiratanga of Maori in terms of their relationship with the state and non-Native society in Aotearoa. Rangatiratanga has multiple usages, but here refers to the political authority of Maori, which comes from the spiritual, land, and people relations of the Maori culture (Taki, 1996).

**Whanau**, at one level, is one of the basic structural organizational concepts of Maori people - from the tribal level, to the sub-tribal, and then lastly to the whanau or extended family level. However, it is also an important principle in terms of guiding behavioral patterns. Pre-schools, businesses, or research can include extended family relationships/whanau as a key principle for guiding practice. For example, in a pre-school, a family member may be more appropriate as a teacher than an outside professional as is used in the dominant stream model.



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

##### *Introduction*

Indigenous cultures are rich, diverse, empowering, progressive, complex, and a great source of strength, both in terms of our histories as well as our current presence within the modern world. To be Native<sup>1</sup> is *not* to be disadvantaged<sup>2</sup>, but is a place of opportunities, privilege, and responsibility. Joan Phillips, a Chief of the Okanagan Nation, identifies four sacred trusts that frame responsibilities: looking after the land, looking after the people, looking after the spirituality, and looking after the culture (Alfred, 2005a). These responsibilities apply to all aspects of life, and physical activity is no exception.

Incorporating Native aspects into physical activities is extremely important to Native peoples, yet the right of Aboriginal peoples to shape sport as they feel fits has been a struggle in Canada (Forsyth, 2000, 2005; Paraschak 1989, 1991, 1997, 1998). This struggle has taken place against the assimilationist goals of federal policy and within a context of marginalization and exclusion from the Canadian sporting system, economic dependency, a Euro-Canadian definition

---

1. There are a number of terms that are used in the research of Aboriginal peoples, and similarly a number of terms used by Aboriginal peoples when referring to themselves or their group. For the most part, I will use the terms Native and Indigenous, which are used in much of the literature as well as, in my experiences, the terms preferred by Indigenous peoples. As an additional point, many Indigenous peoples prefer to identify with their specific nation, community, area, family, tribe, or the like. Where possible, I have tried to use these terms instead of the more generic terms.

2. This idea comes from Patricia Monture-Agnus (1995). To be Native in Canada is to be less likely to hold a university degree or a professional job, or to be more likely to have gone to jail. However, this does not mean that Native peoples are disadvantaged. It means they typically have fewer degrees and jobs that pay less money. The word disadvantaged serves to cover systemic racism. Not only is describing all Native peoples as disadvantaged a pointless and negative thing to do; it is also wrong. Using a Euro-Canadian yardstick to measure the status of the lives of Indigenous peoples is arrogant and insufficient. There is a wealth of knowledge, power, and connection that Indigenous Canadians have that no other Canadians do. To be Native is to be at an advantage.

of what counts as sport, and a power dynamic between Native peoples and the state (Forsyth & Wamsley, 2006; Paraschak, 1995, 2002). However, Indigenous Canadians have fought for their vision of sport and physical activity at the federal level, which involves the inclusion of Native values in sport as well as more political visions of sport that promote the distinctiveness and nationalism of Native communities (Forsyth, 2000). These sporting practices are separate from the dominant stream<sup>3</sup> sport system in Canada, and take place within an emergent sporting system for Indigenous peoples that forms part of the fight for Native self-determination.

The battle for self-determination is one of the most important struggles for Native peoples; however, this process is highly debated, contentious, and complicated. Discussion exists over the philosophical groundings and political positioning of self-determination, over

---

3. My reasoning for the use of the term dominant stream rather than mainstream is heavily dependent on the way I understand the term "mainstream". There are two ways in which I understand the use of the word mainstream (as a 'thing' and as something you 'do'). Firstly, I see mainstream (the thing) as the usual, dominant, pervasive, normal, expected and 'natural' way of doing things. For example, sports and physical activities characterized as mainstream are those practices that are usual, dominant, pervasive, normal, expected and the 'natural' way to practice physical activities. Those sport practices, which are promoted, maintained, and legitimated by governments, powerful media organizations, schools/universities, and major games/sports events could all be characterized as mainstream. Likewise, heterosexuality would be mainstream because it is dominant, usual, pervasive, normal, expected, and the 'natural' way to act in Canada. However, for some Indigenous peoples, an Indigenous sport system would be usual, normal, expected and the 'natural' way to practice physical activities. Under this understanding, mainstream may not work for these people. Likewise, heterosexuality is not usual, normal, expected, and 'natural' for homosexual people, and thus the term mainstream doesn't necessarily fit into their worldviews. Heterosexuality for homosexual people is not their perspective of mainstream. However, there are obvious and undeniable power differences between the mainstream and alternative streams of sport (or sexuality, or whatever) that are adequately dealt with by using the term 'dominant stream', without falling into some of the assumptions of the term mainstream. (I also accept that dominant stream could easily fall into the same traps as mainstream. However, it all comes down to the way they are defined, and I believe dominant stream does not have those same associations.)

Secondly, the word mainstream also is used as a 'doing' word. For example, 'government policy mainstreamed Native peoples into the workforce'. The use of mainstream in this way has heavy overtones of colonization and assimilation. The same would hold true for statements not involving Native peoples. For example, 'sport rules and regulations have become mainstreamed in order to become standardized and internationalized'. The word mainstream is thus naturalized as 'the' place to be, and is facilitated by deeply connected practices of 'mainstreaming', that for Native people are connected to processes of assimilation. I think that for my purposes, the Native perspective challenges this very way of thinking, and so I prefer not to use the word.

who gets to make such decisions, what degree of self-determination should be pursued, when it should take place, and what it could possibly look like in practice (Alfred 1999, 2005b; Fleras, 1999; Kickingbird, Kickingbird, Chibitty, & Berkey, 1996; Maaka & Fleras, 2005). Although “Indigenous-State relations are constructed and conducted through official policy and administration... [they] are secured at the level of tacit assumptions and patterns of engagement” (Fleras, 1999, p. 191). From this perspective, the ways in which policy is framed are of crucial importance to understanding how self-determination, is, or is not, part of the agenda in Aboriginal sport policy at the federal/national level.

Policy and policy-making are important sites for pursuing self-determination in Canada, and this study focuses on specifically federal/national sport policies. Federal/national sport policy in Canada has had mixed results for Native peoples, yet there are signs that sport is becoming more accessible, and is facilitating aspects of self-determination more than ever before (Forsyth, 2000). The goals, rationales, proposed solutions, and framing of policies all heavily influence the possibilities that policies present. According to Chalip (1995),

once social issues and their potential effects have been identified, issues managers work with strategic planners to formulate a strategy to minimize negative impacts and to maximize positive impacts. The objective is to turn emergent issues into opportunities for, rather than threats to, the organization (p. 3).

In other words, policy makers primarily seek to turn the emerging Aboriginal sport system into opportunities for, rather than threats to, the government, Sport Canada, politicians, and the dominant stream sporting system. Given that Native self-determination may question (if not totally oppose) the assumed authority of the state over the lives of Indigenous Canadians, the political aspects of Native sporting opportunities provide possible tensions for government

policy-makers and Native leaders. How these tensions are dealt with will have considerable effect on the potential of federal/national policy for Indigenous peoples, and forms a focal point for this study.

### *Statement of the Problem*

**How can Indigenous peoples learn from their teachings and experiences in order to gain self-determination over their sporting practices, through the development of sport and physical activity policies and programs?**

This problem presents two important bases to the pursuit of self-determination: the importance of traditional values and teachings, and the experiences of Native peoples, which provide a wealth of knowledge that can help to inform how self-determination could take place. Guiding the investigation of the problem is an Indigenous framework for undertaking research (see Chapter 3). A key advantage of an Indigenous approach is that it is a catalyst that moves Indigenous research away from asking deficit questions to ones about knowledge (Pohatu, 2003).

To tackle this central problem, I created two sub-questions to gather information that can be systematically reviewed and analyzed to help ground my contribution to this problem. The sub-questions are as follows:

- 1. How have sports policies facilitated and/or constrained the self-determination of Indigenous peoples in Canada from 1990 to 2007?**
- 2. To what extent are Indigenous sport leaders involved in the pursuit of the self-determination of Indigenous peoples in Canadian sport?**

The first question analysed policy documents that function at the federal/national level, and served two basic purposes. Firstly, this question helped to show whether policy has played a role in self-determination at the federal/national level in Canada. The second element of the first

question to provided the current context in which the perspectives of the interviewees in the second question could be understood.

The analysis of the second question used interviews with several Native sport leaders, who were be asked to give their perspectives and experiences relevant to a discussion of self-determination in sport. I explored the strengths, challenges, relative importance, and some of the complexities of the pursuit of self-determination in sport policy. The chance to speak with individuals who work behind the scenes enabled an examination of the messiness and complexities of policy-making that are usually not an explicit aspect of formal policy documents.

#### OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

**Aboriginal peoples** is a term that refers to a social, cultural, and political group of people whose early ancestry traces back to the original inhabitants of Canada. The term was put into legislation in the Constitution Act (Canada, 1982) and refers to the Indian, Métis, and Inuit peoples of Canada. This term is used to refer to all Indigenous peoples of Canada at one time, but not to any one people in particular. This definition is significantly different from a racially based understanding of Aboriginal peoples, and significantly different from many Native understandings (including my own, see below) of how to define Indigenous peoples (Alfred, 1999).

**Indigenous peoples** refers to a social, cultural and political group of people whose early ancestry traces back to the original inhabitants of a country/state/territory or the like. This term refers not only to Canadian peoples, but can also refer to the original occupants of any country. The term **Indigenous** refers to the political platforms, legal systems, spiritual beliefs, cultural patterns and practices, social institutions, and values of Indigenous peoples.

**Native peoples** is used interchangeably with **Indigenous peoples**.

**First Nations** is a term used to note the fact that Indigenous peoples were the first or original people of Canada, and the plural 'Nations' is designed to show the multiple nations within the term First Nations (e.g., Dene, Cree, or Mohawk). This term will replace the use of the term Indian, except where Indian is specifically relevant (e.g., the Indian Act of 1867).

**Inuit** refers to the Indigenous group in Canada whose ancestors were original inhabitants of the northern arctic regions of Canada. Inuit refers to people who were previously known as Eskimos.

**Métis** refers to a group of peoples whose heritage is a mix of Aboriginal and European ancestry. The Métis Nation refers to a select group of Métis peoples whose beginnings can be traced to the Red River area of Manitoba

The **dominant stream sport system** is a bureaucratically run, centrally organized, state government led system, whose scope includes sport at the elite and grassroots level, and whose function is to provide funding, structuring and direction to sport in Canada and at the federal, provincial/territorial and regional/municipal levels. The Canadian sport system includes the public, private, and voluntary sectors. The **dominant stream sport community** that makes up the dominant stream sport system includes athletes, politicians, bureaucrats, managers, scientists, volunteers, policy makers, coaches, and technicians. These individuals administer sport through organizations such as National Sport Organizations (e.g., Hockey Canada), Multi-Sport Organizations (e.g., Canadian Wheelchair Sport Association), International Sport Federations (e.g., IAAF), federal/provincial/territorial sport bodies (e.g., Sask Sport), and municipal level sport bodies (e.g., Windsor Spitfires). The assumptions behind the Canadian sport system include nationalism/unity, health of the country and cultural importance of sport to Canada, and are embedded within a neo-liberal capitalist framework (Green & Houlihan, 2005).

**Sport Canada** is an organization that works within the Department of Canadian Heritage. Sport Canada works with many organizations, including NSOs, MSOs, provincial/territorial bodies, and Canadian Sport Centers, to administer and fund grassroots and elite competition sports through the current policy agenda of the Canadian Sport Policy.

The **Aboriginal Sport Circle (ASC)** is Canada's national sporting body representing Indigenous peoples from grassroots through to competitive levels of sports through its membership of Aboriginal provincial/territorial sport and recreation bodies.

**Aboriginal sport system** refers to Native sporting practices that take place separate from, and alongside the dominant stream of sport. These practices are usually led by Native peoples (such as a band council, a provincial sport body, or the ASC) and are participated in by Native peoples. The Aboriginal sport system is made up of participants, coaches, volunteers, elders, community leaders, managers, administration personnel, and families. Values underpinning this system include a holistic approach to sport, the promotion of traditional values, personal development of participants, development of and pride in Native communities, inclusion, and self-determination (Aboriginal Sport Circle, n.d.; Forsyth, 2000). For example, an all-First Nations hockey league, or the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) occurs within the distinctly Aboriginal sport system, and not the dominant stream sport system.

#### ASSUMPTIONS

1. Although the Aboriginal community and the dominant stream community have common goals, there are fundamental differences in terms of how each group approaches sport, and what they are striving for in terms of Aboriginal sport. Thus, dividing those who constructed the policy into those perspectives (Native and dominant stream perspectives) is a strategy that deliberately, and from the outset, seeks to highlight this division and use

it as a basis for understanding the policy construction process. For example, the Aboriginal sport communities' focus on elite sport includes the development and production of Aboriginal role models as one of its key bases (see, for example, Canada, 1992), whereas the dominant stream community has tended to focus on elite Native athletes as competitors in elite international competitions (see Canada, 1992; or Canada, 1998). This division is not about pitting values against each other, but rather is about the acceptance of different positions as a basis for working together.

2. The processes involved in the making of policies are crucial to how underlying frameworks (on Aboriginal sport) are produced and (de)limited (Bacchi, 2000). The frameworks within which sport is practiced and understood are deeply affected by the official policy frames on sport, and hence an examination of how those documents are developed is significant in terms of how sport is practiced by Native peoples. Furthermore, it is not only the choices involved in policy construction processes that need to be scrutinized, but also the choices to follow particular frameworks in the policy construction process. Because frameworks fundamentally shape and (de)limit possibilities, the decision to use particular frameworks in constructing policy can have a greater effect on how policy is created than the decisions involved in policy construction itself. For example, Sam (2003) notes how dominant ideas like 'national unity' or 'excellence' produce or (de)limit how future actions are undertaken or understood, in what he calls the shaping or circumscribing of future plans and actions in sport policy-making.
3. "Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions.... [such as] sports



and traditional games...” (United Nations, 2007, p. 11). Although the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was not ratified by the Canadian government, and hence the government does not believe it is accountable to it, I am nonetheless privileging this point in my study because I value its position.

4. The Canadian government has a commitment to facilitate Aboriginal rights, as per its commitments to international law, domestic law, treaties, and to social and humanitarian values of Indigenous rights and social justice. The United Nations Declaration on Human Rights (United Nations, 1948, section 22) notes that the state must provide all individuals with the social and cultural rights that are essential to that person’s development. Upholding Aboriginal and treaty rights is a responsibility of the state, as per section 35 of the Constitution Act (Canada, 1982). Furthermore, in the *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples [RCAP], 1996), the Federal government of Canada recognizes its obligation to facilitate Aboriginal rights in Canada.
5. This research agenda attempts to promote reciprocity, and strive with intention for the benefit of all groups involved within the research. These include: the researcher, advisor and researching institution; the people who help facilitate the research (policy/program administrators); and Indigenous people more broadly, as they form the focus of the policies under examination for this study.
6. Incorporating Native principles and values as a basis for sport is an essential component of a sport system that will work optimally for Aboriginal peoples. The incorporation of sport and cultural practices in the North American Indigenous Games is one example of how the culturally relevant practices of sport can be empowering for many Aboriginal

peoples (Forsyth & Wamsley, 2006). Sport in Canada, however, is represented largely by European-Canadians and European-Canadian understandings of sport (Paraschak & Tirone, 2003). The incorporation of Native systems of belief into a sport system provides an opportunity for the development of leadership within the Aboriginal community. The use and development of mentorship strategies in athlete development could be one such example. Furthermore, sport provides an opportunity for Aboriginal leaders to model how self-determination could be practiced within the colonial era. Although there is much debate over how self-determination could take place, as well as ambiguity over what this term really means (Forsyth & Wamsley, 2006; also see Chapter 2), sport and recreation governance could (and in some ways has) played a role in the understanding as well as in the practice of this process.

7. Racism and colonialism have had and continue to have devastating effects on the lives of Indigenous peoples. Sport and physical activity can foster a deep connection to Native peoples' culture, the forced abandonment of which has contributed to a loss of self-esteem and identity amongst Native communities that can help to explain (much more than the often highlighted economic circumstances) the social (e.g., education graduation rates), psychological (e.g., suicide rates) and physical (e.g., rates of obesity) damage of colonial practices. Paraschak and Tirone (2003) note that sport is a potential vehicle for the development of pride and cultural heritage. Examples of this include the practice of Native sport tournaments and leagues, Aboriginal representative teams, pow wows, tribal journeys, and culturally inclusive events such as NAIG and Arctic Winter Games.
8. The double helix model is used as a basis for the ongoing formation and development of the Native sport system (as well as other social systems such as education or health care).

The double helix has two individual intertwining strands that represent the Aboriginal system and the dominant stream system, linked by multiple bridges where the two systems connect and together form the Canadian sport system (Forsyth, 2001). This model recognizes both Native and non-Native systems of sport, and shows how the Aboriginal system is both distinct from and connected to the dominant stream system. This concept is reiterated in article 5 of the United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples (United Nations, 2007):

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions, while retaining their right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State (p. 5).

The double helix is already (although imperfectly) in its formation; Native sport leagues (e.g., the Aboriginal Hockey League), NAIG, and the leadership of the ASC are part of a Native stream of sport.

9. Research questions and methodology fundamentally shape which questions are valued, which questions are asked, how answers are found, which answers are found, and what solutions are identified and recommended (Smith, 1999). For example, Shapiro (1992) shows that a government report's questions about infant mortality rates framed Australian Aboriginal peoples' nomadic lifestyle as the problem to receiving adequate healthcare. Framing the report in this way makes the cultural practices a self evident obstacle, whereas asking questions about how the healthcare system can meet the needs of the Indigenous group is a question that can result in very different solutions. Another case involves the Mackenzie Valley pipeline inquiry (see, Maaka & Fleras, 2005) in the

Northwest Territories, where the commissioner of the inquiry, Thomas Berger, rejected technical questions (i.e., he focused on 'why' questions, rather than 'how to' questions) in terms of industrial development on Native lands. Employment, which had been portrayed by others as a solution to Aboriginal communities' economic and social troubles, was seen by many Northerners as a problem; a problem that disrupted customary community production and sharing, and hence added problems to these Native communities. The reframing of these types of questions and problems would be what Smith (1999) would call the decolonization of methodologies.

10. A Native sport system, like any other Native system (education or television for example), is not just important because it can benefit Native peoples, but because they are entitled to it (Forsyth & Wamsley, 2006)! It is their right to be recognized as individual nations; they are entitled to their own social, economic, cultural, and political systems and therefore are entitled to shape their futures as they see fit. It is my position that the debate over the legitimacy of entitlement to Native rights is over, that Native rights are not things that dominant stream Canada *gives* to Aboriginal peoples (although they are in a position to facilitate or constrain them), and it is not an unjust system of rights and resource allocation that puts Aboriginal peoples at an unfair advantage - it is their right. However, entitlement as a framework for negotiations is limited because it facilitates a divisive mine and yours mentality (as opposed to a constructive engagement of establishing what is mine, what is yours, and what is ours; see Maaka and Fleras, 2005), as it fosters disengagement rather than communication. A focus on engagement over entitlement is a philosophical position that, in my understanding, builds upon entitlement without focusing on outcomes because it looks towards the process of relations building.

Moving beyond using values and principles as guides towards an end or goals, and instead viewing them as ends in themselves provides policy makers with an effective tool for relations building. The focus on values as the basis for building relations, rather than on outcomes of relations, offers a sustainable basis for actually building relations rather than focusing on how outcomes do or do not work for Aboriginal peoples. For example, land claims settlements for some non-Native people are often about resolving, finishing, and absolving governments from claims and previous injustices committed by the state. For Native peoples, however, it is more about one step forward in ever-evolving relations. It is this perspective of relations, rather than a focus on outcomes, which not only facilitates better relations but better outcomes (for all) as well.

## LOCATION

Identifying location is a very important aspect of traditional Native values, in both our day to day lives and our research. It is the starting point from which aspects of myself are brought forward so as to reveal where I have come from and what has shaped my life. Sinclair (2003) understands location as “revealing our identity to others; who we are, where we come from, our experiences that have shaped those things, and our intentions for the work we plan to do (p.122). Hence, location in Indigenous research, as in life, is a critical starting point. It is also the opportunity to honor and respect my family, ancestors, nation, tribe and genealogy. It is, however, as Absolon and Willet (2005) note, more “than simply saying you are of Cree or Anishinabe or British ancestry; from Toronto or Alberta or Canada; location is about relationships to land, language, spiritual, cosmological, political, economical, environmental, and social elements in one’s life” (p. 98).

In Aotearoa, Maori often begin formal communications with a pepeha – which is a structured message about how I link myself to my tribe, and thus puts forward my genealogy so as to situate myself in relation to others. The beginning of this chapter presents a perfect opportunity to share with you my pepeha.

Ko Tararua te maunga	(My mountain is Tararua)
Ko Oroua te awa	(My river is Oroua)
Ko Tainui te waka	(My waka is Tainui)
Ko Ngati Raukawa te iwi	(My tribe is Ngati Raukawa)
Ko Kauwhata te marae	(My Marae is Kauwhata)
No Papaioea ahau	(I am from Papaioea)
Ko Brian Te Hiwi toku papa	(My father is Brian Te Hiwi)
Ko Sandra Stokes toku mama	(My mother is Sandra Stokes)
Ko Braden Te Hiwi ahau	(My name is Braden Te Hiwi)

It would take some time to explain everything about my pepeha, but what it does do is establish a few central ways in which I connect to the people and land of Aotearoa. I note my tribal affiliation and the Marae I belong to, I identify some geographical features such as the river and mountain of most significance to my people, as well as noting my parents as my personal points of connection to the world.

*It is crucial to understand the importance of location. It is not a simple cultural idiosyncrasy, or a cultural nicety; it is an important statement of who I am and where I come from, which is a single yet integral part of Indigenous methodology (Absollon & Willet, 2005).*

One of the central aspects of identifying location is that it helps me as an author to show why I am doing this research, how I am connected to it, and how I am invested in it (Absollon & Willet, 2005). Without this, it not only becomes very difficult to understand the topic, but it also increases the possibility of abusing the privilege and opportunity to do such research. The connection between the researcher and the research helps to enable an ethical approach to indigenous research in which subjectivity, experience, and location are privileged.

The use of location helps to identify what I can and cannot speak about, and what I can or cannot research. Although it speaks to my connections to the land and other Maori (for example my tribal affiliation), it does not suggest that I speak on behalf of my tribe. In fact the opposite is true; my life may be linked to my heritage, but this is a personal statement that enables me to speak to my personal perspective and experiences that are influenced by my ancestry, yet does not claim to represent my ancestry.

I grew up in the suburbs in the town of Palmerston North – a city of around 75,000 people and one of the larger cities in Aotearoa. I was born there in 1981, to a Maori father and Pakeha mother. This has meant that in many ways I have lived in two worlds. I have experienced tangihanga as well as funerals, I have been in dominant stream school classes as well as Maori classes, sometimes I hear prayers and other times I hear karakia, and I have had ham as well as hangi for Christmas dinner. These are the two worlds I negotiate.

The dominant stream/pakeha influence has been significant in my life. I speak English not Maori, I grew up reading pakeha books in school, watching pakeha tv shows, my (immediate) family does not speak Maori, and the people I interact with on a day to

day level are mostly pakeha (except for family). Many Maori, including myself, lived a very integrated life. Negotiating the 'ins' and 'outs' of these worlds remains relevant as I attempt to approach research from an Indigenous perspective.

The way that I relate myself to Native Canadians is another issue at stake within this research. I believe my perspective as a Maori privileges me to an 'us' relationship at times, yet at other times requires an outside relationship. When speaking to broadly indigenous issues, such as self-determination, indigenous rights, loss of language, or dispossession of land, I have created a largely uncontextualized (and admittedly problematic) 'us'. And throughout this research I will refer to 'us' or 'our' when referring to Indigenous peoples and these issues when I see myself as connected to Indigenous Canadians (as per the examples above). At other times, considering myself as similar to Native Canadians would not only be highly inappropriate, but innately absurd. I simply have absolutely no idea what it's like to play in a native hockey competition in Canada, or what it's like to live on a reserve (to name but two differences, of an innumerable number of differences). When I refer to Native Canadians throughout this study, I speak about a group of people separate from me.

One faulty assumption that can be made of Indigenous research is that Native peoples and non-Native peoples are two groups that are completely different, fixed, and separated by race (Jones & Jenkins, 2008). If someone has both Native and non-Native parents, to what degree does that enable someone the ability to use an Indigenous or western approach to research? If a Native person has lived (in at least some ways) a highly integrated and dominant stream life – does this make a person able to access an Indigenous perspective? Or if a pakeha person is welcomed into the life of a Maori



whanau, to what degree can that person identify with Maori or Pakeha perspectives? In terms of sport, such tensions would be a problem when attempting to categorize Aboriginal peoples participating in the dominant stream sport system, or non-Natives working within the Aboriginal sport system. Even the term Indigenous itself has problems, as it (nationally, pan-nationally, and internationally) can have both unifying and homogenizing effects.

I had initially written a memoir that was intended to be used as an appendix in this document. My advisor suggests this to all of her students, to give the reader insight into the author and the author's perspective. Given my preference for this chapter as part of the study, I have chosen to incorporate the memoir here.

*A Selective Account of my Personal History: A Memoir*

**What can I tell about my life that will better inform the reader of where I stand today, so that he or she may more fully understand where it is that I am coming from, and why I am asking my questions?**

The above question guided the writing of this memoir, and also enabled me to reflect on my personal history, which prior to its writing had to a large extent only existed in pockets and snippets of life experiences. It is my hope that this glimpse into my life will help give some insight about where I have come from, and where I currently stand.

Sports and physical activity have been a major part of my life since the introduction of physical education classes and extra curricular sports in primary school at the age of five. In the first section of this memoir I briefly discuss why I have a passion for, and deep affiliation with sports and physical activity. In the second section I discuss how my Maori heritage has intersected with sports and physical education within my life.

This section provides a brief glimpse into my thoughts on sport, physical education, race and culture based on a selective account of my personal experiences.

### *Personal Connection to Sport*

I have been quite flexible and open to sporting experiences, participating in both competitive sports and sports without competition, individual and team sports, formal and informal sports, sports for fun and sports for rewards, sports with external competition and sports with internal competition, and physically demanding sports as well as games of skill and chance. I have played at one stage or another at an intensive or formal level: cricket, rugby, touch rugby, basketball, tennis, gymnastics, squash, badminton, martial arts, table tennis, pool, darts, swimming, soccer, and golf. I have always been attracted to sport because it was fun, it involved a sense of play, it gave me the opportunity to learn new things, and it was an opportunity to build relationships.

Sports were always enjoyable, fun, and made me feel good. I would often find myself so involved when playing sports, I would feel like I would 'wake up' in the middle of a game with no recollection of what just happened; I believe I was sometimes able to let my unconscious self guide me in playing sports. Sport was one of the few places I would truly be present in the moment.

I also loved the opportunity that sports offered me to simply play. While many of my sporting experiences had external motivators, much of why I loved sports is because I found it an opportunity to be playful. I remember after playing hours of tennis as a teenager, my friends and I would relax with games we would make up such as playing cricket with an upside down tennis racket and tennis ball, or playing volleyball on a

tennis court (inside the service boxes) with our feet (like soccer). Sports enabled me to play, and play gave me a sense of being free.

I have developed a passion for learning in my life, and sports provided me an opportunity to learn and go through new ideas, sports, experiences and more. I had been criticized when I was younger for not sticking to sports - not because I would give it up after a week of trying, but rather because after I would pick up a new sport I would play it incessantly for years, develop a relative competency, and then find myself moving on. My preference to develop and learn new things rather than to know everything about one sport helps to explain why I made those choices.

Learning about myself was another aspect I found compelling about sports; I really enjoyed the chance to test myself. As a child I would often get into extremely competitive matches and games with my friends. One time, after many tennis matches that were split roughly evenly between me and my friend, we decided to have one match to see who the best really was. The current score is one set all, and I believe the reason why the match was never finished was because there was simply too much at stake for the loser.

After years of intensely hyper-competitive tennis matches with this childhood friend, he began to beat me with regularity. Incredibly tight matches for years were turning into 6-0, 6-0 drubbings. At first my friend was extremely happy with himself. It seemed he now had my number. The reason for this was not because I began to lose interest in the match; I began to lose interest in the score. Each match for me was an opportunity to see how well I could play, how well I could hit the ball, how good my technique was, how well I could construct a point. I would often leave the match

reflecting on how I played one particular point just perfectly. The fact that it was meaningless in terms of the match did not matter to me. And as a result, the scores lost their meaning to me, which for better or worse was the end of that rivalry. I thoroughly enjoyed the opportunities for testing that were available in sport, whether that meant self-testing, or testing myself against a friend,

This brings me to my last attraction to sports: relationship building. Sports provided a medium for bonding with family, friends, teammates, and strangers. I have too many stories to tell about building friendships in sport, but in many ways I used sport as a means to this end.

#### *Intersections between Race, Culture, Sport, and Physical Education*

Because there were no uniquely Maori sports available to play as I was growing up, physical expression in a Maori context in my experiences would be best exemplified by both Maori games (e.g., ti rakau and poi) and kapa haka (a performance/entertainment group who sing action songs and perform haka). Through these activities, we learned about leadership, teamwork, commitment, our bodies, our stories, our ancestry, and the mana of our traditions. We also learned from our performances that when representing the Maori community the standards were set high for us, and I think many of us internalized the pressure to perform because of perceived judgments by Pakeha society. I recall one instance tied to a lack-luster performance in front of the rest of school, when our class was asked to re-perform by our Maori teachers. The resulting telling off by our Maori teachers brought shame to our group, and was a reminder that even a bunch of kids were the object of Pakeha scrutiny. I also remember my teacher ‘joking’ with me that I should mouth the words to songs because my singing was flat. Now, whilst this may

have been very true, the pressure I felt from my teachers to represent the Maori community with excellence was so great that it was deemed to come at the expense of actual participation in Maori cultural activities; this was a potentially understandable but obviously illogical line of reasoning.

I had many role models and icons while growing up; all of them were sports stars, and most of them were rugby and rugby league professionals. And as I reflect upon all those heroes of mine when I was a young boy, most of them were Maori (e.g., Frank Bunce, Walter Little, Mathew Ridge, the Iro Brothers), Tagata Pacifika (e.g., Michael Jones), and Australian Aborigines (Cliff Lyons and Steve Renouf). I am not sure if this was because I had a passion for sports, that I was Maori, that Maori and Tagata Pacifika peoples are unfortunately over represented in certain sports, or that I identified with Polynesians and Indigenous peoples. Whatever the reason, this confirms for me the importance of role models, and particularly role models with which I could identify.

Having Indigenous role models within the field of physical education is also very important. The absence of Indigenous teachers and researchers and Indigenous aspects of physical education created a void in the inspiration that those of my age, as well as those before me could have benefited from (although recently things are getting better). I have found this experience to be negative because of the difficulty of learning Indigenous perspectives on sport, the difficulty in finding Indigenous teachers and advisers as role models, and more symbolically, that Indigenous knowledge in sport appeared to be a non-priority. These institutionalized forms of discrimination were also accompanied by personal forms of discrimination.

Racism was part of my life in sports and physical education. I recall one experience I had at high school during physical education class, when we had a golf lesson at a local golf club by an English golf pro. At the time, I had played far more golf than anyone in my class, I was an avid and competent golfer for my age, I was a genuinely attentive and well behaved student, I was actually listening to what the instructor had to say, and the instructor clearly did not know who was talking whilst he was. Yet these realities did not stop him from singling me out in front the class, yelling at me, telling me how disrespectful I was, and adding “that if I did not want to be here, then I should go out to the fields and pick turnips!” It goes through my mind that instances like this could, quite easily, be a simple mistake. But it also runs through my mind that it could be that my rough looks and brown skin led him to believe that out of everyone in the class it must have been I who was disrespecting him. Or perhaps my alleged disrespect and lack of attention was consistent with the racist Pakeha disassociation of Maori from education, and their association of Maori men with physical labour (which by the way was state government policy during my father’s school years, see Hokowhitu, 2003), whereby I would be of better use to society working in the field rather than learning on the field.

Would it have made a difference if I had dressed in a middle class manner, in keeping with how golfers prefer to see themselves? I think it might have. But does the Pro always single out and yell at young Pakeha kids, and then tell them they should go out into the fields and work? I don’t think so.

Another experience I recall from school, that I did not realize at the time, highlights for me how the denigration of Maori culture seeps into every nook and corner

of our lives, and how destructive the internalization of this can be. During lunchtimes it was everyday practice to share your lunch with your classmates (I was in a bilingual class so almost the entire class was Maori). There was the constant sharing of all foods, and in particular if you had fish n chips for lunch. Often, most of your fish n chips would not end up in your own stomach, but in those of your friends. This expectation, however, ended up in people hiding just to eat their lunch, so that we could hide from what was labeled as the 'scrounger'. This was the freeloader who is too cheap to have his/her own lunch, so he/she would need to sponge off others. And this expectation was partly negative, and resulted in some resentment by friends and classmates when others 'scrounged'.

This outcome, however, need not have been the case. Communal cultures are often criticized: they are not competitive enough, they encourage laziness, they lack room for personal growth and success, etc. And when practiced in contexts in which the true values of communal cultures are not valued, they get highlighted as examples of how communal and Maori cultural forms are ineffective or 'don't work anymore'. I believe this was internalized by my classmates, and stopped us from being proud that none of our friends or classmates would go hungry that day because their parents did not make them lunch, or they could not afford lunch, or for whatever reason they did not have lunch that day. The intersection between communal cultures and the individualistic values that ground the label of the scrounger, led to a less ideal situation and consequent resentment by some of us during lunchtime, rather than viewing the sharing of lunch with friends as being an empowering and productive practice for our classroom community. These personal accounts I have just highlighted are some of the reminders of how privilege

operates. I too, though, have undoubtedly experienced privilege from the other side of the fence.

My experience as an immigrant in Canada has broadened my understanding of race and culture, and has also been a largely positive experience. In the first years of my arrival, I would scarcely go through a day without somebody taking interest in New Zealand and my travels. To boot, my accent garnered a lot of curiosity and compliments from interested Canadians. The entire time this was happening, I was well aware that this is not necessarily the typical experience for immigrants to Canada. Each time I received a compliment, I also knew there were many people who were being ignored, overlooked, and avoided because of their accents. My social inclusion in Canada did not reflect the experiences of others, for if I had an East Indian, Korean, or Mexican accent, difficulties in communication with Canadians would probably be considered far less cute.

The application for permanent residency in Canada was a trying process for me. The uncertainty of not knowing whether I would be able to live with my wife produced times of insecurity and instability. Many Canadians would side with my story and position, stating with a peculiar regularity that my home country is part of the commonwealth, and hence immigration should be easy for me (and by implication that if it is not easy, then it should be). And whilst I appreciated the support of those who offered it, I suspect that this support was nothing more than a thinly veiled attempt to suggest immigration policies should favour *white, not commonwealth* countries. If I was from the commonwealth countries of Pakistan, Malaysia, or Nigeria, I am much less certain that romantic notions of our shared commonwealth connections would have been invoked in support of my situation.



Another anecdote from Canada that I will never forget was my first introduction to Native relations in Canada. I had been in Canada for only a month or so when I watched a video about First Nations in a university sociology class. This was one aspect that interested me a lot about Canada when I arrived, and I knew absolutely nothing about Native relations in Canada so I was looking forward to watching it. The title of the movie was *Rocks at Whiskey Trench*, a native narrative of the confrontation on the Mercier Bridge during the Oka crisis in 1990. An introduction to Native relations indeed! I recall watching in disbelief. Surely this is not true, surely this film is fictional, and surely this could never actually happen! For crying out loud....this is Canada! But as you know it did happen, and the film has left an indelible mark in my mind ever since.

#### *Closing Thoughts*

The writing of this personal history has been a very productive process; it enabled me to reflect on previously disparate experiences in my life and put them together to help explain how my life experiences have led me to where I am today. I briefly discussed why I was attracted to sports, and then noted a few life experiences that were important to my understandings of race, culture, sport, and physical education. This memoir has reminded me that Native relations are not race relations; but are an amalgam of gender relations, age relations, class relations, cultural relations, economic relations, race relations and more.

My graduate education, along with the last years of study at the undergraduate level, was significantly different to my former years of undergraduate study. I began to more fully engage in physical education ideas, foster the value of physical education, recognize the importance of physical education, and learn about connections between

Native issues and physical education. It is my belief that learning through my body provided me with a meaningful way to learn that eventually fueled non-physical forms of learning that I otherwise may not have come across. The meaningfulness I found with physical forms of learning can thus be seen as having an essential role in facilitating the academic learning I now focus on too. For me, physical education is both a physical education, as well as an education of the physical.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### SOVEREIGNTY, SELF-DETERMINATION, AND SELF-GOVERNMENT

so we [First Nations] live differently.... we lived this way for tens of thousands of years, is that to mean we lost our sovereignty, because we had a different vision of why human beings are alive? (former National Chief of the National Indian Brotherhood George Erasmus, in Cassidy, 1991, p. 24).

Erasmus poses an important question that strikes at the heart of a central conundrum; if Aboriginal peoples are equal to other Canadians, why is their self-conception continually rejected in favor of the dominant stream one? This question begs another; when will equality through difference be accepted as a legitimate means for developing Indigenous/settler relations?

#### *Introduction*

Within discussions about self-determination are some heavily loaded and debated terms, such as sovereignty and self-government. I have examined this discussion, ‘unloaded’ these terms, and will show their relevance to a discussion on self-determination. My discussion revolves around a progression from sovereignty, to self-determination, to self-government. In my argument, each term necessarily precedes the next, and becomes less abstract and more practical through the progression<sup>4</sup>.

Before I present my argument I briefly outline these central terms. Sovereignty of Indigenous nations in Canada is foundational to self-determination and self-government, and is

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4. I am suggesting that this progression leads to the optimal workings of the values of each of the terms as I understand them, rather than the way it necessarily must take place. For example, a limited measure of self-government may be delegated without the recognition of Native sovereignty or self-determination. Whilst this may be possible, I argue that this would not be the optimal workings of Native self-government, self-determination and sovereignty for Canadians.

grounded in a spiritual relationship to the Creator. Self-determination is the collective power of choice, whilst self-government refers to the right of peoples to exercise political autonomy, and is one possible result of that collective choice (RCAP, 1996, p. 175).

### *Sovereignty*

Sovereignty is not a fixed or objective term, but rather a contested term that is culturally appropriate, and contextually and historically specific. Used to justify a particular social order, sovereignty is a rationalization used to legitimate the exercise of authority (Boldt & Long, 1984). Initially used as a theological term in the 'East', it was subsequently taken by Europeans to characterize the king as the head of state (Deloria, 1979). The king was the sovereign, whose rule was handed to him by the authority of God. This power is absolute, it originated from God, and thus God's authority was administrated through the king to his kingdom (Kickingbird et al., 1986). Sovereignty from a Western perspective is about achieving peace and rule through complete control, authority, and domination (Alfred, 2005b). This hierarchical understanding is exclusive in its claim to absolute power under a central authority – such as a god, or more recently as the state (Scott 2000, in Maaka & Fleras, 2005).

I prefer to use the Kickingbird et al. (1986) definition, which views sovereignty as “the supreme authority from which all specific powers and rights derive their legitimacy or effect” (p. 1). From this perspective, sovereignty is the most foundational concept in the self-determination of Indigenous peoples; sovereignty is the basis of all claims to nationhood, self-determination, autonomy, self-government, and Indigenous rights. It is a framework which embraces a conception of sovereignty that works with Indigenous peoples' world views. This view of Aboriginal peoples is described in the words of the former Chief in Ontario, Gordon Peters, who

states that “there is only one source of authority that we have, and that is the Creator, who put us here with a very distinct purpose in mind” (Cassidy, 1991, p. 33).

Indigenous conceptions of sovereignty are based on a spiritual relationship between themselves and the land on which they live. This relationship is one of partnership, whereby principles larger than the peoples themselves (e.g., the creator, or natural laws) link Indigenous peoples to their territories in a spiritual and sacred way. Part of this partnership was the responsibility of keeping the balance within their people and territories and maintaining this balance through the sustainability of the earth; the health and well-being of its peoples is central to Indigenous philosophies of sovereignty (Alfred, 2005b).

The role of partnerships in this understanding of sovereignty provides a platform for engagement between Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous peoples. As Maaka and Fleras (2005) note, “indigenous claims to self determining sovereignty are not synonymous with independence or closure but embrace references to *relationships* that need to be nurtured in partnership rather than borders that must be defended” (p. 59, original emphasis). There are obstacles in communicating ideas about sovereignty between Indigenous peoples and the state. Firstly, the absolute control and authority of western ideas of sovereignty and the partnership and interlocking control conception of Indigenous sovereignty are at odds with each other. Also, theoretical problems exist with the social constructionist conception of sovereignty by Western sociological theory that conflicts with the holistic and spiritual conception of sovereignty of Indigenous peoples (Ponting, 1997).

Not only is the promotion of partnerships important, but the type of partnership that exists is also significant. Jones and Jenkins (2008) explore the role of the hyphen within the term ‘Indigene-Colonizer’ relations in cross cultural research partnerships, and they suggest that the

hyphen both joins and separates the groups in this relationship. There are a number of ways to interpret or approach the hyphen. One way to approach the hyphen is to erase, soften and deny it by promoting commonalities and sameness between the groups. Another approach would be to promote the importance of the hyphen in creating distance and highlighting difference between the groups as a basis for this relationship. The ways in which differences and commonalities are able to shape the relationship may have significant impacts on the type and effectiveness of the relationship between Native and non-Native peoples.

Taiiaki Alfred (1999, 2001, 2005a, 2005b) has repeatedly argued the limits of the current pursuit of sovereignty, and calls for ideas that include Indigenous ideas of self-determination. Alfred (2005a) calls for the end of the current pursuit of sovereignty in favour of a relational conception of sovereignty; a partnership form of sovereignty designed to work with the world, and with those whom Indigenous peoples wish to share it. This would replace current Western based understandings of sovereignty with a Native understanding of power, and a Native world view (Alfred, 2005b). Forcing Aboriginal ideas into European terms is part of the processes of assimilation that have violated and hurt Indigenous communities (Barker, 2005). In discussions about sovereignty and policy I believe it is appropriate to remember the words of former chief Gordon Peters; “there is a natural law that we must observe....until we recognize that, legislation, constitutions, and all other forms of supposed authority and jurisdiction will be meaningless” (Cassidy, 1991, p. 34).

### *Self-Determination*

Self-determination refers to the degree of autonomy, freedom, and authority a people has to organize themselves politically, culturally, socially, and economically, without restriction, in ways that they feel meet their needs and desires. (Alfred, 1999; Fleras, 1999; Maaka & Fleras,

2005; Ponting, 1997). In other words, self-determination as sought after by Indigenous peoples is simply the freedom to be Indigenous peoples - at least to the same degree as other Euro-Canadians are free to be themselves. Essential to self-determination are the traditional principles of connectedness, rootedness and interdependency (Alfred, 2005b). These principles are applied to the land, with the creatures that share the land, with other people we share the land with, and to one's self.

Indigenous principles through sport and physical activity are evident in many ways; connection with the land (e.g., hiking, surfing, fishing, canoeing), the interdependency with creatures on the land (e.g., dog sledding, hunting, rodeo), the interdependency with other people (e.g., team sports, or creating policy with others), and the rootedness of the self with one's culture (e.g., a sweat lodge, or Maori haka before a sport match). Although I have separated these examples for the sake of explanation, they are, of course, not disparate but deeply interconnected and interdependent.

The sovereignty of Indigenous peoples is evident in their histories with non-Indigenous peoples. Self determination and nationhood are reflected by the existence of nation-to-nation partnerships, alliances, wars, and treaties (Alfred, 2005a). These histories, however, do not represent Indigenous claims to sovereignty, but represent the existence of Indigenous sovereignty (Cram, 2005). As noted above, sovereignty is a supreme authority that enables inherent Indigenous rights, which no treaty or (non)practice can prove<sup>5</sup>. The notable absence of the practice of self-determination by Indigenous peoples has led to the belief by some non-

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5. This does not absolve state governments from honouring treaties or agreements made between Indigenous peoples and settler states. But it does acknowledge there is a sovereign basis that precedes treaties, and thus sovereignty is not reducible to treaties made between settler states and local Indigenous peoples.

Indigenous people that they do not have it. For such individuals, the issue is not whether the right to self-determination exists, but instead the logic that a lack of self-determination must come from the absence of that right in the first place (Deloria, 1979). This factor is compounded by the lack of popular (and critical) education on the history and rights of Indigenous peoples, as well as a lack of genuine understanding of the Indigenous perspective.

Much of the push for self-determination comes in the form of claims to Indigenous rights. Indigenous rights are collective and inherent; collective in the sense that these rights are asserted by the collective and not the individual, and inherent in that they are not delegated or negotiated but reflect original occupancy and first principles (Maaka and Fleras, 2005). Indigenous rights present special entitlements for Native peoples, but also a framework for building non-Native relations. The international context is also highly relevant to the promotion of Indigenous rights, as seen in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (United Nations, 2007).

Most discussions about sovereignty and self-determination by Indigenous peoples are not about the pursuit of separate state independence, but instead feature the pursuit of accommodating equally valid yet mutually opposed notions of autonomy and belonging (Maaka & Fleras, 2005). Indigenous sovereignty will provide a challenge to absolute state sovereignty, as well as to dominant understandings of inclusion, equity, belonging and citizenship. Some fears of settler societies include the association of sovereignty with complete and separate independence of Indigenous nations, and consequently a disruption in the social order of the colonial state. This is, in many instances, a distortion and misunderstanding of Aboriginal nations' desires. Many Aboriginal organizations in Canada – such as the Native Women's Association of Canada, Assembly of First Nations, Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, and the Métis



National Council - have adopted an approach of sovereignty by self-government through band and reserve control of Aboriginal governance, management, and administration of the day-to-day lives of their people (Barker, 2005). Although this may challenge Western ideas of state authority, they are not claims to be separate nation states. There are others like the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP, 1996), which propose that self-determination is thought to rest with nations and not individual communities. I believe it will be impossible for every individual community to be internally and externally<sup>6</sup> self-determining, and that many communities would be better served through overlapping jurisdictions of control with non-Native organizations and institutions.

To help examine some of this discussion on self-determination, I will look at an example of self-determination in Aotearoa. The Indigenous movement toward sovereignty in Aotearoa for Maori is called Tino rangatiratanga, which has come to mean different things to both Maori and Pakeha: nationhood, sovereignty, self-determination, tribal authority, self government, autonomy, absolute chieftainship, as well as many other things. Reconciling an understanding of Tino rangatiratanga - both within the Maori community as well as with the non-Maori community - is proving a challenging task.

Maaka and Fleras (2005) understand Tino rangatiratanga as the Indigenous right to self-determining autonomy, which presumes Maori as politically autonomous peoples with self-

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6. Internal control is control of matters strictly within the Native community (e.g., the role of traditional language in education curriculum, or political election procedures). External matters relate to matters outside of the community (e.g., aiding in an international peacekeeping mission). External matters obviously provide more tension for Euro-Canadians as such matters directly affect them, and consequently are much more difficult to gain mutual agreement for. However, the role of international sport representatives is a form of external jurisdiction that is somewhat palatable outside the Native community. The role of Native international athletes/teams thus presents a unique and potentially powerful avenue to promote the usually contentious elements of external self-determination.

determining rights over land, identity, and political voice. However, like Tino rangatiratanga, words like sovereignty, autonomy, and Indigenous rights (amongst others) are loaded terms, difficult to grasp, prone to misunderstandings due to their meaning different things to different people, and are context dependent (Maaka & Fleras, 2005). Navigating the complicated terrain of these central terms presents one of the many problems with practicing sovereignty and self-determination amongst the Indigenous peoples (and settler societies) of the world<sup>7</sup>.

One example of what is widely understood as facilitating Tino rangatiratanga by Maori is Maori education. The development of Te Kohanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa Maori, and Waanagna Maori (Maori pre-school, school, and tertiary education institutions), as distinct systems as well as separate components of the dominant stream system provide a space for the growth of Tikanga Maori (Maori customs) and Te Reo Maori (the language) within the groundings of Kaupapa Maori (Maori values). This instance of Tino rangatiratanga tells us that self-determination includes Maori control of institutions and structures, it revitalizes traditional teachings and customs (notably the language), it provides an empowering space for Maori, it works as part of and separate to dominant stream institutions, it provides a basis for Maori/Pakeha relations in education, and both Maori and Pakeha maintain the ability to choose to be part of this system or not. Perhaps these are some lessons that can be applied to other situations relevant to Indigenous self-determination elsewhere and can facilitate a discussion about what self-determination is, and how it can be practiced.

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7. Confusion over the terms has in some respects facilitated the popularity and pursuit of sovereignty and self-determination, as the mixing of terms and the ambiguity of meanings has enabled all opinions to be included to provide strength to the movement. However, the devil is often in the details, and although Aboriginal rights, self-determination, and self-government have at times been promised and pursued by politicians and policies, the differences in meaning have sometimes led to implementation of Aboriginal rights, self-determination, and self-governance outside of Native understandings. In other words, they have not provided Aboriginal rights or self-determination at all.

### *Self-Government*

Self-government, unlike self-determination and sovereignty, is widely accepted by non-Aboriginal peoples in Canada, as well as within policy circles, but less agreement exists over exactly how it can be implemented in terms of content, scope, pace and jurisdiction (Cockerill & Gibbens, 1997; Maaka & Fleras, 2005). Ponting (1986) notes four key aspirations of Indian self government: (1) greater self-determination and social justice, (2) economic development, (3) protection and retention of Indigenous culture, and (4) facilitating social vitality and development. These aspirations could easily suit the needs of Native sport leaders.

Asch (2002) defines self-government as “those powers and initiatives that enable a community to govern a territory and its occupants by setting goals and acting upon those goals without fear of external interference” (p. 229). However, this definition is more appropriate for a local community rather than federal level policy administrators. Self-government at this level would more appropriately be the power to set and administer the goals of Native sport with as much freedom as interdependency (e.g., economic, political, or human interdependency) allows.

Fleras (1999) provides four levels of self-governance that can broadly categorize multiple conceptions of self-government in terms of power, scope and jurisdiction. The first level is statehood, which is complete separation and independence from the state government. Only a few nations endorse this model, such as the Mohawk nation. The second level is nationhood, which is the authority over internal matters of central importance, but not over external affairs. The more organized and economically independent nations would tend to fit this model. In the third level, municipal government has control over culturally based community governance, working with and in dominant stream models of governance. This model might be best suited to the most economically dependent or geographically isolated nations and communities. And

lastly, institutional government provides meaningful contributions to decision making powers through accommodations and adequate representation. Although this last model seems to lack a strong political stance on Native nationalism, it may well play a crucial role for the increasing numbers of urban Natives in Canada.

Native scholar Vine Deloria Jr. (1979) acknowledges the limits of self-government, particularly when it is grounded in and privileges Western ideas of sovereignty and legitimacy of state government control over the lives of Indigenous peoples. He explores this issue in the following passage:

Self-government is not an Indian idea. It originates in the minds of non-Indians who have reduced the traditional ways to dust, or believe they have, and now wish to give, as a gift, a limited measure of local control and responsibility. Self-government is an exceedingly useful concept for Indians to use when dealing with the larger government because it provides a context within which negotiations can take place. Since it will never supplant the intangible, spiritual, and emotional aspirations of American Indians, it cannot be regarded as the final solution to Indian problems (Deloria & Lytle, 1984, p. 15).

This criticism of self-government is based on the delegation of self-government by the colonial state, which tends to promote institutional accommodation.

Institutional accommodation is essentially a problem solving mechanism, which takes groups with irreconcilable positions and creates circumstance by which conflict is appropriately managed or limited (Ponting, 1997). It is a tool used to manage, not to solve issues. As time passes and circumstances change, institutional accommodation will necessarily fail, conflict will re-emerge, and the problem is once again an issue. Alfred (2005) would criticize this kind of self-government as reflecting non-Aboriginal forms of governance, and thus necessarily

insufficient. Nonetheless, it is my belief that dominant stream structures and organizations will feature in Aboriginal self-government (at least in some instances), because institutional accommodation is easier to attain than engaging in Indigenous rights, and because Native peoples are going to have to use all the resources available to them to realize their own self-government.

There are other limits and cautions that accompany Aboriginal self-government. Replacing dominant stream government may simply trade race-based privilege for class-based privilege - the empowerment of Aboriginal elites and leaders at the expense of other Native peoples. The small size of the Aboriginal population is also limiting in terms of economies of scale, and the human resources of Aboriginal peoples may be largely absorbed by the need for government at the expense of other sectors of society (Ponting, 1997). Balancing the use of foreign forms of governance with the need for resources and engagement with dominant stream society will also prove to be a challenging task (Gibbens, 1986).

Another tension in the discussion about self-government is different understandings about the legitimacy of self-government between Indigenous peoples and the state. From the Aboriginal perspective, self-government is inherent (Kickingbird et al., 1996), whereas governments believe self-government is not inherent but contingent (Asch, 1992; Fleras, 1999). In other words, self-government is something that the Canadian government gives to Aboriginal peoples that comes from constitutional powers at the federal and provincial level, and always works within federal and provincial structures. The delegation of rights continues to keep control in the hands of the state, and has led to the devolution or self-government of Indigenous peoples through administration without control – such is the case in many band councils (Alfred, 1999).

One last tension that has the possibility to affect Native self-government can be described as the possible conflict between rights and needs. To what degree do the Native leaders pursue the essential needs of the Native community (such as housing, education, healthcare), as opposed to more abstract Indigenous rights. The delicate balance of this tension is captured by Ponting (1997):

The quest for constitutional entrenchment of an inherent right to self-government can be seen from a sociological perspective as an example of the **status-striving** that is common among subordinated groups. Success could yield a political payoff, in terms of support from constituents, for the aboriginal political leaders who achieve it. In the interim, though, to the extent that a focus on such sovereignty issues divert time and energy away from the amelioration of the daily life problems of the grassroots constituent, the political leaders might be trying the patience of those constituents (p. 362, original emphasis).

### *Conclusion*

Sovereignty, self-determination, and self-government are highly contested concepts in terms of their legitimacy, utility, range, scope and power, and must take into account the specific context of each Indigenous nation. Sovereignty for Indigenous peoples is strongly linked to their worldviews, which imbues the term with spiritual principles that connects peoples to the land and animals in a partnership of interlocking relations. This is in contrast to the European view of sovereignty that justifies control over the land and people, as well as the Western intellectual understanding of sovereignty. Sovereignty legitimizes social orders and ways of living, and provides a justification for the self-determination of Indigenous peoples. Self-determination means different things to different nations, and has different purposes and objectives that depend on the circumstances. In general terms, it represents the authority and control of Indigenous

peoples to organize themselves politically, economically and socially, in ways that Native peoples deem are appropriate for their lives and desires. One extension of self-determination is the idea of self-government, which refers to the organizational power to set and administer the goals of Native communities or organizations. I believe self-government will best suit the needs of Native communities if it is based on traditional structures and Native values.

These terms are not separate but deeply connected, and contain general elements. Firstly, there is discussion over an ideal or utopian type philosophical position around each term. Secondly, these terms must be understood and pursued within the inevitable and highly political context of settler/state relations, and international relations as well. Thirdly, a pragmatic approach must be taken into account to facilitate the practical ways in which self-determination can be exercised. Fourthly, there must be room for each Native community to express their idea of self-determination. Yet I believe this must also allow for the potential benefits of pan-Indigenous views, such as the potential of a Native Canadian position on self-determination in sport, or the international position found in the United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples (United Nations, 2007).

#### THE SHAPING OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES THROUGH POLICY IN CANADA, 1970-2007.

As is evident in Canadian policy, the Indigenous peoples of Canada have traveled an arduous journey of Native/state relations. One feature of the history of Native/state relations in policy is that it constantly yet paradoxically promoted and infringed on the Indigenous rights of Canadians. This has occurred through the use of institutional accommodation in Native administration, and also through discussions on Aboriginal rights. This section will discuss policies, government reports, court rulings, and land/treaty claims, and begins with the Calder decision made in the early 1970s.

The Calder decision of 1973<sup>8</sup> reopened the door for re-visioning Native/state relations and Indigenous rights (Asch, 1999; Miller, 1991). The Calder decision asserted by the Supreme Court of Canada established the principle that Indigenous peoples lived in sovereign and self-governing societies before colonization, and that Indigenous rights had existed (with or without actual practice) since that time (Maaka & Fleras, 2005). This case was crucial to Indigenous claims for autonomy over land, identity, and political voice, and presented a significant opportunity for moving government policy away from assimilation and towards self-determination. Although this was a great opportunity for furthering Native self-determination, subsequent policy has largely been pursued through the entrenchment of Native self-government. Government initiatives included the shifting of administration – but not necessarily control – of Native governance to the individual communities (Maaka & Fleras, 2005).

In the Calder case the judges acknowledged that prior to contact with Europeans, the Nisga'a (the nation of which Calder was a chief) had Indigenous rights that derived from their use of their traditional territories. This was the first time Indigenous rights and title had been acknowledged by dominant stream society in a meaningful way. Court decisions<sup>9</sup> have been used by Indigenous peoples to further self-determination, and by the mid 1970s much of the government funding had moved from allocation based on individual Aboriginal persons to funds under band control (Fleras & Elliot, 1992). It was negotiations between the state and Indigenous peoples, and not the court decisions directly, which were the main driving force in developing

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8. *Calder et al. v. Attorney-General of British Columbia* (1973) 34 DLR (3d) 145 (cited in Maaka & Fleras, 2005).

9. Most notably *Calder et al.*, but also later on: *R v. Sparrow* (1990) 70 DLR (4th) 385 (SCC) (cited in Maaka & Fleras, 2005), and *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia* [1997] 3 S.C.R. 1010 (cited in Maaka & Fleras, 2005).



Aboriginal rights (Asch, 1999). The Calder case was limited in the sense that it was not able to establish the past and present content of these Aboriginal rights, as First Nation claims continued to be treated as though they were delegated by the crown and would be traded for land and resources.

In response to Hydro Quebec's plans for a hydroelectric plant that would destroy traditional grounds claimed by the Cree and Inuit of northern Quebec, the James Bay and Northern Quebec agreement (1976, cited in Maaka & Fleras, 2005) was signed as a comprehensive claims agreement<sup>10</sup>. The deal included land and \$262 million in payments, the right to hunt and fish, and guaranteed income for those who wanted to live on the land, in return for the extinguishment of future claims to other lands and rights (Maaka & Fleras, 2005). Later in 1984, the Cree-Naskapi and Quebec signed an agreement that included both land management and self-governing rights (Maaka & Fleras, 2005). A new agreement between Quebec and the Cree of Quebec (2002, cited in Aubin, 2002) included \$3.5 billion in payouts, Cree control over resources, and Cree gains in authority over managing their affairs.

The Cree and Quebec agreement applied pressure for accepting Aboriginal rights at the national level (Foster, 1999). However there are others like Alfred (2005a) who argue that accommodation of this type erodes traditional values and teachings, because the foreign forms of governance will continue to alienate Indigenous peoples and legitimize the myth that the state owns and therefore can adjudicate over the land's future.

The rights of Indigenous peoples were acknowledged and confirmed within Canada's Constitution Act of 1982 under section 35, which states "(1) the existing aboriginal and treaty

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10. A comprehensive treaty claim is used to establish treaty relations with those nations who do not have a treaty relationship, to clarify who owns what land. This is separate from a specific land claim, which aims to resolve a specific grievance that is claimed to have not been fulfilled by the state to a Native community.

rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed” (Canada, 1982). The Constitution comes with a double edge; the Constitution recognized Aboriginal peoples as distinct and deserving of culturally appropriate services and programs and provided leverage for Indigenous rights, but it failed to acknowledge the political goals of self-determination and sovereignty (Foster, 1999). The entrenchment of Aboriginal rights in the constitution further supplanted the state as the arbiter of Aboriginal rights, as the body that is ultimately in control, and has the authority to single-handedly limit Aboriginal rights in the name of public interest or national unity (Maaka & Fleras, 2005). In addition, the exact meaning of these rights is still to be concretely defined<sup>11</sup> and so Aboriginal rights remain somewhat ambiguous and instable.

Turner’s (2006) interpretation of Aboriginal rights in policy is that they do not present a problem to the government because they can be subsumed within a more general liberal theory of rights, as they are considered a special class of rights within a general theory of minority rights. For liberals, a legitimate societal culture is modern, and has a commitment to individual equality and opportunity. The policies of this type treat equality as the central measure of liberal justice, and are limited in their ability to meet the needs of Indigenous Canadians (Turner, 2006).

During the 1980s a number of government reports were issued of relevance to Indigenous self determination: the Penner Report, the Nielson Report, and the Coolican Report. The Penner Report (1983, cited in The Special Parliamentary Committee on Indian Self-Government, 1986) called for wholesale changes in the constitution, in legislation, and in the structural organization

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11. A series of forums were undertaken after the construction of the Constitution to define Aboriginal rights, but the talks ended in a stalemate.

of First Nations governance to facilitate First Nation self-government in consultation with the state. The report was based on the goal of accommodation through negotiation, and on administrative self-government rather than self-determination through self-government. Two years later, the Nielson Report (1985, cited in Miller 1990) was a reproduction of the 1969 White paper<sup>12</sup> (cited in Miller, 1990), and proved to be another roadblock for Native/state relations.

The Coolican report (1986, cited in Miller, 1990) was able to move beyond the impasse of previous land claims policy by providing direction for Canadians to accept and pursue the affirmation of Aboriginal rights, whilst also calling for power sharing through established political institutions (Miller, 1990). The Coolican report (1986, cited in Miller, 1990) received a fairly negative reception by First Nations people (RCAP, 1996), and it also lacked any clout to make a real difference. These reports show a continuing trend of government uncertainty on how to proceed with the issue of Native rights.

Advances in Aboriginal rights were furthered by instances of Native resistance. The Meech Lake Accord's (1987, cited in Maaka and Fleras, 2005) prospective amendments to the Constitution (Canada, 1982) disrupted by the efforts of Elijah Harper, were based on the lack of Aboriginal participation in constitutional discussions (Miller, 1990). In another instance, the Mohawk of Kahnawake and Kahnestake engaged in a standoff in protest of the proposed development of a golf course on traditional burial lands, which resulted in a high profile two month long standoff in Oka with Quebec police and military. This violent and highly contentious

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12. The Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy (1969) is also dubbed 'the' White paper because of its profound change in direction on Indian policy. It suggested the extinguishment of Indian peoples in a political sense, and subsequently the extinguishment of all the political ramifications of the Indigenous status of the Indian people of Canada. The paper was swiftly withdrawn in an official capacity due to Indian opposition to the policy, and remains a key political moment in Indian policy.

defense of Aboriginal title would leave an indelible stain on Native/state relations, but would pressure Ottawa to move Native/state relations forward (RCAP, 1996).

State reaction to the Oka crisis included the creation of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP, 1996). The Commission's final report discussed numerous issues, including the need for improved economic development, health, housing, education, and government relations through multiple changes to the current administration of Aboriginal issues. For example, they advocated for the creation of a third Aboriginal order of government along with federal and provincial levels. The importance of Native rights, self-determination, and self-government formed a reoccurring theme in the document:

Affirmation of the right of Aboriginal peoples to fashion their own lives and control their own governments and lands - not as a grant from other Canadian governments, but as a right inherent in them as peoples who have occupied these lands from time immemorial. (RCAP, 1996).

Building on the processes of self-governance initiated by the Cree and the province of Quebec, the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement was signed by the Tungavik Federation, along with federal and territorial governments (Maaka & Fleras, 2005). The agreement included a Nunavut Territory public government to administer over the land, the resources, and its people as part of Canada's parliamentary system and not in the sovereign sense as advocated by other Indigenous nations in Canada (Maaka & Fleras, 2005). Nunavut was not organically developed or based on a traditional community, but rather was the result of a desire to meet the needs of Northern Canadians, whose distinct livelihood was in danger of being overpowered (Maaka & Fleras, 2005). Nunavut is a good example of devolution within the governmental administration of Indigenous peoples, as the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND)

became less of a director of communities and more of a facilitator in the transfer of funds from the federal level to the local level.

The Nisga'a Final Settlement (Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, 2000) was a landmark event – significantly different from Nunavut - in that it acknowledged Aboriginal claims to self-government by moving beyond the fiction of extinguished self-government at the time of Canadian confederation (Alfred, 1999). This represents a new agenda for dealing with Indigenous peoples, by respecting their rights to self-determination and self-government in areas such as policing, education, community services and taxes. The settlement not only acknowledges but continues Aboriginal rights, as Nisga'a share jurisdictions with the federal and provincial governments (Maaka & Fleras, 2005). Some areas are still under state control (e.g., application of the Charter or citizenship), some are shared (e.g., welfare and education with the provinces), and other areas are under complete Nisga'a control (e.g., matters of language, culture, and group membership). Self-government is seen not as a delegated right, but as one that is inherent. However, the settlement does not ultimately challenge the absolute sovereignty of the state (Blackburn, 2007).

Criticisms of the settlement include concern over the further absorption of Aboriginal peoples into dominant stream Canada, and the fact that the settlement is firmly imbedded within a Canadian framework rather than promoting self-determination in its strictest sense. Alfred (2001) is skeptical as he believes some will unfortunately and incorrectly see this as a final solution to the Aboriginal problem within that area, and further that it is based on the faulty assumption that the Canadian government gave Nisga'a these rights after they had to prove it in court.

At the international level a movement for Indigenous rights has been growing for decades, and was symbolized by a Decade of Indigenous peoples (1995-2004), and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (United Nations, 2007). Although ratified by the majority of member states, the United States, Australia, Aotearoa, and Canada were exceptions. The document does provide some leverage for Indigenous peoples world wide as it promotes the need to uphold Indigenous rights and promotes ideals of self-determination, through

...control by indigenous peoples over developments affecting them and their lands, territories and resources [that] will enable them to maintain and strengthen their institutions, cultures and traditions, and to promote their development in accordance with their aspirations and needs (United Nations, 2007, p. 2).

Beginning with the Calder decision, Indigenous rights have become a major focus of Native/state relations, were formally established in 1982, and were furthered with the Nisga'a Final settlement in 2000. Self-determination has largely moved forward since the 1970s, in part because of pressure from key court cases, but has for the most part progressed on state terms and with the underlying assumption that the state should be the final authority on how self-determination can be put into place. The prominence of self-government initiatives reveals the acceptance of Native self-government, yet the reluctance and ambiguity towards addressing Indigenous rights and self-determination shows the governments' uncertainty over dealing with such matters.

## SHAPING SELF-DETERMINATION IN SPORT THROUGH FEDERAL SPORT POLICY IN CANADA, 1950-2005.

### *Introduction*

Federal sport policy has played a key role in shaping the sporting practices of Native peoples in Canada. Early developments in Native sport included the Arctic Winter Games (AWG), Northern Games, and the Native Sport and Recreation Program (NSRP). More recently the Aboriginal Sport Circle (ASC), and the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) have become important parts of the Indigenous sport system. At times these events have attempted to assimilate Native peoples into the dominant sport stream, yet at other times were points of resistance to the dominant sport stream. Self-determination and Native nationalism played a role in shaping much of the motivation behind Native involvement in sport.

### *A Golden Era: An Emerging Native Sport System, the 1960s and 1970s*

Described by some authors as a 'Golden Age' of Native sport in Canada (e.g., Forsyth, n.d.; Paraschak, 2002), this period marked the first time that Native peoples were able to shape sport at the national level, but at the same time were also subjected to federal attempts to directly shape native sport. This period includes the development of TEST, the Arctic Winter Games, the Northern Games, and the Native Sport and Recreation Program.

In the small Yukon town of Old Crow a local priest, Father Jean Mouchet, developed a cross-country ski program to enhance fitness, fun, and competition for northern Natives in the 1950's (O'Bonsawin, 2002; Paraschak, 1983). Through the request of the Recreation Department of the NWT, the program enhanced its capacity in a move to Inuvik, and later in 1967 developed into a federally funded ski program for the north – the Territorial Experimental Ski Training Program (TEST).

The TEST governing board created three objectives that TEST was to pursue:

1. To investigate if Indian and Eskimo youth in the Yukon and NWT could be motivated to higher general achievements as students and citizens through participation in competitive athletics
2. To develop a modeling program for Northern youth that would provide meaningful motivation in athletics and involve maximum personal effort
3. To investigate the potential of Northern youth for making the best of their environment and excelling in competitive cross-country skiing at the national and international levels. (Glassford, Scott, Orlick, Bennington and Adams, 1973, p. 3)

The program had a very strong focus on the development of sport and creating opportunities within the dominant stream of sport, yet also provided a culture and environment that suited northern Natives and attempted to retain a strong commitment to traditional values (Paraschak, 1983). Initially, TEST had an elite sport focus and many northern skiers made the national ski team, but by 1973 the program began to balance elite and recreational needs. Although federal funds finished in 1975, the government of the NWT took over funding by providing \$25,000 annually to the program (Szabo, Paraschak, & Schauerte, 2001). The next major developments for Native peoples were the Arctic Winter Games (AWG) and the Northern Games.

Driven by their lack of success at the inaugural Canada Games of 1967, bureaucrats from the Yukon and the NWT set out to create a more suitable level of competition for the north - the AWG. These games are a Euro-Canadian ethnic sports festival in the north that was premised upon internationally recognized dominant stream sports from southern Canada. Secondly, and in reaction to the Euro-Canadian style of the AWG, the Northern Games were established as an



ethnic sport and recreation festival premised upon Dene and Inuit sports and games, which created a space for northern Natives to participate in sports. The federal government was present in both the conceptual and funding stages of the AWG. For the Northern Games, however, the federal government helped to fund the Games initially, but left the administration of the Games to the experts of Native sports and games – that is, Native organizers (Paraschak, 1991).

Although the AWG fits into the dominant model of sports, Native peoples within the north have been able to partially shape the AWG through the inclusion of cultural dances and games, as well as Arctic Sports and Dene Games events within the AWG. The Northern Games have also had to satisfy both systems of sport; for example, the rules of the sports and games have been formalized like dominant stream understandings of sport, but in order to remain culturally relevant to the north these rules are applied with ‘flexibility’. The ability of the Northern Games to resist dominant stream practices while being a legitimate government program, speaks to the ability of Native peoples to shape their own future (Paraschak, 1991).

Fitness and Amateur Sport<sup>13</sup>, in cooperation with DIAND, funded and developed the Native Sport and Recreation Program (NSRP) in 1972; it was a five year pilot program for sporting and recreation opportunities for Indigenous peoples (Paraschak, 1995). The NRSP had the clearly defined rationale of “raising the level of performance to the point where native athletes will be able to participate in broader competitive events with other Canadians (Department of Health and National Welfare, 1972, cited in Paraschak, 1995), whilst additionally providing a service to a “disadvantaged” group in need (Forsyth, 2000). This program was a significant step forward for Native sport as it was the first nationally coordinated and funded

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13. The national sport administration body of that time.

program within the federal government. Native sport leaders saw the program as an opportunity to meet the needs and challenges of Native peoples and communities through the funding of provincial level sports administration (Paraschak, 1995). The program led to a mix of sporting opportunities - some dominant stream, some traditional, some competitive, and some recreationally based (Forsyth, 2000).

Native leaders aspired to advance Native athletes to compete internationally through the NRSP, but not in the way government officials had originally envisioned (Paraschak, 1995). Developing Native athletes to represent their own Native nations at the national or international level was a vision that would facilitate Indigenous unity and excellence whilst facilitating the Native politics of self-determination. Whilst national representation never came to fruition, Native leaders did use the program to promote Indigenous values in sport at the expense of the official government prescribed objectives. For example, the incorporation of traditional arts, crafts, dancing and wilderness camps was part of physical activity administered by the NSRP (Forsyth, 2000), which was an attempt to practice and govern physical activities on Indigenous, not Euro-Canadian, terms.

J. Wilton Littlechild, an Ermineskin Cree Chief, lawyer, and sport advocate in Alberta, proposed to the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB) that a national sports body for First Nations people be created, and consequently the National Indian Sports Council (NISC) was formed (Forsyth, 2000). Initially the Council lacked direction because the NIB was uncertain about how to treat sport, but in 1976, under the leadership of newly elected president Noel Starblanket, the NIB became interested in sport as a distinctly political (and not social) project, which would promote the broader agenda of Native self-determination (Forsyth, 2000; Paraschak, 1995).

Because the program was initially established for a five year trial period, the Department of Health and Welfare evaluated the NSRP in 1977 (Forsyth, 2000). The emerging professionalization of sport administration in the 1970s (see Macintosh & Whitson, 1990) meant that the state's interest in Aboriginal sport was in terms of a potential return on their investment. The talk of helping 'a group in need' is questionable in light of a review that led to the decline of the NSRP because the program was ineffective at producing elite level Canadian athletes (Forsyth, n.d.). Furthermore, the review cited concern over the close relationship between sport, recreation, and cultural activities that was considered outside the traditional boundaries of sport for Sport Canada (Forsyth, 2000; Paraschak, 1995). Funding was eventually cut to Native sport organizations, in part because the program's inclusion of 'cultural activities' was not part of Sport Canada's Euro-Canadian understanding and vision of sport for Native Canadians (Forsyth, n.d.).

Native leaders were disturbed by the 1977 evaluation report because they had not been contacted for their opinions on the program, and further found that the overall tone suggested that dominant stream administrators would be better at identifying and managing a vision for Native peoples' sporting practices than the First Nations could themselves (Forsyth, 2000). The NSRP continued the legacy of Euro-Canadian arrogance in a "we know what's best for the Indian" framework for engaging First Nations in policy<sup>13</sup>.

Native sport and recreation leaders met with the Minister of State for Sport, Iona Campagnolo, to discuss the future of the National Indian Sport Council (NISC). The federal

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13. A legacy firmly grounded in policies such as the Royal Proclamation, the Indian Act, the reserves system, and the residential school system.

government offered to relocate the NISC to the National Sport Centre, but Native organizers at the meeting explicitly stated that they did not want to be assimilated – they preferred to retain their identity and control (Paraschak, 1995). The Native leaders therefore rejected the offer.

By 1981 the program had ended along with most of the activities it had fostered, partly because of the political associations of the NISC as well as the rejection of its relocation (Forsyth, n.d.). The NSRP was cancelled not because it failed to meet its objectives, but because the means by which Native peoples sought its objectives were not considered legitimate by the government (Paraschak, 1995). For Native leaders, maintaining the integrity of their traditions and their rights to self-determination in sport came at the price of losing sporting opportunities that the NSRP was providing. In the short term this was costly in terms of sporting opportunities for First Nations, but holding firm on Indigenous beliefs would provide some hope for possibilities of self-determination in sport in the long run.

This era of Native sport witnessed the emergence of a Native sport system separate from the Canadian dominant stream sport system. A development such as the NSRP certainly provided the promise of a legitimate and sustainable Indigenous sport system, yet was ended due to the rejection by Native leaders of government control, in order to support a national segregated all-Indian sport system grounded in the rights to self-determination. Tensions were sometimes irreconcilable, as in the NSRP, and at other times compromises were made, as was the case in the AWG and Northern Games. Sport for Indigenous Canadians from this era on became (at least in part) a political tool, which sought to advance the needs and wishes of Indigenous peoples and communities. The end of this era of Native sport, however, would facilitate new opportunities in the following decade.

*Federal Withdrawal and Native Renewal: The 1980s*

The closing of the Golden era of Native sport was marked by the end of federal funding to the NSRP. The federal government continued its shift away from the increasingly provincial jurisdiction of recreation, in order to focus on elite sport. The federal government did include some marginalized groups, such as women and the disabled, in their policies of the 1980's (Paraschak, 2002). Aboriginal peoples did not receive mention in these policies.

Although federal involvement in Native sport dwindled during this time, it did not mean that Native involvement in Native sports had stopped too. The withdrawal of federal involvement was actually directly implicated in the renewal of Native sport as it inspired Native leaders to rejuvenate an Aboriginal sport system (Forsyth & Wamsley, 2006). The withdrawal of government funds also withdrew federal input and control over the direction of Native sport. This unintentionally created a space for Native sport leaders to envision Native sports in a separate Native-controlled sport system, even if it meant that they did not have the funding or governmental assistance to help build their vision.

W. J. Littlechild developed a vision for a World Indigenous Games, which would provide another level where the self-determination of Indigenous peoples would be promoted, and the local and national forms of self-determination and self-government that were being developed by Native peoples in Canada could be extended (Forsyth, 2000). Littlechild also advanced the idea of the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) as a stepping stone toward provincial, national and international sporting events like the Canada Games or Olympic Games (Forsyth, 2000). Although first conceived in the late 1970s, it was not until the 1980s that the first NAIG would begin to be fully organized.

Littlechild, with the help of John Fletcher and Charles Woods, began to organize NAIG in 1988 (Forsyth, 2000). The ultimate purpose of the NAIG was:

to improve the quality of life for Indigenous peoples by supporting self-determined sports and cultural activities which encourage equal access to participation in the social fabric of the community they reside in and which respects Indigenous distinctiveness (1990 NAIG mission statement, cited in Forsyth, 2000, p.108).

The 1980s was a period marked by limited practical development of a separate Native sport system, but its strength lies in the development of a vision of Native sports. For example, the visionary nature of NAIG is described as follows:

In our cultures, to vision quest is strong and good medicine. To have a vision for the people is powerful and to fulfill a vision for the people is sacred. Our ancestors were given visions by the Creator, which lead the peoples to govern themselves. The North American Indigenous Games was a vision (Team Saskatchewan, n.d.).

The mission statement and vision of NAIG include the ideas of self-government and self-determination, which were a key motivation behind why the Games were desired by Native Canadians. NAIG was held for the first time in Edmonton, Alberta during 1990; the vision was becoming reality.

In addition to the preparation of NAIG during this period, the Northern Games continued the practice of Native-governed traditional sports festivals in Canada. The Iroquois Nationals, an all-Native lacrosse team, furthered the dominant stream legitimization of Native nations as distinct peoples as they competed in the lacrosse world championships as a nation separate from Canada beginning in 1990. And at the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, Mohawk kayaker Alwyn Morris celebrated his gold medal by holding up an eagle feather on the podium as a sign

of respect for his grandfather, as well as for Native peoples more generally (Paraschak, 2002). Morris' symbolic gesture not only drew attention to and inspiration for Native athletes, but he has played a significant role in the leadership of Aboriginal sport in Canada from this time on.

This era was thus a pivotal stage for developing, conceptually more so than in practice, the emergence of a grassroots to international level segregated sport system that is premised on the privileging of Indigenous claims to national distinctiveness and rights to self-determining control of their lives. Indigenous Canadians would re-emerge in federal policy in the 1990s, not because of the acknowledgement of Indigenous rights, or because of the acknowledgement that the Native population needed more sporting services, but due to an ethical crisis in Canadian sport that Native peoples leveraged to support their goals (Brant, 2002).

#### *An Ethical Crisis in Canadian Sport, 1988-1992*

Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson's positive drug test results after his initial 100 meter sprint win at the Seoul Olympic Games in 1988 prompted an ethical crisis in Canadian sport. The task force report, *Toward 2000: Building Canada's Sport System* (Canada, 1988) sought to expose the tensions of elite focused federal involvement in sport and proposed both elite and social equity goals (Green & Houlihan, 2005). The Dubin Inquiry (Dubin, 1990), initiated with the goal of investigating the interplay of doping, ethics, and high performance sport, concluded with Dubin's report, which announced that the Canadian sport system was in a state of moral crisis. The crux of the crisis rested on whether or not Canada's emphasis on winning at the international level resulted in unethical sport practices such as those Johnson has demonstrated, recognizing that perhaps this was coming at the expense of participatory based sports.

The government's response to the issue of its moral positioning in sport was *Sport: The Way Ahead* (Canada, 1992 – also known as the Best Report), and reflected Dubin's concerns

about too much of a focus on elite sport performance. The tone of the report is captured on page two: “Sport must above all be based on ethical values. It must become athlete-centered, community-based and more accessible in a better harmonized system where shared leadership goes hand-in-hand with clearly defined accountabilities” (Canada, 1992). The report called for a broader re-evaluation of sport and brought to the fore a philosophical approach to sport and the values it seeks to promote (Green, 2007), by prompting questions such as: “Why do we support high-performance sport at all?” (Canada, 1992, p. 26). Such a prominent focus on the philosophical and political underpinnings of government in sport is in stark contrast to the previous rationalization and de-politicization of sport, as the state had been framing sport in technical<sup>14</sup> rather than political terms (Macintosh & Whitson, 1990; Green, 2007).

The Best report also re-introduced some focus on sport for Indigenous Canadians. As part of the focus on participation and equity in sport, the report made recommendations to create a national secretariat to administer and lobby the government for the needs of the Native community. This secretariat would later become the Aboriginal Sport Circle (ASC).

The potential of the Best Report to drastically shift governmental objectives in sport was never fully realized. The report was overlooked, partly because sport lacked political importance at this time (Macintosh, 1996; Green 2007), and also because high performance continued as the highest priority for the federal government during this time period (Green, 2004; Green & Houlihan, 2004, 2006; Macintosh, 1996; Macintosh & Whitson, 1990; Whitson, 1988).

Although the opportunities advocated by the Best Report would promote increased

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14. A rational, technical, and apolitical framing of sport would seek to answer ‘How to’ types of questions, such as: How do we become the best at sport? What is the most efficient way to promote excellence in sport? A framing of reflections on the Canadian sport system that are based on philosophical groundings would seek to answer ‘why’ types of questions, such as: Why get involved in sports? What values should be promoted in sport?



access to sport for Native peoples, this would not include any direct promotion of self-determination through sports.

*A Second Golden Era? Revitalization of Indigenous Sport and Aboriginal Policy, 1990-Present.*

The inaugural NAIG was a crucial step forward in terms of self-determining sporting practices, as it took a leading role in promoting and demonstrating the possibilities of an Indigenous sport system. The purpose of the Games was

to improve the quality of life for Indigenous peoples by supporting self-determined sports and cultural activities which encourage equal access to participation in the social and cultural fabric of the community they reside in and which respects Indigenous distinctiveness (Personal archives of J. W. Littlechild, cited in Forsyth, 2000, p. 108).

The first Games in Edmonton, Alberta were a success, and were followed by Games in 1993 and 1995; none of these was well supported by the government. Each year the Games had grown in popularity and stature, and by 1997 \$1.9 million in federal, provincial, and public sector dollars provided substantial monetary backing for the Games; this was the first time the government made a significant dip into federal and provincial coffers. A key driving force behind these additional funds was the petitioning of the Aboriginal Sport Circle (ASC) to federal-provincial/territorial ministers in 1997 (Canadian Heritage, 2003).

As per recommendations made in the Best Report, a secretariat was created for Aboriginal sport in 1995, and was named the ASC. The ASC is a multi-sport organization that has a mandate to address the grassroots sporting needs of its provincial and territorial constituents, and was created in response to the need for accessible, equitable and affordable sport and recreation opportunities (see the Best Report). There were three primary objectives of

the ASC: coaching development, developing provincial/territorial sport bodies, and NAIG (Paraschak, 2002).

In terms of self-determination, the ASC expresses its desire to facilitate distinctly Native sporting opportunities within an Aboriginal sporting system. Yet at the same time the national sporting body also promotes opportunities for Native peoples within the dominant stream system; this is the workings of the double helix approach (see pages 10-11 for more detail on this term) to developing Native sporting opportunities (Forsyth, n.d.). The promotion of Native representative teams by the ASC, such as Team Indigenous, as well as the prioritization of NAIG, would further legitimize Native claims to cultural distinctiveness.

The importance of major international sporting events was not lost in dominant stream sport policy and was included within the *Federal Policy for Hosting International Sporting Events* (Canadian Heritage, 1996 – as well as subsequent versions of the policy). Government policy cites both NAIG and the AWG (Canada, 2008) directly for the purposes of providing “quality competition opportunities for designated under-represented groups which face systemic barriers to sport participation, and which form part of a Government of Canada strategy to decrease these barriers”(p. 8). It is clear from this passage – at least in terms of major sporting events - that Native Canadians are treated as an ethnic group in need of sporting opportunities, rather than as culturally distinct nations with rights to self-determination.

NAIG was hosted again in 2002, 2006, and 2008, each with 4000-5000 competitors, and thousands more cultural performers, volunteers and supporters. By 2003, the repeated calls for government funding for NAIG (e.g., Canada, 1998) were answered in the *North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) Funding Framework for 2008 and Onwards Hosting Component* (Canadian Heritage, 2003). Providing a framework of support both secures the importance of

NAIG in Canada and also shows the government's acknowledgement of the importance of an Indigenous sport system for Canadians.

*New Millennium, New Directions, 1998-2005*

Designed to assess the state of the sport industry, *Sport in Canada: Everybody's Business* (Canada, 1998 – also known as the Mills Report) had a mandate to examine the economic and cultural aspects of sport, as well as the type of role the federal government should play in sport. The report included a section on Aboriginal sport within the cultural aspect of sport, and made a number of recommendations. The recommendations included a call for the development of an advisory body to help with government consultations with Aboriginal people (Canada, 1998), as well as three recommendations that mirrored the priorities of the ASC: funding NAIG, developing a coaching program, and the priority of federal relations with Native provincial/territorial sport bodies (Canada, 1998).

The Mills Report also called for a National sport consultation process. This process was significant, as it included six regional sport conferences, and a number of stakeholder group discussions that culminated at the National Summit on Sport in 2001 (Canada, 2001). Parts of this National Summit on Sport report were based on discussions with Aboriginal peoples, along with other under-represented and marginalized groups. These groups gained special status because of the government's objectives of decreasing barriers to sport, promoting leadership roles in these groups, fostering social integration within the dominant stream, increasing self esteem of these people, and overcoming personal and group difficulties (Paraschak, 2002). The summit issued a report in 2001 - *Building Canada Through Sport: Towards a Canadian Sport Policy* (Canada, 2001). Three key pillars were suggested as the main directives of the Canadian sport system: participation, excellence, and capacity.

The consultation process with Indigenous Canadians included two National Indigenous Roundtables in 2001, one focused on recreation (producing the *Maskwachees Declaration*) (Paraschak, Forsyth, & Giles, 2005) and the other on elite sport. There are, however, a couple of key criticisms of the Declaration. Firstly, the evolving nature of Indigenous sporting needs benefits most from an ongoing process of identifying Native needs, rather than in the definitiveness of a final Declaration (Paraschak et al., 2005). Secondly, the unique and distinctive aspects of each community were compromised within a framework of national needs and directions; and finally, the Declaration was not aligned with the pillars of the *Canadian Sport Policy* (Canada, 2002), which could have offered a better opportunity to work within a government framework for funding allocation (Paraschak et al, 2005).

The culmination of two years of nationwide discussion was the release of the *Canadian Sport Policy* (CSP) (Canada, 2002). The policy included the goals of participation, excellence, and capacity (as identified in 2001), and also included interaction as a fourth goal. Although there is no specific mention of Aboriginal peoples in the policy recommendations, there is a call to increase access and equity in sport for underrepresented groups under the goal of participation.

The incorporation of both excellence and participation as central goals may indicate a new path for government policy. A parliamentary Bill was passed to replace the out of date Fitness and Amateur Sport Act of 1961, titled *An Act to Promote Physical Activity and Sport* (Canada, 2003). Together these documents suggest a change towards the balancing of policy priorities between participatory and elite sport. Yet government funding for the 2005-2006 period for participatory sports was \$5 million dollars, as compared to \$140 million dollars for elite sport (Green, 2007). Perhaps it is not so much a change in policy direction in terms of participation and elite sport, but rather a relatively small recognition of the importance of

participatory sports in the context of the growing prioritization of the partnership between health benefits and physical activity.

The most significant foray of Sport Canada into Aboriginal sport policy came in 2005, with *Sport Canada's Policy on Aboriginal Peoples' Participation in Sport* (Canadian Heritage, 2005). The policy builds upon the developments of an Aboriginal sport system in Canada, NAIG, the ASC, and the growing significance of equity in sports as directed by *An Act to Promote Physical Activity and Sport* (2003) and the CSP (2002). The policy works within the framework of the four goals of the CSP, and also notes the barriers that are specific to the Indigenous population in Canada.

### *Conclusion*

Sport policy linked to Aboriginal peoples has tried to define and control how Native peoples should participate in sport. Native peoples have attempted to control the means to their sporting practices, through initiatives such as the NSRP or the more recently formed ASC, but have also been subject to an assimilationist agenda by the federal government. This agenda is based upon the implicit superiority of the dominant stream sport system and its Euro-Canadian values. The assumed progression of Native athletes' involvement in high-performance sport to represent Canada is one such example. The Native sport system has become more legitimate over time, starting in the 1960s and 1970s, and has been furthered in policy with the government's promotion of culturally relevant sporting practices for Native peoples in the 1990s. The establishment of the ASC and the development of the NAIG have enhanced the legitimacy of the Native sport system, but at the same time have also legitimized the dominant system of sport. NAIG has been developed with an explicit political statement about the cultural distinctiveness of Native peoples and also Native nationalism. But with government sources of

funding, and the promotion of dominant stream sports and values in the Native sports system, it has to some degree been incorporated into the dominant stream. For example, the focus on the medal table, or the representation of Canadian athletes by provinces rather than their Native national affiliation at NAIG, could work against traditional values in sport and Native nationalism. Additionally, there is no overt mention of Native rights or self-determination in sport policy, and thus government has not yet officially recognized this Indigenous right in sport policy. The struggle for self-determination in sport policy has paradoxically both limited and facilitated self-determination for Native peoples in Canada.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

#### INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND RESEARCH

Indigenous peoples are researchers; we always have been and always will be. Indigenous theories and methodologies claim that we have always been engaged in theorizing our lives, our experiences, and our context (Pihama, 2005). Research is an important part of everyday life for Indigenous peoples and is not the sole preserve of academics and universities. The lack of formal education, university research positions, and literature by Native peoples does not represent a lack of Indigenous theory, but rather the marginalization of Indigenous peoples within university research (Smith, 1999).

The critical assessment of research processes and methods does distinguish formal and academic research from the day-to-day research by Native peoples (Royal, 2002). This section outlines how and why Indigenous theory and research methodology is used for my study. But first I provide an argument supporting the need for Indigenous theory in research.

The track record for academic research and Indigenous peoples is one of exclusion and marginalization. Historically, research has not been neutral in its objectivity, and instead has used Native peoples for non-Native purposes that have ultimately dehumanized and colonized us (Smith, 1999; Pihama, 2001). The civilizing principle of Christianity and European settlers is limited by its mentality of the “one right way”. This mentality has disengaged settler societies from others, and led to violence and belittling of Native cultures and values (Alfred, 2005a). This has led to the displacement of Indigenous worldviews and systems of knowledge.

## THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL JUSTIFICATIONS

At the most fundamental level, Indigenous theory is needed precisely because its purpose, goals, procedures, theories and methods all serve the purpose of Indigenous peoples.

Incorporating an Indigenous approach to research will enable Indigenous perceptions and patterns to make sense of what is going on in our issues and our relationships (Pohatu, 2003). In order for Indigenous theory to be understood, to be explained, and to respond to Indigenous issues, there must be a theoretical foundation that has been constructed by and for Native peoples (Pihama, 2005).

Indigenous based research is vitally important to the advancement of Indigenous knowledge, in terms of promoting Indigenous theory, and also in terms of developing and extending Indigenous theory. Charles Royal (2002) calls for three key projects in the future production of Indigenous knowledge:

- (a) the need for indigenous peoples to articulate our interpretations of our worldviews, both traditional and contemporary, and for us to create our own indigenous epistemologies and theories of knowledge
  - (b) the need for indigenous peoples to be in control of the processes by which indigenous knowledge is taught, preserved and created
  - (c) the need for indigenous peoples to embrace an ethos of creativity, to explore and research traditional knowledge bases inspired and motivated by a creativity that will revivify these knowledge bases and traditions in the contemporary and modern world
- (p.10).

Achieving these three projects will prove to be a challenge, but provides direction for the pursuit and practice of self-determination of Indigenous peoples within research.



Another aspect of Indigenous research is its political purpose. Promoting the self-determination of Indigenous peoples is very much an overt purpose of the Indigenous agenda. The lack of both researchers who are Native and researchers who promote a Native agenda are best addressed with the production of Indigenous research. Linda Smith (1999) calls for the decolonization of research, which for her is primarily about “centering our [Indigenous peoples’] concerns and world views and then coming to know and understand theory and research from our own perspectives and for our own purpose” (p.39). The primacy or centering of Indigenous perspectives is grounded in traditional teachings as a basis for research. This is important for both the development of Indigenous knowledge, and also for Indigenous students as it promotes the legitimacy of Indigenous research. It is also crucial because Indigenous frameworks are often more accessible for Native peoples, particularly in terms of ‘making sense’ of the research, and also in terms of identifying with the study’s purpose, relevance, theoretical grounding, methods, and importance (Pihama, 2001).

When Indigenous peoples use their understandings as a basis for gathering knowledge it is a powerful process that empowers us. Taina Pohatu (2003) provides a strong argument for the empowering nature of Kaupapa Maori studies, the Indigenous research framework used in Aotearoa:

We begin to be ‘in charge’ of ‘what is meaningful’ in life, in relationships, in knowledge, in thinking, in every context in which we engage. We deliberately choose to align with theory more connected to our reality. Putting our bodies of knowledge and thinking into our kaupapa, permit Maori to evolve further as a people, relevant to each new time .... Consequently, Kaupapa Maori Theory has been deliberately chosen as the main theoretical framework here, because it accepts the integrity and potential within [the

Maori worldview]... It has grown out of the distinctive historical, political and social contexts of Aotearoa, privileging Maori ways of knowing, validating for Maori first, Maori thinking, knowledge, language and application. Kaupapa Maori is a platform to engage with other theories, ‘a doorway’ to reflect and draw from, ‘a critical theoretical lens’ to exam[ine] the positions and views of others and ourselves (pp. 9-10).

The practical justification for this study is three-fold. Firstly, it is my position that Native peoples should have the opportunity to participate in sport and physical activity so that their involvement in sport facilitates those individuals and communities as fully as possible. The administration of sport from the highest levels to the community level thus needs to facilitate Indigenous values for its participants to realize their needs and desires in sport. The significance of federal administration, particularly in light of the federal jurisdiction of Native relations, is why this study has a focus on the role of federal sport policy in relation to self-determination.

Secondly, this study aims to facilitate Native sport leaders’ reflections on how they can further contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of their input in the formation of policies and programs. At the very least, this study provides a forum for Indigenous sport leaders to express, discuss, and reflect upon their experiences and ideas relating to self-determination.

Thirdly, future recommendations I make as a result of this study may provide insight for improvements to future policy formation processes and policies. Policies have real impacts on the lives of real people, and thus a focus of this thesis is a focus on the lives of those whom these policies affect.

## INDIGENOUS WORLDVIEWS, VALUES, AND CUSTOMS

Undertaking research requires having a theoretical understanding of the world, knowledge, the problem, and the methods used. Since going “about doing your research is

inextricably linked with how you see the world” (Kirby & McKenna, 1989, p. 61), this section explicitly links how worldviews, values, and traditional customs/behaviors are deeply related to theory and methodology.

Indigenous peoples are made of hundreds of individual nations all over the world, each with its own lands, customs, languages, rituals and societies. Yet these individually distinct lives are connected through their Indigeneity. In this section, I explain how it is that Indigenous peoples’ worldviews impact on how research can be developed. To explain how and why an Indigenous worldview is important to research, I discuss three important levels of knowledge understanding and production: worldviews, values and first principles, and customary practices and behaviors (Royal, 2002).

### *Worldviews*

The worldview looks at the most basic and fundamental questions about the nature of reality (Frisby, 2005)<sup>15</sup>. The worldview of Indigenous peoples patterns how reality is conceptualized; how the world is to be regarded in actuality, in probability, in possibility, or in impossibility (Royal, 2002). The worldview lies at the very heart of Indigenous culture, and thus it has the capacity to provide a sound basis for Native peoples to undertake research.

Indigenous worldviews are not all the same, but generally adhere to the philosophical beliefs of holism, connectedness, interdependency, cycles of change, balance, harmony, struggle, and rootedness (Alfred, 2005a). For instance, holism does not see the world as separate entities, but as aspects of a wholeness, or one-ness. Indigenous governance, for example, would have as its basis the need to create stability and harmony within their community, as well as with other

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15. This is how Frisby (2005) describes ontology, and I understand ontology to be the same as worldview.

people, other creatures on the land, and the land itself. This would acknowledge the partnership of all natural things, in order to achieve balance and harmony for the community.

### *Indigenous Values*

If worldview is how the world is, then values and first principles seek to provide a basis for how we as Indigenous peoples understand the world. Is the world something to be controlled? Is it socially constructed and constantly changing? Are we part of, or separate from, the natural world? The traditional teachings, first principles, or values held by Indigenous peoples inform how we see the world. In Aotearoa, these values or traditional teachings are known as Kaupapa Maori, and Kaupapa Maori theory is an emergent Native theoretical framework (see Smith, 1999; Pihama, 2005). Although Native values are heavily shaped by our worldviews, it is the values and traditional teachings that best suit how Indigenous governance should move forward because they provide principles as the basis for action (Alfred, 1999).

Values held by Native peoples could promote such principles as partnership with the land, maintaining connectedness, promoting harmony, sharing, or the communal and personal responsibilities of upholding social and spiritual obligations. To continue the example of Native leadership and governance, traditional governance systems would lead with the validation of kind and generous rule, which would be achieved through consensus building and traditional values rather than competitive power seeking in order to govern over others (Alfred, 1999). One of the responsibilities of Native leaders is to keep the balance within their people and territories; maintaining this balance through the sustainability of the earth, and the health and well-being of its peoples is central to Indigenous philosophies of governance (Alfred, 2005).

### *Indigenous Behavioral Patterns*

The final level of knowledge production and understanding comes in the very practical form of behaviors and traditions. This can manifest as languages, rituals, or customs, which mutually reinforce the worldview and values held by Native peoples. For example, Native governance structures include the roles of chiefs, spiritual leaders, and elders, as key persons in directing consensus decision making practices<sup>16</sup>. Yet these positions only work on behalf of the rest of the community and the land they connect with, in accordance with Native teachings and values. Therefore these roles are the tangible ways to act that promote the traditional teachings.

### *Indigenous Theory and Knowledge*

Indigenous research frameworks are more than just theories. Like research paradigms, Indigenous research frameworks include theories of how the world exists, how one understands the world, and the processes of knowledge gathering. Yet a research paradigm also falls short of an Indigenous research framework. In describing Kaupapa Maori theory, Smith (1999) rejects the idea that Indigenous research is a set of ideas and practices that define a specific line of research (or paradigm):

Kaupapa Maori research is both less than and more than a paradigm. It does set out a field of study which enables a process of selection to occur, and which defines what needs to be studied and what questions ought to be asked. It also has a set of assumptions and taken-for-granted values and knowledge, upon which it builds. In this

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16. One aspect of Indigenous self-government is that Indigenous peoples invest their customs and traditions - not just their chiefs or elders - with the authority for their self-government. In Aotearoa, Maori often begin a conversation with the phrase "the old people used to say...". This phrase thus removes the speaker as the giver of advice and instills the history of Maori principles and our ancestors as the teacher - the elders may simply be one appropriate means through which teachings take place.

sense it can be fitted into some of the ways a paradigm is defined. It is also, however, more than the sum of those parts. Kaupapa Maori research is a social project; it weaves in and out of Maori cultural beliefs and values, Western ways of knowing, Maori histories and experiences under colonialism, Western forms of education, Maori aspirations and socio-economic needs, and Western economies and global politics (pp. 190-191).

Indigenous research thus uses traditional worldviews and values, yet does so in the contemporary context. One aspect of Indigenous research mentioned above is the understanding of knowledge.

This study uses the perspective of theory and knowledge that seeks to explain and make sense of the world that was experienced by those who possessed it, and is not limited in what it was asked to explain (Royal, 2002). In other words, it is not necessarily about explaining relations of economic production (like Marxism), nor is it essentially about exposing and redefining power relations (like a critical approach), nor is it necessarily about privileging certain types of knowledge (like a historical or psychological approach); it may be all or none of the above. More importantly, and more precisely, the goal is the basis on which the knowledge was able to make sense of and explain something to those who employ it, rather than to achieve a specific end<sup>17</sup>.

An Indigenous research framework is not a singular entity. It is not best explained as a set of procedures that are done in a specific way, but rather it has a range of expressions that are influenced by things such as family, tribes, urban experiences, language, culture, geography and

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17. This, however, does not mean that Indigenous research does not have an agenda. Although Indigenous research is partly justified by its ends, it is not defined by its ends. For example, an Indigenous centred approach to sport would be about privileging Native experiences and theories of knowledge, which would likely but not necessarily involve challenging power relations. A decolonization approach to sport would necessarily be about challenging and redefining power relations

more (Pihama, 2005). What is important is the understanding that Indigenous theory is grounded within knowledge systems that derive from experiences, understandings, worldviews, values, and beliefs that are ancient (Pihama, 2001). To take a completely objective stance when undertaking Indigenous research would be impossible, unnecessary, and insufficient; the subjective and experiential aspects of Indigenous research are central to its philosophy.

## INDIGENOUS METHODOLOGIES

### *Worldviews*

Indigenous methodologies provide the tools of analysis and ways of understanding the cultural, political, and historical context that Native peoples live within. It is also an assertion of the Indigenous right to be Indigenous on our own terms and to draw from our own knowledge base and theories of knowledge to explain the world as we see it (Pihama, 2005). Indigenous methodologies are an important aspect of self-determination.

For Indigenous peoples, creation stories promote similar themes, such as our responsibilities on earth and to live as part of the relationship that connects all the natural elements. This understanding is part of an Indigenous worldview and should not be compromised; this would be like trying to challenge natural law. Natural laws are principles found in nature, such as the changing of seasons<sup>18</sup>. It is because natural laws are not people's creations that we have no place in controlling, reconstructing, or altering them (Alfred, 1999; Cram, 2005). However, in instances of human creations – such as Indigenous governance systems - a different approach may be relevant because Indigenous peoples created them. This is particularly important for incorporating our ancient teachings into a modern context.

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18. This approach can be contrasted with the approach of the Chinese government, which used technologies to attempt to control the weather for the opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

Indigenous research thus attempts to speak the truth, although this truth is only a truth from the position in which Indigenous peoples stand. Native peoples do not necessarily claim that this truth is for everyone else. In fact, there is a vital experiential component of Indigenous research. A researcher must experience and understand what it means to be Indigenous and have some understanding of traditional teachings in order to have the legitimacy of being able to conduct Indigenous research. I hold the position that Indigenous research does not (and cannot) work for others.

Indigenous methodologies can also include dominant stream knowledges and methods in an Indigenous research framework. Indigenous methodologies weave in and out of dominant stream methodologies (Smith, 1999). What is more important than which theories or methods are used, are the underlying values and worldviews within which they are used. For instance, a foreign theory used within an Indigenous perspective would be more beneficial than a superficially Indigenous theory without grounding in a Native perspective. The use of Indigenous worldviews places Indigenous ways of thinking, knowledge and application at the core of the processing of what knowledge and practice is included and excluded (Pohatu, 2003).

### *Indigenous Values*

One other significant departure from dominant stream research is the holistic worldview that forms part of Indigenous frameworks for research. In Aotearoa, Maori research design may include a holistic viewpoint that incorporates the physical, family, spiritual, environmental, and intellectual aspects of Maori life (Hokowhitu, 2003). In Canada, an Indigenous viewpoint may use the medicine wheel view of the physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual elements of life. The discipline of Physical Education was largely non-existent in universities until the 1960s, in line with the Cartesian philosophy of the separation and superiority of the mind and the



spiritual over the physical (see Descartes, 1996). In a similar vein, Indigenous research may also incorporate physical, spiritual and emotional elements in conjunction with the intellectual element that is so dominant in university settings<sup>19</sup>. The point here is that life exists in a wholeness and one-ness that must, at the very least, be acknowledged when undertaking Indigenous research. To help explain how this takes place philosophically, the following extract will show how important this view is to Maori researcher Charles Royal (2002) when going on a morning run:

Woke up at 7am and went for a run (3 parts walking, 1 part running). Behind Manulani's house, a dirt track leads up a gentle slope heading inland. I decided to jog up there a little. After a little while I look back to see Hilo Bay opening up before me. Beautiful deep blue sea. Also had a little flash of an idea come through. When I set off, I said to myself, 'Now pay attention Charles, to your body. Listen to it.' because usually what happens is my mind goes wandering off. And as it wanders off, I forget to pay attention to my body and that is when fatigue and stiffness etc. sets in. Also before I set out I often say to myself, 'Okay, let's jog to the top of the hill' so I can congratulate myself when I get there. This time I say to myself, 'Who cares if I get to the top or not? The important thing is to listen to my body, to listen to what it is telling me.' That's a good idea. Just jog to the length and to the pace that my body suggests. So I head off and jog for a while. But before too long, sure enough, my mind has wandered off to think

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19. Two important exceptions need to be acknowledged. In some western countries theological universities exist, and obviously promote a spiritual element to research. However, they do not necessarily fit within the dominant stream of universities. Also, some universities have theological or religion based departments, degrees or academics. However, both of these examples form only a fraction of the volume of university research, and have not managed to significantly challenge the unquestioned primacy of intellectualism within formal research. Additionally, such research has not upset the understanding of intellectualism as somehow superior and separate to other aspects of life.

about something and whole minutes have passed before I am even conscious that this has happened. Then it dawns on me. Let my body be my mind! Yes, let the mind be the body. The whole statement, 'Charles, listen to your body!' is based upon the assumption that my mind is one thing and my body is another. How did this happen? (p. 47).

The importance of enabling a holistic approach to life and research can be a challenge.

My training within the university setting has been in non-Native classes, with non-Native teachers and advisers, with a largely non-Native student population, who teach within largely non-Native understandings of knowledge, teaching, and research. This has been severely limiting with respect to Native understandings of knowledge. Nonetheless, prioritizing the importance of holism is an important aspect for Indigenous methodologies. In terms of this study, the spiritual basis for understanding sovereignty and self-determination are crucial in facilitating the self-determination of Native peoples, so that they can fulfill their social and spiritual obligations. For example, Indigenous peoples identify the need to respect and care for the integrity and health of the land they connect with; this can only be possible if we are self-determining.

#### *Indigenous Behavioral Patterns*

The processes of Indigenous methodologies are informed by Native worldviews and values, but are employed through behavioral patterns and customs. Smith (1999) identifies seven appropriate aspects of Kaupapa Maori research that are grounded in culturally important behavioral guidelines, which are expanded on and explained by Pipi et al (2004):

1. Aroha ki te tangata (a respect for people) is about allowing people to define their own space and to meet on their own terms.
2. He kanohi kitea (the seen face, that is present yourself to people face to face) is about the importance of meeting with people face to face, and building relationships.

3. Titiro, whakarongo... korero (look, listen....speak) is about the importance of looking and listening so that a researcher can firstly develop understandings so that a researcher can find a place from which to speak.
4. Manaaki ki te tangata (share and host people, be generous) is about taking a collaborative approach to research, research training, and reciprocity.
5. Kia tupato (be cautious) is about being politically astute, culturally safe and reflexive about our being an insider and outsider of the research participants.
6. Kauga e takahia te mana o te tangata (do not trample the mana of the people) is about sounding out ideas with people, about disseminating research findings, and about community feedback that keeps people informed about the research process and the findings.
7. Kauga e mahaki (be humble in your approach, do not flaunt your knowledge) is about sharing knowledge and using our qualifications to benefit our community.

Incorporating these aspects of the methodology will help to ensure that research is undertaken within an Indigenous framework.

#### LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS

In the document analysis, this study is delimited to federal/national involvement in sport policy. This delimitation recognizes federal responsibilities for working directly with the Native community, and the fact that some federal government sport documents are part of a larger national framework. I did not adequately examine how provincial/territorial and municipal/band levels of governments are impacted by and impact sport policies in the document analysis. This is not to say that they are not important or that they are not relevant, but rather that they are beyond the scope of this particular analysis.

I examined only a partial number of sport policies and documents. The selection of policies was based on the significance of the policy to Canadian sport in general, or because the policies were of significance to Native peoples specifically. The time frame in which the documents were gathered was delimited to the years 1990-2005. These dates are selected because they best reflect the contemporary situation for policy development, and also because the early 1990's sparked a re-evaluation of Canadian sport and re-involvement of the federal government in Indigenous sport policy.

The sample size used in this study is small. There are, however, very few Native sport leaders who have had experience working in the development of Indigenous sport policy. Additionally, the knowledge that this study offers is certainly not meant to be generalizable to all Native sport policy makers, but rather to learn from the thoughts and experiences of a small group of policy makers in an attempt to offer whatever insights are available based on my perspective and their experiences.

In the study I was not always able to embrace some of the Indigenous values in research, such as the face to face interviews (which only took place in four of the six interviews), and I was limited in my ability to form ongoing relationships because of the one-off interview methodology that was selected. It is my intuition that Indigenous value-based research may be more intense (in terms of time, money, researcher skills, distribution of results, etc) than dominant stream research. Given the practical reality of a masters degree, compromises were made where I deemed it necessary to complete the study.

I interviewed six Native sport leaders who were involved in sport policy or document creation. They were selected because of their importance and experience in sport policy making. Their experience and knowledge within the field provided information and insight that no other

source could offer my research questions. There are other stakeholders within the Aboriginal sport community, such as athletes (both elite and recreational), parents, elders, volunteers, or political organizations relevant to Aboriginal sport who are not directly represented in my research. But it is policy makers who can best facilitate an understanding of the processes of policy development.

A significant methodological limitation was in the analysis of the documents in sub-question 1. Had I been able to interview a number of people who were involved in the development of each of the analyzed documents, I believe I would have a far greater appreciation of the frameworks used to develop those documents, and thus the decision frames I found would have been more robust than simply using the documents themselves to create the decision frame.

Dominant stream policy administrators are an important part of a healthy and effective Native/non-Native relationship. Although this study offers an opportunity to hear and discuss Native perspectives, delimiting the interviewee sample to those representing Aboriginal sport fails to directly examine the perspective of government administrators in policy construction, and consequently focuses on only one particular side of the relationship. However, the document analysis provides some insights on the government's perspective.

In treating the interview participants as representing the Native perspective, I ran the risk of reducing this perspective to blood quantum and the self-identification of being a Native person. This is not what I intended to do. The participants, however, all appeared to be engaged within the Native community in a number and variety of significant ways.

Green and Houlihan (2004) note that policy documents provide a rhetoric of language that is not necessarily that of the policy makers. The neutral language of policy documents thus

is a limitation of the policy analysis of sub question 1, because underlying reasons for the inclusion or exclusion of self-determination in sport policies are not necessarily made explicit in the documents. The interviews of Native sport leaders helped to overcome this limitation.

My self-identification as Maori has undoubtedly influenced why it is that I am seeking to answer the types of questions I am asking. Furthermore, it also affects my assumptions (as noted above) and my understandings of race relations. This in some ways presents an opportunity to understand how race relations are experienced in Canada from an insider's perspective (as an Indigenous person), yet in many other ways places me as an outsider (as an immigrant) to the issue. I have undergone processes of open self reflection that enabled me to be open with my biases, and laid this perspective out when I justified why it is I am attempting this study, and how I undertook the study, so that there is no false sense of objectivity or appearance of neutrality (Pihama, 2001).

Kaupapa Maori research has provided me with a platform from which to engage with Indigenous concepts and linkages. Kaupapa Maori contains many key components: ako maori, Tino rangatiratanga, rangatiratanga I tuku iho, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, mana, te reo Maori me ona tikanga, whakatauki, whakapapa, mana motuhake, taonga toku iho, and whanau (Pihama, 2001) (it is not important and beyond the scope of this study to explain all of these terms, but they provide some complex ideas and thus show the total complexity of Kaupapa Moari). Although many of these aspects are not directly relevant to a general Indigenous approach to research, I believe whanau (extended familial networks) is important in terms of learning/teaching/fostering/supporting a Maori approach. The absence of whanau provides a notable deficiency and limitation to the development and use of an Indigenous element by me as

a researcher. The use of this framework without such support represents a very uncomfortable challenge to the importance of this process in Indigenous research.

My final limitation is the widespread use of, and consequent naturalization of the term 'Aboriginal' throughout this document and analysis. As noted by Alfred and Cornthassel (2005), 'Aboriginalism' is a government construction designed to incorporate Indigenous peoples into dominant stream constitutional orders and systems. The term, first coined and institutionalized in Canada's Constitution Act (Canada, 1982), further undermines separate Indigenous identities, adds to the additionally ambiguous relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, and in the view of Mi'kmaq leader Daniel Paul, has created a new race called 'Aboriginals' (Paul, 2004).

Whilst the term Aboriginal is an idea that facilitates a discussion of all Canadian Indigenous peoples, its use and its discourse are sometimes misused, misrepresented, misinterpreted, and used in a non-abstract sense to speak to 'real' communities or peoples. However, there is no such person as an Aboriginal, who speaks Aboriginal, who dances Aboriginal, who eats Aboriginal, and who lives in an Aboriginal community. Christine O'Bonsawin (2006) notes how the Vancouver Organizing Committee, despite an official relationship with four host First Nations, used the Inuit inukshuk as the symbol of the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games. The use of foreign meanings in the symbol was an insult to local First Nations, whose Indigeneity had been conveniently overlooked to incorporate foreign (i.e., Inuit) meanings and understandings into the Aboriginal symbol of Vancouver and Canada at the Olympic Games. It is my belief that this is only possible when local Indigenities are replaced by the convenient ambiguities of state friendly interpretations of Aboriginality. The inclusion of this limitation, however, should be read as an attempt to disclose my ideas rather than to resolve

these limits; I continue with it as a working term in this document as I struggle to adequately deal with its limitations.



## CHAPTER 4

### POLICY ANALYSIS

#### **Sub-question 1.**

**How have federal/national sports policies facilitated and/or constrained the self-determination of Indigenous peoples in Canada from 1990 to 2007?**

#### DATA COLLECTION AND METHODS

In the analysis of sub question one I examined eight sport policies and documents produced between 1992 and 2005. This timeframe corresponds with the reemergence of Indigenous peoples within federal/national sport policy (Paraschak, 2002). Through these documents I hoped to gain a thorough understanding of how self-determination and sport policies have affected each other at the federal/national level. The documents I analysed are listed as follows:

1. Sport: The Way Ahead (Canada, 1992).

Also known as the Best Report, this federal document was the result of a re-evaluation of sport in Canada, as it looked to identify the philosophical approach and values the sport system wished to promote in policy. Aboriginal peoples were re-introduced for the first time into federal/national sport policy since the 1970s in this document.

2. Sport in Canada: Everybody's Business – Leadership, Partnership and Accountability (Canada, 1998).

Also known as the Mills Report, this federal document assessed the state of the sport industry in Canada, with a focus on the economic and cultural aspects of sport, as well as the type of role the federal government should play in sport. Aboriginal people were included in this report within the cultural aspect of sport.

3. The Maskwachees Declaration (2000, cited in Canadian Heritage, 2005).

As part of the process for national collaboration in the creation of the Canadian sport policy, two national roundtables – one on sport, the other on recreation – were held, and the Maskwachees declaration was issued following the recreation roundtable. This national document speaks to some strengths and challenges facing Native peoples and sport, as well as providing a rationale for the importance of sport for Native peoples.

4. The Canadian Sport Policy (Canada, 2002).

The result of a national collaborative process, this document provided the central framework for the federal and national direction of sport in Canada. It has four key goals: to enhance participation, excellence, capacity and interaction. From this point on, this document is referred to as the CSP.

5. The Physical Activity and Sport Act (Canada, 2003).

This Act updated the federal government's position on sport and physical activity in legislation, outlined the objects and mandate of the bill, as well as detailed information about the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre for Canada.

6. The Report on Consultations with Provincial/Territorial Aboriginal Sport Bodies on the Draft Policy Framework (Sport Canada, 2003).

This report was one of many consultation documents used in the development of Sport Canada's Policy on Aboriginal Peoples' Participation in Sport (document 8). The report included feedback from a number of P/TASBs on the development of document 8 up to that point in time. From this point on, this document will be referred to as the 'consultation document'.

7. North American Indigenous Games (NAIG) Funding Framework for 2008 and Onwards Hosting Component (Sport Canada, 2003).

This document lays out the policy direction regarding the funding of NAIG, as well as key principles and identifies a set of funding guidelines for potential host cities.

8. Sport Canada's Policy on Aboriginal Peoples' Participation in Sport (Canadian Heritage, 2005).

This federal document is the most significant foray into Indigenous sport policy in government history. It builds upon the four goals of the CSP, and notes some of the important barriers and issues for Native peoples in sport, as well as identifying guiding principles of the policy. From this point forward, this document will be referred to as SCPAPPS.

These eight documents were selected because of their prominence and significance to sport for Indigenous Canadians. Documents 1 and 2 were the most significant federal sport reviews of the Canadian sport system in the 1990's, whilst document 4 provided the current policy direction for sport in Canada. Document 5 was considered important because it came out after the creation of the CSP, is the Act guiding sport and physical activity for the federal government, and is the first time that a new sport bill had been developed since 1961.

Among the Indigenous focused documents, document 8 is the first Indigenous federal sport policy that Sport Canada has released, and thus is, in many ways, the most significant document. Document 6 was chosen because it was important to the development of document 8, whilst also laying out what Native sport leaders were looking for in policy document 8. Document 3 is also a prominent sport document for Indigenous Canadians, and was drawn upon in the creation of document 8. Document 7

was selected because of the prominent role that NAIG has for Indigenous peoples and the Indigenous sport system; including this document enabled an examination of one way this very important event was managed by Sport Canada.

There are other documents that, due to time restrictions, I did not analyze. For example, Paraschak (2002) notes two other sport documents relevant to Indigenous sport: *A Planning Framework for Sport in Canada* (1994), and a *Comprehensive Overview of Physical Activity and Recreation/Sport Relevant to Aboriginal peoples in Canada* (1995). Additional analysis of these (and other) documents would have further contributed to an understanding of self-determination in policy. It could also have been beneficial to look at policies where Native people were absent in policy making, as they may provide additional insights on the exclusion of Native peoples in sport policy.

Chalip's (1995,1996) policy analysis method was used to help provide a framework that would systematically identify how and why Indigenous peoples are incorporated within sport policies, and how these trends impact the self-determination of Native Canadians in sport. Chalip (1995) has five related aspects in his framework, which are: the focusing event, legitimations, problem definition, problem attributions, and decision frame. I used all of these aspects except the focusing event<sup>20</sup>. Legitimations are the rationale for the policy, and provide

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20. I prefer to not use focusing events for a number of reasons. Firstly, they are described by Chalip (1995) as nationally traumatic, yet as Willment (2007) notes, these events are better described as events of national significance that require a policy response rather than as traumatic events. Secondly, whilst in some instances a focusing event is generally indisputable (e.g., Ben Johnson's failed drug test and the Dubin Report clearly prompted the policy response that was the Best Report), this is not always the case. I believe that a series of events or processes may best describe how a policy problem becomes significant enough to elicit a policy response, rather than the 'necessity' of a single prominent symbolic event. This is particularly the case for a marginalized group, which seldom features prominently in dominant stream sport circles, let alone provides a nationally significant traumatic event to elicit a policy response. And lastly, I believe that many Native issues as identified by the government are due to historically standing systemic 'disadvantages', and thus do not necessarily require the impetus of a single event.

the basis on which the policy makers deem the policy issue to be important (Chalip, 1995). The policy problem identifies what the policy must do, whereas the attributions of a policy identify the causes of the policy problem, and as such promote specific solutions to the issue (Chalip, 1995). Thus the legitimations justify the policy and the attributions direct the policy action (Chalip, 1996). The decision frame acts like a boundary, which focuses the issue by framing it in terms of what is possible, probable, and desirable.

The framework used to analyze the policies identifies five aspects of the documents: (1) the key actors, (2) problem definitions, (3) legitimations, (4) attributions, and (5) the decision frame (see Appendix A for the framework and Appendix B for an example). If the document is a general sport policy that affects Indigenous peoples in sport (see documents, 1,2,4, and 5; as opposed to specifically Aboriginal sport policy), then I included two separate but related analyses (see Appendix C for this example). The first step identifies the above aspects of the whole policy document (in regular type, see Appendix C). Secondly, I identified the five aspects as they relate directly to Indigenous peoples (in bold type, see Appendix C). This enabled me to identify the specific aspects of the policy for Indigenous peoples, and at the same time take into account the context of the policy document as a whole.

Although the first four steps are crucial in helping to determine the decision frame, it is this final step which was the focus of my analysis. I chose not to do an analysis of the other aspects of Chalip's (1995) critical policy analysis (e.g., attribution and legitimation analyses), because I wanted to focus on the most central elements of the policy documents, which fits with an analysis of the decision frame. I also chose not to analyze the other aspects of Chalip's (1995) critical policy analysis in conjunction with the decision frame because the decision frames provided more than enough information

to analyze and discuss in a masters thesis. However, analyzing these other elements would provide additional relevant information.

I searched for the key themes that I identified in each of the eight decision frames, and so I looked for the major themes in each document, rather than all themes in all documents (for a more detailed description of this process, see Appendix D). By searching for themes within the decision frames, I hope to have identified the most crucial themes that I saw relevant to the data. The themes that were found are discussed in terms of their ability to facilitate or constrain self-determination.

To examine the decision frames in terms of themes, I went through each of the decision frames and looked for ideas or concepts central to the meaning of the points made in each decision frame (for a more detailed description of this process, see Appendix E). Each of these themes was collated and put into like categories, or sub-categories if necessary. Each theme was then discussed, based on its prominence within the data set, using examples of each theme from the documents to help explain it. Once the categories or themes were identified, I re-examined the decision frames and policy documents and because the decision frames reflected the data accurately I kept the themes first identified.

## RESULTS

### *Introduction*

I have identified three main themes within the select policies: (a) interest and goal directed policy, (b) equity/equality, and (c) native distinctiveness. The most pervasive theme is that of interest and goal directed policy, which was identified 15 times. Equity/equality was a theme that was seen 9 times, and the theme of native distinctiveness was seen 6 times. Whilst these numbers are not inherently significant, they do show how relatively prominent each theme

was identified within the data set. A small number (2)<sup>21</sup> of other themes were identified but were only identified once and are thus not considered significant in the analysis.

Whilst I argue that these three themes are distinct, I also believe that they are related. Also, I am arguing that these are the key themes identified in each document, and not all the themes within the data. In other words, I did not look for themes throughout all the data, but I looked for themes in the decision frames of each of the documents.

### *Interest and Goal Directed Policy*

The most pervasive theme throughout the documents was interest and goal directed policy, which incorporates the idea that policy should work towards goals, objectives and interests of one or more parties involved within the focus of the document. The sub-themes contained within this theme are:

- (a) Mutual benefits,
- (b) Native objectives,
- (c) Dominant stream objectives, and as a sub-theme to dominant stream objectives,
  - (c.i) Strengthening the dominant stream system.

The interest and goal directed policy theme (or its sub-themes) was identified 15 times amongst the decision frames in documents 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, and 8 (the numbers used here onward correlate to each one of the documents as per their listing above). The two documents in which this theme was not identified are the CSP (4) and the Physical Activity and Sport Act (5), both of which are generally focused federal/national documents that only indirectly mentioned Aboriginal peoples and thus could not contain any specific recommendations on how to

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21. The two themes that were identified but remained isolated from the major themes - and subsequently were not included in the analysis - were 'financial responsibility' and 'develop leadership'.

approach Aboriginal peoples in sport. Interest and goal directed policy is thus incorporated into Aboriginal sport policy whenever Aboriginal peoples are mentioned directly.

Documents 1, 6 and 7 include the idea that policy should be mutually beneficial. For example, in the Best Report (1) the promotion of access and equity for Aboriginal peoples would offer a means to meet Aboriginal peoples' "strong willingness to have an access point to the Canadian [i.e., dominant stream] sport system" (p. 155). At the same time, increased inclusion into the dominant stream sport system would strengthen the government objective of achieving a more equitable sport system, particularly in light of the issues raised by the recent Dubin (1994) Report.

The Best Report (1) also mentioned that promoting Aboriginal peoples in sport will lead to increased representation of Aboriginal peoples as Canadian national athletes competing for Canada in international competition. The report notes a 1990 subcommittee report which proposed that "a secretariat be established to encourage the increased active participation of aboriginals in national and international sports competitions" (p. 156). Increased success at the international level is also one of the key goals of the elite level of the Canadian sport system.

The consultation document (6) implicitly includes the need to identify Aboriginal interests and concerns about the proposed policy framework, as seen in the stated need to consult with Aboriginal peoples on how the policy can meet their needs. However, Aboriginal peoples had to work within Sport Canada's boundaries, as seen in the following passage:

While realizing that Sport Canada does not want to support two separate sport systems, but rather wishes to increase linkages between Aboriginal and mainstream sport so that Aboriginal athletes can choose where they wish to participate and they are afforded the



same opportunities as non-Aboriginals athletes, there is still a place for Aboriginal events (Document 6, p. 5).

The Aboriginal events are identified as a crucial part of the system, but also presented in a way that works within the government's preference for increased linkages in both streams of sport, rather than as two distinct streams of sport (interestingly, the above statement seemingly rejects two systems of sport whilst at the same time acknowledging them). The result is that Aboriginally-linked events (e.g., NAIG and AWG) and Aboriginal games/sports work for both Aboriginal and dominant stream interests.

Perhaps the most explicit acknowledgment of the need to work in terms of mutual benefits comes in the SCPAPPS policy, which includes the guiding principle of "increasing Aboriginal Peoples' participation in sport ... by working with Aboriginal sport leaders ... through *continued partnerships to achieve objectives of common interests* (p.7, emphasis added).

The other documents identify specific Aboriginal and/or dominant stream interests as a key foundation for why such a policy document exists and should be pursued. In terms of Native objectives, the Best Report (1) promoted establishing a formal voice to lobby for indigenous views and to facilitate communication between Aboriginal peoples and the government, as per the recommendation for the formation of what would become the ASC (Canada, 1992, p. 65). The Mills Report (2) was very clear in its promotion of Aboriginal interests, as it recommended the promotion of three key objectives (NAIG, P/TASB's, coaching) as identified by the ASC (Canada, 1998, p. 89). The Report on Consultations with P/TASB's (6) had as its basis the facilitation of Aboriginal interests by including Aboriginal input in the developing framework for how Sport Canada would approach Aboriginal sport. The NAIG funding framework (7) certainly promotes Aboriginal interests by funding one of the cornerstones, particularly at the

symbolic level (although it also has a truly significant practical focus), of Aboriginal sport and the Aboriginal sport system. NAIG serves a number of Aboriginal interests, such as providing a space for Aboriginal athletes to compete with their peers, and promoting the distinctiveness of the Aboriginal sport system. The SCPAPPS policy also promotes a number of Aboriginal interests, from a focus on coaches and coaching development (see p.7) to acknowledging and respecting the diversity of all Aboriginal peoples and their circumstances as they relate to sport (see p.7).

With respect to dominant stream objectives, a number of policies included the promotion of dominant stream interests (2, 3, and 8). The Mills report (2) includes Aboriginal peoples under the goal of increasing accessibility of select groups to the dominant stream of sport, and thus would increase the sport system's capacity to include more Canadians in the future. The Maskwachees Declaration (3) was created as part of a national collaboration that identified and consulted with select groups of interest to Canadian sport to develop the Canadian sport policy, and hence the inclusion of Aboriginal peoples through the development of the policy was to serve the federal/national goal of increasing collaboration and communication within the Canadian sport system (see CSP, p. 2). The NAIG funding framework works very much within the government's stance on promoting international sporting events, as per their policies on hosting sport events (see Canadian Heritage, 1996; Canada, 2008), as well as the state's interests in the development of competitive Aboriginal athletes (Canada, 1992, p. 155).

I have identified one other sub-theme that fits within the theme of dominant stream objectives, which is to strengthen the dominant stream system. This theme seeks to build upon the existing system by tinkering with or adjusting the system yet maintaining its core values. Strengthening the dominant stream system often includes the task of reducing barriers as a way

to create change in the system, yet maintaining its key values and orientation. The Maskwachees declaration (3) includes a number of challenges that need to be overcome in promoting physical activity, sport, and recreation, which are an important part of the document. The SCPAPPS document (8) also notes that increased participation of Aboriginal Peoples “will strengthen the value base of Canada’s sport system and the quality of life of all people in Canada” (p. 2).

Additionally, the consultation document (6) states that

...the development of a Sport Canada Aboriginal Sport Policy will ensure a clear commitment to Aboriginal Canadians that will guide all Sport Canada programs and policies and will allow for the broader Sport Canada objectives of participation, excellence, capacity and interaction to be achieved (p. 2).

The SCPAPPS policy (8) also seeks to “contribute to the Canadian sport policy” by focusing on the four goals of the CSP (4) (see p. 2). The incorporation of Aboriginal peoples in sport will thus create change within the Canadian sport system, but in ways that maintain and promote the current values. Perhaps the most explicit example of the Aboriginal sport system’s role in promoting dominant stream values is noted as one of the guiding principles of the SCPAPPS document (8), which states that Aboriginal “sport serves the public interest” (p. 2).

The Physical Activity and Sport Act (5) lists as one of its objectives regarding physical activity: “to assist in reducing barriers faced by all Canadians that prevent them from being active” (p. 2). Similarly, the SCPAPPS document (8) identifies a number of barriers to participation (pp. 4-5), which are recognized as an “immediate priority” for Aboriginal sport (p. 4). The removal of barriers thus helps to enhance the current system by removing unwanted obstacles, yet maintaining the key elements of the system as it currently exists. This approach

suggests that the current system largely works for Aboriginal peoples, and that small adjustments and increased access will result in the best sport system for Aboriginal peoples.

*Equity/equality.*

The second major theme is equity/equality<sup>22</sup>, which refers to the provision of facilities, programs, and services to all Canadians based on fairness, by taking into account the needs of all people and how they can access and be included in the sport system. This theme was identified 9 times throughout the decision frames - explicitly in documents 1, 2, 4, 5, and 8, and implicitly in documents 3 and 6. The only document not to include the equity/equality theme was 7, which was a document that formalized the funding framework and some financial elements of NAIG. Thus all documents that are formal federal/national sport policy documents include the idea of equity/equality, and the Aboriginal-specific documents that included Aboriginal peoples tended to implicitly promote equity/equality (by the need to strategically include them).

The Best Report (1) and the Mills report (2) included Aboriginal peoples under the respective headings of equity and access, and encouraging accessibility. In both cases Aboriginal peoples were grouped with other under-represented groups such as women, disabled people and other groups. The Mills report notes a number of negative statistics relevant to Aboriginal peoples – from substance abuse, to employment, to suicide (p. 87), which together suggest that an equity/equality approach can work to restore Aboriginal peoples to being like other Canadians. The Maskwachees Declaration (3) was created as part of the government's national collaboration plan (as per the recommendations of the Mills report), which identified

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22. I understand equality to be an idea that seeks to treat people fairly by treating them alike or the same in order to achieve the same results for all, whereas equity is an attempt to treat people fairly, by taking into account their circumstances so that the end result is just, and may include treating people differently so that outcomes remain fair. These policies do not explicitly note this difference, and I believe the documents merge these two distinct terms into one general and contradictory concept.

Aboriginal peoples as stakeholders who should be included so they can contribute to the building of an inclusive national sport system.

The CSP (4) and the Physical Activity and Sport Act (5) are very similar in that both documents only indirectly include Aboriginal peoples in regards to dominant stream priorities. In the CSP (4) Aboriginal peoples are included under the goal of participation; the document proposes to “increase access and equity in sport for under-represented groups” (p. 16). Similarly, in the Physical Activity and Sport Act (5), under the title of objects and mandate, the document proposes to “facilitate the participation of under-represented groups in the Canadian sport system” (p. 3). Given that these documents are arguably two of the most significant sport documents for the current sport system, treating Aboriginal peoples as an under-represented group (just like other [selected] under-represented groups such as women or disabled peoples) would suggest this is perhaps the most significant overarching framework for engaging with Aboriginal peoples in sport. The desire to promote sport for under-represented groups implies the need to create change (i.e., change to be equal) for these groups.

Again, the consultation document (6), as a precursor to the SCPAPPS policy, is a purposeful attempt to remedy the lack of success and participation of Aboriginal peoples within sport, as part of the broader agenda of reducing inequity within the Canadian sport system. The first line very clearly sets the tone for Sport Canada’s interest in Aboriginal sport; it states: “a key strategic direction for Sport Canada is to increase access and equity in sport for targeted under-represented groups, including Aboriginal peoples” (p.2).

Much of this theme makes reference to focusing on under-representation as a way to increase equity/equality within the Canadian sport system. This perspective suggests that identifying individuals on a needs-based assessment (that is, those who are identified as in need

of more help, deserve more help) is the most basic level of engagement of Sport Canada with Aboriginal peoples. This perspective suggests that once equitable/equal representation is achieved, the overarching framework of equity/equality for engaging Aboriginal peoples would largely be irrelevant.

*Native Distinctiveness.*

The last major theme is Native distinctiveness, which I have come to define as the idea that Native peoples are different and distinct from dominant stream society in many fundamental ways, such as: different reasons for why sport may be important, different values promoted in sport, different goals and interests in sport, and different understandings of sport. This theme was identified six times in the decision frames of documents 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, and 8. The documents that did not feature Native distinctiveness were the CSP (4) and the Physical Activity and Sport Act (5), which were federally/nationally focused documents in which no direct attention was paid to Aboriginal peoples, and by extension did not include any major themes on Aboriginal peoples specifically. Thus all documents that speak to Aboriginal sport specifically include the idea that Aboriginal peoples are distinct from the dominant stream of society and thus require distinct policy to address their distinctive and unique needs.

The Best Report (1) acknowledges that Indigenous conceptions of sport are different from the model of institutionalized sport that exists within the dominant stream, and notes that the dominant stream sport community needs to accept the cultural basis of Indigenous sport, which seeks to promote that

- Athletic achievement is more than medals and individual glory.
- Traditional indigenous values and ethics in sport are paramount to the concept of a balanced society.

- The strong spiritual element will have to be recognized and accepted.
- Sport is important in the way it influences the development of the person (p. 155).

The key recommendation within this report (1) also led to the creation of an Aboriginal secretariat (the ASC), which was designed to promote the specific needs of the Aboriginal community, their athletes, other indigenous organizations, and a holistic approach to sport (see pp. 156-7).

The Mills report (2) notes that NAIG is an important site for building and expressing Aboriginal peoples' heritage, and also points out the ability for sports and recreation to play a role in strengthening the emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual aspects of Aboriginal life (see p. 87).

In the Maskwachees Declaration (3) there is a strong focus on the particular needs and perspectives of the Aboriginal community. Comments ranged from looking to "support, invite, integrate and use the knowledge of Elders in program design and delivery" (n.p.), to the need to "provide inclusive opportunities for leadership development and role modeling" (n.p.), to the affirmation of "...the holistic concepts of Aboriginal cultures, given by the Creator...[to] promote balance through the integration of the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual growth of the individual" (n.p.).

During consultations in the development of Sport Canada's framework for Aboriginal directives in sport (6), a number of key issues were identified that speak to the importance of Native difference. The inclusion of all aspects of physical activity, from recreation to competitive sport, were said to be needed in order to meet the more holistic nature of Native understandings of physical activity (see p. 4). This is in contrast to the dominant stream approach, which tends to separate and categorize these types of physical activity. Also, diversity

within Aboriginal communities was highlighted by Aboriginal feedback in the policy making process (see p. 4). This comment suggests that it is not only important that Native peoples are recognized as different from the dominant stream, but there needs to be a respect for the distinctiveness of Aboriginal peoples and communities that fall under the umbrella of 'Aboriginal peoples'. And lastly, the feedback that traditional games and Aboriginal events should be a central aspect of the Aboriginal sport system (see p. 5) very much reveals the importance of distinctiveness as held by the Aboriginal sport community.

The creation of a funding framework for NAIG (7) also shows the importance of Aboriginal events, which were created by, led by, and offered for the participation of Aboriginal peoples only. The consolidation of NAIG's funding scheme helps to reinforce the central difference of Aboriginal peoples concerning their distinctive sporting needs. Much of the basis for the SCPAPPS policy (8) is to address the particular needs of the Aboriginal community, from recognizing that physical activity for Aboriginal peoples is "centered on important principles within their belief systems and cultural values" (p. 3), to recognizing the specific socio-economic issues specific to Aboriginal peoples (see pp. 3-4), to identifying specific guiding principles (see pp. 5-6) and barriers for Aboriginal peoples participation in sport (see pp. 4-5).

### *Conclusion*

The three themes that I have identified speak to one overarching theme running throughout the documents. Whereas the first two themes speak to commonalities, mutualities, equality, equal representation and sameness<sup>23</sup>, the final theme focuses on difference, distinctiveness, and tensions. These three themes are all related to the issue of how Native peoples should be treated within the policies in terms of difference and similarities – along with all of the political significance that they may imply. The ability to adequately deal with



differences and similarities is familiar within the struggle for self-determination and indigenous rights, and I see this as the major tension within these select federal/national sport documents.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

### *Interest and Goal Directed Policy*

The first and most pervasive theme is that of interest and goal directed policy. This may seem quite evident and obvious at one level; when two or more groups attempt to create a policy together, they do so by trying to reach their own interests whilst also accommodating the interests of the other party(ies). However, this is not necessarily the case. It was not historically evident in unilaterally-created federal Indian policy, nor is it the same as the state pursuing Indigenous interests as Indigenous peoples define them. Furthermore, I believe this theme offers insight into the power dynamic within dominant stream and Indigenous relations.

Mutual benefits are the areas within sport that are mutually agreed upon as suiting both groups at the same time. For example, in the Best report (1) Aboriginal peoples were included because they were identified as needing equity in and access to the dominant stream sport system, and Alwyn Morris' research (as reported in that document) found that Indigenous peoples wanted increased linkages to the dominant stream sport system. In principle, each group's interests are served by creating, maintaining, and extending linkages to the

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23. It is possible that Native peoples were meant to be included in the generally focused documents because there is a level of generality inherent within such a broadly focused document which uses "under-representation" as a conceptual category. Additionally, including Native peoples as an under-represented group explicitly states nothing (positive or negative) about their status as self-determining peoples. However, there is absolutely no recognition that Indigenous Canadians are a self-determining group. The fact that they are only included in policy (generally focused or Indigenous focused documents) as an under-represented group suggests that under-representation is the way in which Native peoples are viewed in these documents. Furthermore, it is my belief that it would be highly unlikely, had the government strongly desired to acknowledge Native peoples' self-determining rights, that this could not have been incorporated into policy due to the levels of generality inherent within the generally focused documents. Each of the documents does speak to Indigenous (or gender, or able-bodied ) specific aspects of each of these under-represented groups, and so there is more than enough opportunity to acknowledge self-determination for Native peoples in these policies.

dominant stream. This is not to suggest that there would not be issues concerning how those linkages are created, maintained, and extended, but merely that in principle both groups want linkages between dominant stream and Indigenous sport. This theme is also explicitly identified in the SCPAPPS document (8), as it notes as a guiding principle that increasing Indigenous participation in sport should be “continued [through] partnerships to achieve objectives of common interests” (p.7).

The policies also show that the Indigenous sport system should work to further the goals of the dominant stream sport system. It was noted on separate occasions that the SCPAPPS policy was to contribute to the CSP and its four key goals, and more broadly that Aboriginal “sport [should] serve the public interest” (p. 2). These examples show a relationship of unequal power between the dominant stream sport community and the Aboriginal sport community, where it is reinforced that the latter works within the framework and the goals of the former. Following on from this focus on the dominant stream, is the assumption that the dominant stream sport system should be strengthened and not challenged.

Aboriginal sport is seen as a way to strengthen the dominant stream system by increasing Native access to sport, particularly through the reduction of barriers, as is noted in documents 3, 4, 5, and 8. Documents 4 and 5 are of particular note, firstly because they are arguably the most significant documents to the Canadian sport system. Secondly, these documents imply a concern for Aboriginal peoples through a focus on under-represented groups; this indicates that treating Aboriginal peoples as just another under-represented group could be the dominant framework for engaging Native peoples in sport. In these documents, access is sought through the reduction of barriers, or through increased linkages between sport systems. This suggests to me that the dominant stream is a good place for Indigenous peoples, that it offers rich and rewarding

experiences for Indigenous peoples, and that if Native Canadians had equal access to the dominant stream that they would be equal to non-Natives in sport. I agree that if unwanted obstacles to the sport system were removed, the system could be more accessible for Indigenous Canadians. Yet this approach does not allow for any challenge to the fundamental values or organizational structures of the system, which may counter some (or many) of the interests of Native peoples. This is a significant limitation of this approach, which will be discussed in greater detail later.

Jones and Jenkins' (2008) recent work explores the difficulties and complexities of what they label as 'Indigene-Colonizer' relations, particularly as it relates to the hyphen within the term<sup>24</sup>. The hyphen is a metaphor that necessarily *joins* each cultural group together in a relationship, yet it also *separates* each group (Jones & Jenkins, 2008). There are a number of approaches to understanding the hyphen, and I will suggest two broad understandings. The first seeks to erase, soften, and deny the hyphen, thus seeking to promote commonalities and an essential sameness between groups. The other approach seeks to promote the importance of the hyphen and its role in creating distance and difference between the two groups, which may promote a focus on tensions and challenges as a means of building relationships and facilitating engagement.

A multicultural approach would be one in which the hyphen is softened, as a focus on sameness is a statement about the importance of our common humanity rather than our

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24. This article refers to 'indigene-colonizer' relations in research collaboration. There are significant differences between cross-cultural researcher collaboration and cross-cultural policy making, but the authors make significant insights into 'indigene-colonizer' relations in general, which I believe have helped me to think through Native/non-Native relations as I interpret them through these policies.

difference. This is another way of saying we are all the same; we are all equal under the law, we are all equal in the eyes of God, we are all citizens, and we are all the same in terms of needs and opportunities. The extension of this way of thinking is that the hyphen becomes a matter of social division, a barrier to building relations, and hence a problem to be (dis)solved (Jones & Jenkins, 2008).

My findings suggest that under the theme of mutually beneficial policy making, softening difference is a dominant framework for working with Indigenous peoples in building sport policy. For example, Native peoples are treated as just another minority group in all of the generally focused documents (1, 2, 4, and 5). Sport Canada also states (in document 6) that ‘a key strategic direction for Sport Canada is to increase access and equity in sport for targeted under-represented groups, including Aboriginal peoples’ (p. 2). In terms of self-determination, this suggests that Native peoples are essentially the same as other members of society. Many Native peoples, however, firmly reject the privileging of commonalities and instead prefer to ensure that our profound difference is both acknowledged and legitimized. Indigenous sport policy in Canada, with its focus on mutual benefits, commonalities, and the claim that Aboriginal peoples are just another group in need of equal representation, seriously neglects their separation and distinctiveness by stressing the “us” in the relationship. As Jones and Jenkins (2008) assert, ultimately “... ‘us’ cannot *stand in place* of the hyphen; it can only name an always conditional relationship-between” (p. 475, original emphasis). The softening of the hyphen could be criticized as an approach that imposes Eurocentric ideas and ideals onto Native peoples; Western thinking (as based on European Enlightenment) attempts to understand the world as potentially knowable and generalizable and therefore ‘other’ peoples’ culture is viewed as an obstacle to applying European understandings to everyone, at all times, everywhere (Battiste & Henderson,

2000)<sup>25</sup>. This is a process that's not unfamiliar in the history of Indian policy in Canada (for example, the 1969 White paper, or residential schools).

The other broad approach to the hyphen suggests that tensions or difference can provide an important site for learning. Using difference as a way to guide future relations and the development of sporting opportunities for Indigenous peoples, offers far more possibilities - particularly meaningful ones - to Native peoples than solely focusing on similarities ever can. Using these tensions provides a space for creating new directives in sport for Native peoples. This is far more difficult than a focus on similarities and mutual benefits; however its potential benefits are far greater than a focus on commonalities.

Using tensions as a positive space for creativity, I believe, does take place within these policies; but I suggest that the softening of the hyphen tends to be far more dominant and pervasive throughout the policies. For example, in the consultation document (6), it is suggested that sport be considered more holistically to remain relevant for Native peoples. This is a tension because there are different *interests*, *knowledges*, and *needs* at play in the definition of sport. By bringing this tension forward, Native peoples have created a new space for reinterpreting what sport means in policy as it relates to Native peoples; this is a space of relational possibilities and engagement.

Perhaps a focus on these tensions, despite the inherent difficulties in a focus on difference, will ultimately provide more productive and effective policy for Native peoples. I propose that building on existing commonalities is good, but prioritizing a focus on tensions and the space that they may open is the best route for engagement in the policy building process for

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25. It is not that equality is not generally accepted by many cultures and societies worldwide, but the issue is that the western definition, contextualization, implementation and prioritization restricts competing understandings of these kinds of ideas. Suggesting that Western definitions are 'the' understanding of these ideas reinforces/infers the superiority of the West over all 'others'.

Aboriginal sport.

The importance of difference is clear for Native peoples, but this focus on difference also reveals a deeper process within Indigenous sport policy. The key issue for the government is not the loss of social power when Native people participate in Native only events, promote Native values in sport, or offer alternatives to dominant stream sport through Indigenous sport activities. But rather it is the loss of the government's ability to define the conditions or the socio-political space within which, the dominant stream believes, working together in building policy should take place (Jones & Jenkins, 2008). In other words, it is not that Native peoples are not different, or that their difference is inherently a problem, but rather it is how that difference takes place and how that difference is legitimized which provides significant tensions and challenges to the state. Difference defined as a special ethnic minority group that ultimately shares the same needs, desires, and opportunities as the dominant stream can be readily incorporated within the government's framework on policy. However, a national minority with claims to rights and sovereignty that challenge the authority and sovereignty of the state is a tension that needs to be explored, yet was not evident within Indigenous sport policy in Canada.

*Equity/Equality.*

I understand the current policy framework as fitting within a liberal model of policy making. Before I explain how I understand the relevance of equity and equality, I shall briefly discuss liberalism as it foreshadows how I understand the way that equity plays a role in Aboriginal sport policy. In Dale Turner's (2006) book, *This is not a Peace Pipe*, he identifies three liberal imperatives of Canadian public policy:

First, the government must treat people as equals; second, the government must treat all individuals with equal concern and respect; and third, the government must provide all

individuals with the appropriate liberties and resources they need to examine and act on their beliefs (p. 61).

These liberal imperatives understand the individual as the functional unit for understanding society, and assume that individuals are completely equal and should be treated as such by the state - it assumes the 'common humanity' of individuals. The focus on equality and equal representation are all key elements for the incorporation of Aboriginal peoples within sport policy. Within all of the generally focused (i.e., not Indigenous focused) documents (1, 2, 4 and 5), Aboriginal peoples were grouped together with other under-represented groups, such as the disabled, women, ethnic minorities and others. The goal for these groups is equal representation and therefore 'equity'.

Gaining equity in the sport system is not the government's goal, instead the goal is to work on the inequity of certain individuals; the policy goal is to turn under-represented groups into equally represented groups. If the sport system was about equity there would be wholesale changes made to the structure, purpose, and orientation of the Canadian sport system. This would happen in a number of ways, such as a complete redistribution of money to those who lack access to resources, a complete reorganization of people in leadership roles, or a massive decrease in the prioritization of elite level sport and athletic progression, to name but a few examples. This is not the direction proposed in Canadian sport policy.

Equity is one of a number of key concepts relevant to the Canadian sport system, and is not a priority above all other goals. This was clear from the start (and I am not suggesting that equity should be prioritized above everything else). However, the goal of equity is very different from the goal of transforming select under-represented groups into equally represented groups. In other words, it is neither straightforward nor forthright to suggest that 'equity' and 'turning

under-represented groups into equally represented groups' is the same thing. This point is also relevant to the way in which Aboriginal rights are relevant to sport policy, which I will discuss later.

The idea that individuals are equal means that the state must treat people the same, and thereby implies a position of neutrality for the state. This is Turner's (2006) first point. If a group is under-represented, the priority of that group in sport is legitimated by the current unfair context within which they live, and so particular interventions become a way of keeping privilege equal. This is Turner's (2006) second point, in which state concern is expressed concerning equality by identifying Aboriginal peoples (along with others) as being in need of additional support. Turner's (2006) third point speaks to the role of government in providing all peoples with the liberties and opportunities to act on their own behalf, which is seen in the policies and recommendations for creating access and opportunity within the Canadian sport system. Turner's (2006) understanding of liberal imperatives in public policy appears to be apt in the case of recent Aboriginal sport policy.

The implications for a liberal policy making framework are significant for Aboriginal peoples. Firstly, from the perspective of Aboriginal rights, these policies seem to embrace Aboriginal rights in the same way as other minority group rights, rather than Aboriginal rights based on the inherent sovereignty of Native peoples and their nation-to-nation relationship with the state. This is highly problematic for many proponents of Native self-determination.

Secondly, this speaks to the broader issue of challenges to the state. If Aboriginal rights are considered to be bestowed by the state, and incorporated into a liberal framework through the status of minority rights, the state continues to be the unproblematic arbiter of justice and



sovereignty. Thus, challenges to this assumption, such as the case of inherent Aboriginal rights, remain largely ineffective when engaging in relations with the state.

Thirdly, the state takes into account the history of Aboriginal peoples and this history is part of the reason why they are a significant stakeholder within the sport system, and why Native peoples deserve fair and relevant sporting experiences. Yet the importance of history stops here. Instead, the state opts to attempt to treat Aboriginal peoples neutrally now, so as to provide equality in the future (Turner, 2006). Whilst historical injustices are viewed by the state as discriminatory, so too are attempts to reconcile these historical injustices in the present. The solution is to ignore history; treating people differently (i.e., discrimination) was a problem in the past and therefore staying away from difference (i.e., the privileging of Aboriginal rights) is the best path forward. The crux of this point is that this liberal approach fails to acknowledge historical wrongdoings, and therefore has no capacity for the restitution of historical wrongdoings; this omission fails to meet the needs of the Native perspective and therefore constrains Native/state relations. Indigenous wrongs are not reconciled with Indigenous rights, but instead with further Indigenous wrongs.

#### *Native Distinctiveness.*

Native difference can be best described as the single most important theme through which Native interests are sought. However, I am not suggesting that all Native interests are subsumed within the goal of asserting Native difference, but rather that it is the key theme, and one in which many Native interests are relevant. (For example, promoting Native health is not inherently about asserting Native difference, yet creating culturally relevant physical activities for Native peoples could be best suited to promoting and retaining Native peoples in physical activity, and in turn best suited to promoting health benefits. Likewise, an Indigenous

understanding of health would improve health for Native peoples more than a dominant stream definition of health ever could.) Native distinctiveness is based on the different *knowledges*, *interests*, and *needs* of Indigenous peoples as compared with non-Native Canadians. The different interpretations of how to define sport and physical activity between Native peoples and the dominant stream shows how there are different ways of understanding sport between the two groups. The promotion of participation over excellence in Native sport highlights just one of the different objectives of the Native sport community. The promotion of excellence as a means to create Native role models would be another example of different motivations for why elite level sport is important. It is these kinds of differences that Indigenous Canadians are attempting to assert through sport policy.

Native distinctiveness is clearly an assertion of Native difference that opposes the commonality approach that characterizes the two former themes. This suggests two related points: firstly, that Native difference is of central importance in Native peoples' approach to sport; and secondly, that Native difference attempts to bolster and solidify the hyphen that is not a part of the commonalities approach of mutually beneficial policy making, or of equity and equality. This represents an important counter movement to the liberal policy framework, and I would suggest offers the most significant opportunity to build upon the tensions and differences between the dominant stream and the Native sport community. For example, Sport Canada wishes for Aboriginal people to be a part of the dominant stream system, and whilst this is desired by the Native community there is also an identified need to create and maintain Aboriginal events and sports/games. Rather than simply building on the common objectives of both perspectives, a focus on how they differ and the negotiation of this difference offers a space to learn from each perspective and provides the most effective policy direction. Incorporating

Aboriginal events, sports, coaches, administrators, leagues, or marketing campaigns, is essential for Native interests in sport - and is only possible when the dominant stream engages in these ideas. Building on these tensions within policy and including other tensions as a priority in the future, I believe, will provide the best opportunity for engagement. While the liberal approach promotes neutrality, the tension approach facilitates engagement, and many Native peoples want engagement not neutrality.

As a final point, Jones and Jenkins (2008) note that Native peoples reject the erasure of the hyphen, and at the pragmatic level, they emphatically suggest that erasure of the hyphen in cross-cultural research collaboration *does not work!* In terms of recognizing inherent Aboriginal rights, in which Native communities are sovereign nations that should engage with the government on a nation to nation basis, I believe this to be absolutely true. Furthermore, the treatment of Aboriginal peoples as yet another ethnic group rejects claims of self-determination, and ultimately fails to meet the aspirations of Native peoples.

Yet looking back on Indigenous sport over the same period of time in which the policies were implemented, there have been very significant gains in Indigenous sport. The creation of the ASC as a national voice and administrative organization, as well as the establishment of P/TASB's in all 13 jurisdictions speaks to the growth of the Aboriginal sport system. There is also a Native component developed within the National Coaching Certification Program, which addresses racism, traditional foods, and the holistic approach to sport. Competitive sporting opportunities have grown. For example, the Six Nations have competed at the world lacrosse championships as a separate nation to Canada since 1990, which speaks to the opportunities for elite competition and displays of Native nationalism through sport. Additionally, NAIG is a significant step forward for the Indigenous sport system, and has proven to be highly successful

as a way to promote sport and cultural pride within Native communities. But if treating Aboriginal peoples as simply another minority group in need of equal representation appears to overlook Native claims to rights and sovereignty, and if the softening of the hyphen does not work, then how have such gains taken place within the sport system itself? Although some commentators claim that the inclusion of Native peoples as just another ethnic group is selling out<sup>26</sup>, I believe there are, paradoxically, benefits to this approach that should not be ignored.

Native participation in policy, and the subsequent focus on under-representation and marginalization in the Canadian sport system does not seem to support or recognize Indigenous claims for the right to self-determination in sport policy. However, Indigenous Canadians have been able to work within this framework to create a number of significant opportunities to participate in sport, and have helped to create an emergent Native sport system. For example, NAIG is subject to government funding criteria (e.g., document 7), NAIG promotes dominant stream sports (e.g., basketball, volleyball, golf), NAIG promotes some dominant stream sporting values (e.g., gold, silver and bronze medals, or medal tables), and Canadian NAIG teams represent government defined provinces and territories and not traditional territories and Native national affiliation. At the very same time, NAIG also provides an empowering space for Native peoples to gather and celebrate their culture, it provides a positive space for sporting opportunities, and it reaffirms the importance of Native nationalism. This is what I understand to be the paradoxical nature of the pursuit of Native rights and self-determination.

#### *The Facilitation and Constraint of Self-Determination*

To relate this analysis back to the research sub-problem, I will firstly discuss the analysis as it relates to aspects of the policies that have facilitated self-determination, and secondly, speak

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26. For example, Taiaiake Alfred in his 2005 book *Wasase* suggests that Indigenous peoples need to turn down the huge amounts of government funding offered to what he calls 'aboriginalists', and instead bear the burden of state intransigence on Indigenous principles.

to the aspects of the policies that have constrained self-determination.

*Facilitation.* Firstly, interest and goal directed policy helps to promote particular Aboriginal objectives. These include the recognition that Native peoples' sporting opportunities should be holistic, promote participation, strengthen traditional values, and encourage Native leaders. In particular, common goals and interests are facilitated by the policies, such as the desire for Native peoples to promote Native leadership, health, and access into the dominant stream sport system. Secondly, Native interests were prioritized through an approach that categorized Native peoples as an ethnic group in need of equal representation. It was through this approach that Native interests were leveraged as a priority for the Canadian sport system. Thirdly, Native distinctiveness helped to promote Native difference and helped to legitimate an Aboriginal sport system alongside the dominant stream sport system. Aboriginal knowledges, interests and needs were identified as separate from the rest of Canada, and helped to bring legitimate aspects of Aboriginal life into their sporting practices. The creation of Aboriginal administrative bodies, leaders, and events through policy helped to promote the difference of the Native community from the dominant stream. These initiatives created opportunities for Aboriginal peoples to practice sport in ways that they desire. After reviewing the developments in Indigenous sport over the time period of the documents, the progress of the Aboriginal sport system is clearly linked to these policy documents. For example, the legitimacy of NAIG was partially legitimated through policy; the Best report helped to develop the ASC, which then promoted the importance of NAIG in the Mills report, which was then promoted in policy specific to hosting major games (Canada, 2008) and the creation of a funding framework for NAIG (7).

*Constraint.* A focus on common goals was severely limiting in terms of how Aboriginal peoples were able to attempt to shape their sporting practices through policy, because they are limited when pursuing interests outside government objectives. I showed that Aboriginal peoples' ideas about sport had to ultimately fit within dominant stream goals and interests, and thus Aboriginal peoples were able to be fairly self-determining, but only if their goals in sport were also those of the dominant stream. Since anybody can already pursue their own needs when they fit within the desires and boundaries of the dominant stream, this is not particularly helpful to the advancement of Aboriginal self-determination.

The theme of strengthening the dominant stream sport system represents another limiting aspect of the policies in terms of self-determination. By limiting Aboriginal interests to ones that are also state interests, no major challenges to the state are permissible. If inherent Aboriginal rights call into question the legitimacy of the sovereignty of the state, there is no room for engagement of these rights given the current framework for involving Aboriginal peoples in sport. Under these circumstances, self-determination in its most robust form is not possible.

The mutual interests theme attempts to treat Aboriginal peoples in keeping with a multicultural approach, as a multi-ethnic group. By treating Aboriginal peoples as having essentially the same needs and interests as others, and by focusing on commonalities rather than differences, self-determination is restricted because the importance of difference is essential to Native self-determination. However, the instances where tensions were a focus within the policy documents, I believe, provided spaces that created engagement and relational possibilities, and these tensions could be the most beneficial aspects of policy, even if they are also the most difficult.

The theme of commonalities and treating Aboriginal peoples as essentially the same as others was also found to be central in a liberal framework for policy making. The liberal approach to treating Aboriginal peoples as equals resulted in limiting Aboriginal self-determination in three key areas. Treating Aboriginal peoples as equals meant that inherent rights and Native sovereignty are overlooked. Secondly, challenges to the state are not allowed, and thus engagement of ideas about Native rights or self-determination appears to be outside the framework for dealing with Indigenous peoples. Lastly, an inability to adequately deal with historical injustices severely limits the restitution of Native peoples, and therefore their ability to shape their sporting lives as they see fit.

### *Conclusion*

While Native distinctiveness was able to bring Native interests to the discussion table, what became important was the ways that Aboriginal difference was incorporated by the state. As I suggested above, the ability to shape the conditions or the socio-political space in which difference is understood is of central importance. In other words, the legitimacy and ultimate authority of Native rights will heavily influence the meaning, power, and scope behind the practice of Aboriginal rights. The recognition of inherent Aboriginal rights - which will not and can not be bargained or signed away, which exist in perpetuity, which are based on original occupation and have been passed down through the generations - is a point of ultimate contention with the state because it challenges their taken for granted authority on the issue of Aboriginal rights. The incorporation of Aboriginal peoples into policy brings about some benefits, but paradoxically it also works to undercut Native rights, sovereignty, and nation to nation status, all of which are of vital importance to a robust practice of Native self-determination.

Although Native participation and focus in policy has largely undercut Native claims to inherent Native rights and self-determination, Indigenous sport policy makers have been able to work within this framework of under-representation to create a number of significant opportunities to participate in sport, and have helped to further create, strengthen and provide resources for a Native sport system in Canada. In line with much of Native policy in Canada, this position of Native involvement in sport policy has undertones of the self-government approach to building policy.



## CHAPTER 5

### INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

#### **Sub-question 2.**

**To what extent are Indigenous sport leaders involved in the pursuit of the self-determination of Indigenous peoples through Canadian sport?**

#### DATA COLLECTION AND METHODS

The selection of interviews as a method of data collection provides an in-depth look at an Indigenous perspective of key sport policies and documents. This enables a look behind the “neutral” and “clean” presentation of policies, to see what thoughts exist informally and behind the scenes (Green & Houlihan, 2004). Discussing perspectives of Native leaders also provides an opportunity to compare and contrast their thoughts with the official policy documents released by the state and their organizations (as per sub-question one).

For the interview process I selected six Native sport leaders who had roles in the creation of policies and documents specifically related to Native sport practices. The interview participants were identified through the use of networks of contacts of my advisor and colleagues. There were no guidelines above and beyond their roles within the Indigenous sport system, so I did not require equal representation - whether it be geographic, gender or otherwise<sup>27</sup>. Therefore this informal sampling strategy does not attempt to generalize findings to all Native sport leaders, but instead is used to discuss and examine dominant themes that emerged from the interviews.

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27. There is no imbalance of representation to declare that would significantly impact the analysis.

Kirby and McKenna (1989) note that interviews allow interaction between the researcher and the interviewees that can help to develop the data collection process as the interviews proceed. Smith (1999) also proposes *kanohi kitea* (the seen face), in which the openness and connection of the research process is facilitated by face to face meetings<sup>28</sup>.

Prior to beginning the interview process, ethics clearance was granted from the University of Windsor research ethics board. The interviews were semi-structured, which provided consistency in the information gathered, yet provided flexibility when needed to probe on points of particular interest to the study, the participants, and myself. The flexibility provided a space for the addition of important information that might otherwise be neglected. The pre-established interview guideline helped to structure my relative inexperience as the interviewer (see Appendix F).

There were a series of questions that I wanted to ask the participants, which were narrowed down to the eventual interview guide following the discussion of numerous drafts with my advisor and a colleague. Firstly I wanted to know if and how any traditional Native aspects were relevant to the development of policy, to build upon the central problem and its privileging of traditional knowledges. I thought it was also crucial to understand what the participants thought self-determination meant, and I asked about this for two reasons. Firstly, I wanted to understand where they are coming from and what they mean when they speak to self-determination, and secondly I hoped to see if their understandings of self-determination in policy making could contribute to my understanding of the literature on self-determination. Building from here, I also was interested in knowing how important (if at all) self-determination was when

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28. This principle was pursued when possible, but was subject to interviewee or resource availability. It is also worth mentioning that *kanohi kitea* is much more than simply conducting face to face interviews.

developing policy, and asked for examples of how this might have worked in their experiences.

I decided to include the double helix in the interviews because it is a term developed by a Native sport leader about his vision for the Canadian sport system, and so the participants might have had personal experience with this model in policy and therefore may have an important perspective on the model. The double helix model is also an effective way to discuss the idea of a parallel sport system - a system that promotes the idea of distinctiveness for Native peoples, and also enables a discussion that goes beyond focusing solely on under-representation as a basis for inclusion in policy making. This focus on a parallel system was identified as being important for Native peoples, as per the consultation document (6) used in the document analysis.

The use of a pilot interview further strengthened my competency as an interviewer and also the validity of the interview process through practice of the interview. The interview took place with a Native person in a leadership role who works with Native peoples. Feedback from the interview noted that the interview questions were appropriate, yet I still made changes to the interview guideline by editing the wording of questions to make them easier to understand based on my intuition after the pilot.

My primary interest in the interviews was to gain an understanding of how the participants' perception of self-determination impacts their role within policy creation and/or program implementation. More specifically, I explored the degree that self-determination is a priority, how readily it is being used in policy, what opportunities and challenges it presents, and the degree to which Native peoples are treated as a group with Indigenous rights, and as a 'disadvantaged' group in need.

I began each of the interviews with an exchange about our backgrounds, which was not only good because it established rapport, but because it helped to achieve some important aspects of Indigenous research. Firstly, it established location and therefore enabled the participants and I to speak from a particular place because we positioned ourselves. This also helped to establish why I would be interested in research on this topic, how I can connect with the issue, how I am invested in it, which position I come from to understand it, and also that it increases the likelihood that I come with the right intentions to do this research; all of which are important ethical aspects of an Indigenous approach to research (Absolon & Willett, 2005). In fact, this process began with the first email I sent to invite the potential interviewees to participate in the study, in which I put forward my own Indigenous background.

It is my belief that our shared Indigenous identity helped us to relate to each other and helped to build a good relationship that contributed to the validity of the responses. Had we not shared our backgrounds – whether I identify as an Indigenous person or not – I am not sure the responses to the questions would have been exactly the same.

The interview process also drew on Smith's (1999) seven appropriate aspects of Kaupapa Maori research (see, pages 74-75). For example, *Aroha ki te tangata* (a respect for people) is about allowing people to define their own space and to meet on their own terms. So I allowed the participants the option of phone interviews or face-to-face meetings, as well as allowing them to answer whichever questions they chose, and to the extent they chose. I also asked questions without searching for particular answers, and thus allowed the participants to shape the questions back by working in whichever interpretation they had of the question, and whichever responses they believed were

relevant to the question asked. Even though this makes the interviews less likely to correlate to each other, this was done to help enable the participants to define their own space in responses in our discussions.

Another example of Smith's (1999) research protocols is *kaua te takahia te mana o te tangata* (do not trample on the mana of the people), in which it was very important to adequately understand the traditional teachings the participants spoke of in the interviews as a sign of respect to the participants and their communities. Both the results and discussion sections in which these teachings were discussed were given back to the participants to check over in order to help avoid any misinterpretation, misuse, or misrepresentation of these teachings that I included in the study.

The participants spoke about their experiences in policy making primarily at the federal and provincial levels, and sometimes talked about the development of key sport documents that they had been involved in as well. Four of the six participants were female, and four of the six interviews were conducted in-person whilst the remaining two were conducted by telephone. I thought it was appropriate for the interviews to begin with an exchange of our backgrounds, but this part of the interview was not a part of the analysis proper. All of the interviews took place in February and March of 2009.

These participants had experienced a variety of roles in sport leadership and administration, both past and present. They were involved in various levels of leadership and administration, including provincial/territorial experiences, First Nations band level experiences, as well as federal level experiences. All of the participants had worked within Indigenous organizations; some had experiences working within dominant stream sport organizations too. The vast majority of our discussions related to sport policies;

however some of participants also had experience with non-sport Indigenous policy development. There were no geographic patterns to speak of, in terms of their current places of work, or where their traditional territories are. The participants were First Nation peoples, and not Inuit or Métis. In terms of age, I would estimate that the participants ranged between 30 and 60 years old.

Prior to conducting the interview, all of the participants were informed about the study and consented to its undertaking by signing a consent form to participate in the study (see Appendix G). Confidentiality was offered to all of the participants, and so throughout this study I will refer to each person through a pseudonym (which was chosen by me). I also asked the participants for permission for our discussion to be recorded, which was granted by all participants; the recordings were subsequently transcribed verbatim into a computer document. Once the interviews were transcribed, I looked for patterns, trends, and common themes that tied to the sub-questions to create the analysis. I then sent the interview transcription and analysis back to the interviewee to review if they wished.

To examine the interviews in terms of themes, I went through each of the interview transcriptions and looked for ideas or concepts central to the meaning of the points made in each interview as it related to self-determination and the question asked (see Appendix H for a more detailed explanation of this process). Each theme was then discussed, based on its prominence within the data set, using examples of each theme from the documents to help explain it. After re-reading the interviews, the themes that were identified were well represented in the interviews (and I could see no additional themes that were overlooked), so I kept the themes as initially identified. All participants were offered the opportunity to review my draft analysis, and change

any of their quotes as they saw fit. However, none of the participants felt I had unfairly represented their perspectives, and there were no requests to alter my analysis.

## RESULTS

### *Introduction*

The analysis of the interviews produced four themes: (1) Identity and the self, (2) dominant stream governance, (3) Indigenous governance, which has two sub themes; (3a) relationships, and (3b) building connections, and (4) the importance of working within two systems of governance.

### *Identity and the 'Self'*

The first theme on identity is the acknowledgement that identifying, understanding, promoting, and practicing who they are as Indigenous peoples is central to the pursuit of self-determination. Much discussion took place around the identification of their values. Amanda notes that “for me it [self determination] is more of a self realization about who you are and who you want to be in this world - you first need to understand what it is that you want, who you are in the world. You need to identify those first”. This point becomes particularly important for identifying Indigenous governance systems as suggested by Kelly; “before we can get to a point where we can govern our communities... [we need to] find those rules or those values in ourselves that we bring to any style of aboriginal governance”. Mason makes the case for identity and self-determination in the following passage:

And that old cliché, be proud of who you are and where you came from. If you want to be proud of something better find out what you are going to be proud of. Therein lies that determination. It's the same thing in sport too, it's very clear to me that to be practicing to maintain my physical fitness, my emotional and mental wellbeing, and spiritual

practices. How do I improve myself to be able to at any moment accept what's in front of me? Whether it's a loss or a win. How do you maintain a wellness and health? Is that self determination?

In terms of working with government on policy, Kelly found that she was able to contribute because she "was able to provide an aboriginal understanding [to the policy table]... so I guess because I was strong in who I am - I am self-determining. I understand our issues from a community perspective". Furthermore, knowing one's identity becomes a significant factor when working with government on issues of policy, because "if we are not comfortable for ourselves with who we are in determining for ourselves where we want to go, I think it's very difficult for us to participate in a joint policy process" (Kelly).

Part of the path of finding and living an Indigenous identity is looking back, as their histories and traditional values hold the key in finding their identity. As Mason pointed out, it is important "to once again believe that your people are strong, independent, self-reliant, all those aspects that makes for a healthy wellness and nation. But there is a process of going back". He goes on to suggest that "the teachings start to come back from before. And once again I like to think of it as a process of empowerment. We know what we are, we know what we can do, because we have done it before. [The] Answers have been laid out for us" (Mason).

As a final point, Amanda noted that self-determination is relational, and one particular way to describe this relational concept is through the holistic approach of Mason, as he states

I see four circles. I see the inner circle as the inner self. The second one as family, the third one community, and the fourth one the rest of the world. In order to be that family, you need to know inner-self. And in order to know your community you need to know your family and yourself.



When discussing the importance of values, Mason links individual values to an organization's values, when he says

even with this organization, your bylaws are always going to be the test to how strong your foundation is. You need to create this foundation and build on it and strengthen it and keep building from there. So the same thing applies [with me]. I better be able to practice living up to supporting that constitution bylaw, from an organizational sense, from a community sense, a family sense, and a [personal] sense. Walk the talk brother!

The notion of connecting with your community and giving back to the community was discussed (Mason, Morgan, Amanda, and Melanie). Amanda believes that self-determination is “this notion, I said earlier, of giving back to the community. It's being someone who can move forward in this world, and make decisions not only for yourself, but for the people who you care about”. The difference between the government bureaucracy and the Native community level of governance, as it relates to connecting with your community, is discussed at length by Morgan,

I got to go back to the community again ... [working with the government system in the city] you get quite removed from the community, and my only real engagement was with higher [Native] groups and [at the Indigenous] games. So [getting back to the community] really grounded me again. You get to touch and feel the people. And that's what feeds; I think that's what feeds us when we do our work. If we don't get back to who it's all about, we sort of, we forget, we forget what we are supposed to be doing. Or why we are doing what we are doing. I've been fortunate to be reminded, and hang out with elders, who say, this is what it's all about.

Much of what was discussed in terms of self-determination related to the level of the self - a focus on the level of the individual as a path towards self-determination. Kelly spoke to this

point when she said “first off, we have to govern ourselves as individuals - you know what I mean? Before we can get to a point where we can govern our communities”. This focus on the self was discussed at length by Mason:

you divide that word up into two: ‘self’ and ‘government’<sup>29</sup>. And right now our people are searching for a healing and a path, and we are working towards cleaning up our back yard, our own personal selves. So there is this trend, this movement searching for wellness, we are picking this up and we are working on ourselves. And then we start to engage in finding ourselves, training ourselves, and ultimately there is a point where you are going to stand up [and] the government will emerge.

The predominant way that the ‘self’ related to self-determination was in the impact sport can have on personal development of participants in sport. When speaking to sport and self-determination, the participants noted that “when I think about sport and self-determination, I just think it instills the confidence, it instills a sense of purpose, community pride [and that is] huge” (Morgan), along with the belief that self-determination is “tied to self esteem” (Kelly). In terms of contributions to policy making, Mason begins a presentation at the discussion table with his Native language, as a strength builder and grounding that builds confidence when bringing issues forward in policy making discussions.

#### *Dominant Stream Governance*

The dominant stream of governance refers to the characteristics identified by the participants to reflect governance patterns typically found in state (federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal)

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29. Mason saw no difference between the two terms self-determination and self-government. So whilst this reference is to self- government, the term self-determination is equally relevant here.

governments and dominant stream (government funded, private, and public sector) organizations – particularly as they contrast with those found in Native organizations or governance systems. One reoccurring theme was that working with dominant stream organizations had its difficulties. For example, Morgan noted that the dominant stream organization involved in the development of specifically Aboriginal sport policies questioned why there would be a need for Aboriginal policy when one already exists for “everybody”. Some of the participants (Mason, Morgan, Amanda, and Kelly) also noted problems when working within the government system because of the bureaucracy and all the bureaucratic steps involved in state government policy.

There were also more subtle challenges when working with dominant stream organizations, as was identified by Melanie, who felt when working with a particular dominant stream entity that the enthusiasm behind Native sport initiatives, as compared with other sport initiatives, was less by comparison. She recalls one experience whereby a sport conference was held by a dominant stream entity which would have been a fantastic opportunity to present and educate the field on Native issues and sport, yet as she states, “why aren’t we here presenting? Why don’t they ask us? Why don’t they value the fact that we have this material and be wanting to share it?” (Melanie).

Problems also existed around collaborating and consulting with Indigenous peoples in policy. In one experience of Amanda’s, she explained that developing the policy for her was more consultational than collaborative “in the sense that yeah, we were at the table, and yeah we were talking, and yeah we were doing some negotiating”, but “that it was a more of a consultational setup”. This was reinforced by the physical set up of the discussion table, “because you’ve got one straight line of the table on one side of the room, and a straight line of

tables basically facing them” (Amanda); on one side of the room were the government representatives and on the other side were the people representing various Native interests. Additionally, the meeting began with a government representative emphasizing that the policy was the government’s, and not a policy of the Native sport community. Amanda goes on to say that “it set the tone for the whole process, and it was quite confrontational at times because of it”. Issues of engagement were also highlighted by Melanie, who noted that a government organization

didn’t like to use the word consulting, but [the government was] consulting aboriginal groups around [the policy]....[and did not like to use the word] because there are legal ramifications with consultation.... there is a duty to consultation. So it’s [a matter of] ‘how can we extract information without going through the formal stages of consultation?’

The exception in terms of collaborating with government officials in the development of policy was Dylan, who did note that many government officials tried to understand the Native perspective, and acted with a lot of goodwill with Native collaborators. However, Dylan did speak about government fears in accepting a separate and parallel Indigenous sport system, despite efforts to validate that approach within policy.

We tried to get that [acceptance of a parallel system] into the policy, we tried to put that explanation into the policy. They [the government officials] appreciated the values of those models in understanding why we are different; [but] they absolutely refused to include that in the document. It was actually in the initial draft but as it worked its way up through the food chain people became very uncomfortable about that (Dylan).

The most cited reference given to the dominant stream system is that it often works in silos; it acts as separate compartments in a whole rather than acting together in relationships within a whole. When thinking about the ways that government bureaucracy works, Mason questions this approach when

learning to accept the way of life of bureaucracy, to understand that you are in a silo, that you have a specific mandate and it's very fixed and tight. How do you relate with someone that you should be talking to next door?

When Amanda referred to connections between the dominant stream and Native stream of sport, she stated that “there is still a lot of silos”, whilst Morgan spoke to her experience working within a dominant stream organization, which was very different from the Native community level because of the “cubicles, and everybody worked in silos”. This approach lacked a focus on the process of building relationships, as noted by Amanda, when she said that the government “want[s] an endpoint, and they want their starting point”, whereas the middle parts are just built in between.

### *Indigenous Governance*

Many of the interviews included discussion of Indigenous ideas and concepts as they relate to developing policy in Indigenous styles of governance. Indigenous governance includes the systems, patterns and protocols based on Native values, first principles, and traditional knowledges that the participants identified. One of the most significant differences is the importance of a spiritual aspect in sport that is not really acknowledged by the dominant stream (Mason and Dylan), which is the case in the beginning of Indigenous-run meetings when prayers are offered (Mason, Morgan, Amanda, and Dylan). In addition, the incorporation of elders within the development of policy was also considered an appropriate process (Amanda, Kelly,

Melanie, and Dylan). The difficulty of incorporating Native spiritual elements in sport through policy is highlighted by Mason, when he says:

how do you write your spirituality? You live it and offer it, you can make references to it, but to start to try and describe it, and try to put it into compartments, and words, it doesn't quite do justice what we are offering. There again, you ask yourself, how do I fit into the experience of policy writing?

The style of indigenous governance was also noted to be significantly different to that of dominant stream entities (Mason, Morgan, Kelly, Melanie, and Dylan). Meetings being run by Native peoples are very different from those of the dominant stream, as was noted by Morgan. For example, Kelly said that meetings differed in terms of “prayer, even how we ate, [or how we] organized the room”. Kelly noted that the development of policy within Native circles focused on discussion and finding consensus. And this took place “at a community level – a community focus... [in which she would] sit down with First Nations - you know, worker bee level - and look at what priorities they may have” (Kelly). This was significantly different from the dominant stream approach in which the

policy review committee [was] held behind closed doors...decisions [were] made behind closed doors....[and] lobbying.... wasn't open [for] discussion. So it's a totally different approach for getting something implemented within the ... government system, than it was within our own. I still see that every day.... you don't get to have open and frank discussion amongst all constituents (Kelly).

This latest point about the inability to have open discussion was also explained by Amanda, who found discussion was a problem when there were discrepancies between the personal opinions of policy makers and the mandate of the organization they were representing.

She stated that “you have people [representing the various parts of state governments] saying “I completely agree with you, but I’m not allowed to do that” (Amanda). Kelly also discussed the importance of Native peoples being involved within mainstream structures, because until “we have Aboriginal people be involved in the secret [government] process, we are not really going to change a lot. I mean we will have things there, but we are not going to change attitudes, building relationships, that sort of thing”.

One way in which the dominant stream was characterized was having a top-down orientation, as opposed to a bottom-up orientation. When giving her thoughts on this difference, Kelly states that “our decision making process is totally different. I think we work in Aboriginal country, people up. We give our leaders direction, I think in this [the dominant stream] system it’s the other way down. It’s politicians downward”. Similar experiences were discussed by Melanie, who at length spoke to the challenges of the top down approach when working with the state governments:

[Indigenous] organizations are influenced by the government. There is a delicate balance between something being grassroots driven and creating the agenda and mandate, versus, ‘you will get funding if you address these issues’. The movement of the Aboriginal Sport Circle is very high performance focused, and it had to be in order to meet [its] financial commitments. Did that meet the needs of the community? Are we really serving our community, or are we really just serving what Sport Canada [wants]?

### *Relationships*

Although it falls within Indigenous ideas of governance, the focus on relationships was such a significant part of what was discussed it is represented as its own theme. Mason noted that he deliberately tried to humanize the relationship with government bureaucrats, with attempts to

break down ‘stiff’ meetings and an approach of ‘getting down to business’ in policy making settings. He used simple phrases like, “it’s nice to see you” and “how’s your family?” (Mason). What was important about humanizing policy development, according to Mason, was to “believe we are going to create a relationship”. Part of this relationship strategy was to build bridges (All participants) as well as break down barriers (Morgan), part of which was to educate the government about what Native peoples are looking for, and how they intend to work towards it (Morgan, Amanda, and Dylan). The double helix was identified (by Mason, Amanda, and Dylan) as crucial to promoting self-determination through relationships: Amanda suggests that “the concept of self-determination is wrapped up quite nicely into that model of the double helix”, because “that’s what we were trying to do [at policy meetings]; we were trying to find ways to build those linkages”.

When building relationships, traditional teachings and ideas also played a role. This was the case with Mason who, after failed discussions with an individual within a dominant stream sport entity, attempted to foster relationships between relevant government departments and the dominant stream sport organization. He noted in his discussions with this individual

things like the totem pole. Oh you’re on the bottom of the totem pole; it means you are insignificant, you’re less than. So I use that illustration to say no. We are the totem pole – sport, recreation, and physical activity is the bottom figure. And it’s upholding, or holding up, education, health and the justice system. It’s got wings that can fly, and let’s show the world that. That bottom figure is what’s holding this up. I described that to people and it started to fit. And the reaction I got from the [government individual] ... was ‘that is awesome!’ (Mason).



The importance of traditional teachings in the development of policies and documents was also brought up by Dylan, who had incorporated a model of four interrelated circles – the physical, mental, spiritual and cultural spheres of life – as an important basis for the development of the whole person and not just the athlete in policy. Dylan went on to note that the use of this model

is how we connect traditional teachings with a modern approach to sport. And that is why we are different. You know, at what point do you see in any of our national sport forums or mainstream sport do they open up with a prayer. They don't speak of spirituality because it's taboo. Cultural expression is expected to [be a] part of the melting pot that we don't subscribe to. So in terms of coaching development it is one central piece of the policy; a holistic approach was an integral part of that. [We] Sought ways to explain why we are different and why we take a different approach..

Mason, Amanda, and Dylan all believe that the double helix model was seen as one particular approach that was effective when attempting to foster relationships in joint policy making developments. As Amanda notes,

people tend to get that model quite quickly, it's easy to conceptualize, it's really easy to explain. I don't think it truly offends people's sensitivities about what Aboriginal people want. Because I think sometimes people get hung up on Aboriginal people taking over. It's a good model because it's so clear cut. For the content itself, and a really good entry point for bringing people to the table, and talking about what can be done. And then you can build those relationships.

When speaking about self-determination and the importance of relationships, Dylan said

we know what our needs are, we know how to best meet our needs. But we can't do that in the absence of partnerships, we need the resources, we need the support, we need the

expertise. The[re is] a body of knowledge in mainstream sport, and we are going to take that and shape it so that it fits the unique needs of our community.

Two of the participants (Kelly and Melanie) did not necessarily promote the double helix as a model. For Kelly the model's heavily scientific grounding was a barrier: she preferred the vision of two canoes in the two row wampum as a more appropriate concept for moving Indigenous peoples and the government forward. Melanie thought that the double helix might work well with recreation, but felt in terms of sports - particularly competitive sport - that the dominant stream should adapt to the needs of Indigenous Canadians.

The idea of family type relationships was highlighted as important in building relations. In discussing her experiences working within a government system, Morgan said,

I was used to working at the community level where at least people would come into a room and you know, John knew Jack, and they were there because they lived across the street and they had a common purpose about the community.

When recalling his experiences about policy making meetings, Mason said he would "go into this forum and say guys, we are all family, family. And keep harping at that. That we are family. And what does that mean? Hopefully that will bring family values I think. What does that mean? It's a level of openness and trust". Dylan had similar thoughts, suggesting that when working with other Native peoples there was a comfort level that helped people to connect, rather than a more professional or corporate style of meetings with 'suits'.

It was felt, however, that government bureaucrats did not necessarily share the same relationships approach. Amanda spoke to a policy development experience in which the "policy framework that they [the government entity] were establishing wasn't really set up to build relationships...I understood... [the government entity] probably wouldn't let us build a

relationship that we were really looking for”. She went on to say that “I don’t think ...[the government] got ...[the relationship focus] too much. The other side of the table....was looking at us like deer in the headlights” (Amanda).

An important part of the reasoning behind why a focus on relationships would be of such significance is that its focus goes beyond the policy document itself. In trying to highlight the importance of why both the government and Native peoples are joining together in sport policy ventures, Mason asks, “what is the spirit of our gathering?”. In policy making meetings, Indigenous peoples are

trying to emphasize the importance of relationships. So even if the programs or whatever gets developed because of these policy things, those relationships would still be there, and people will find a way to make things work - even after those other tools [e.g., policies] are gone. Because if you don’t build relationships then there is no concern for the other (Amanda).

In the writing and drafting stages of one of the policies Amanda had discussed, she spoke about how the essence or spirit of the policy development could take a back step to a competitive and narrow focus when discussing the wordsmithing of the policy drafts:

There was a hell of a lot of wordsmithing going on. And a lot of nuances on the various drafts. You had to be very careful with the wording because it became one big game after a while. They were wordsmithing, it would come to...[us] and we would wordsmith it.... And then we would get all upset by like, you know, a word.

In a slightly different way, Dylan also believed there is a need to look beyond the policy document, but spoke to the importance of action to follow up policy. Dylan noted that “what we are focusing on more and more is not simply the focus on the policy statements, but “what it

means after the fact; how do you deliver a policy”. One of the current challenges is “the government[‘s] lack of commitment to action and implementation. Everyone is told to say the right thing, but meaningful investment is still yet to come.

### *Building Connections*

In reference to achieving self-determination, it was felt by some of the participants that there needs to be more room to build connections with Native peoples when attempting to promote the self-determination of Indigenous Canadians in sport. This theme refers to (re)establishing relationships with other groups, communities, and organizations (which are often Native groups) in relationships that strengthen Indigenous peoples’ pursuit of self-determination. This is counter to the silo or compartment approach to governance. The current approach to Native self-government, as seen in government policy, may not be the best approach to move forward, according to Kelly. She explained at length that many of the First Nations she is familiar with are

pulling out of [a collective entity] ...whose strength in negotiating self-government is that all First Nations are a part of it. But now that these individual self-governments are being established, we don’t want that pendulum swing. We have moved from Indian Affairs looking after everything, all the way to individual governments. There is no balance there yet. We haven’t got back to a place where we can work together as First Nations in the delivery of programs and services....it seems that [when] we are implementing self-government, what we are trying to do right now in the communities is mimic a public government process (Kelly).

This is again pointed out by Melanie, when she questioned the different mandates of various groups relevant to self-government and state governments. She noted that there was a

disjuncture between Native sport institutions and Native political institutions, which could potentially limit and provide tensions for moving forward with self-determination in sport. Dylan spoke to a slightly different issue in terms of collaboration and self-determination. He spoke about times when the Indigenous community, athletes, disabled peoples, and women - who were outside groups who gravitated together – did so because “we knew we were outsiders pushing for new organizations, new funding, new focus and with that [a new] policy” (Dylan). These people were identified by government officials as being a disadvantaged group or a client group of people, and “the Canadian sport system needed a policy to hang its hat on and how it would best address the issues specific to those target groups” (Dylan).

The value of working together was also noted by Mason, who recalled that Native leaders used to want to be separate, and act separately, but that over time there seems to be growing value in ‘oneness’. He goes on to say that “you have organization[s] coming together now to say, hey, we have one thing in common now guys. What is that? Who do we need to position [with], [if] we want to be effective and have some movement, we need to be [one] to move forward” (Mason). Dylan also spoke about the importance of collectivization to self-determination when speaking to a new initiative, in which

we are now developing a strategy, not through government, but through all these [Native] agencies and these leaders who say ‘this is exactly what we want to do’. And now we are presenting that and we will see how the response is from the government. But there is absolutely no government involvement in that strategy; it’s all come from within. And to me that’s [a] self-determining approach”.

*Working within Two Systems of Governance*

An important aspect of discussing joint policy endeavours was understanding how working within the two governance systems of dominant stream entities and Native governance systems can help move relations and self-determination forward for Native peoples. Mason commented about how his organization began to engage with the dominant stream of sport, when he said “you start to touch base with the mainstream. How do they conduct themselves? What are they involved in? So now, in time, you start to scan the horizon to see who is who out there in the field”. Later he adds, “in all this trying to understand where we fit, and where we may not feel we fit, that’s where we start to recognize you [Native peoples] are a unique entity” (Mason).

There is a need to understand each system of governance based on their fundamental differences (Mason and Morgan), because each group has a different set of boundaries through which they work, as recognized by Morgan: “the aboriginal people have to recognize the government has to work in their system, and that the [government] people trying to move the policy were guided by certain parameters.... [as the government officials] were restricted by mechanisms and policies in Sport Canada”. Acknowledging this and working with these boundaries was seen as vital to moving relations forward, and was reported as one of the major aspects of the participant’s jobs and roles (Mason, Morgan, and Kelly). Morgan makes this point when she suggests that if

we are going to move [forward] we need to understand, we need to try and understand both [dominant stream and Native governance systems]...[a colleague of mine] has worked at an Aboriginal organization, but he also understands how government works. If you can understand both, you have a better opportunity of bringing success.

This was also suggested by Dylan who, when discussing Native priorities in developing policy with government officials, said that he and his colleagues were attempting to “find a way to articulate that [Native priorities] in a way that government could accept”.

### *Conclusion*

From the themes identified, a few key points about self-determination are important. Firstly, identity is bound deeply to self-determination, as it is the starting point of knowing who we are as Indigenous peoples so we can move forward with our needs, desires, aspirations, and responsibilities. Secondly, participants noted the level of the self as an important part of the process of self-determination. Thirdly, building relationships forms a crucial part of self-determination as it relates to joint policy ventures. Part of this focus is recognizing the potential Native governance systems and the need to work with dominant stream governance systems. Negotiating these two systems of governance is an important aspect in the promotion of self-determination in policy. And lastly, one promising way to form relations is to ground them in family relationships and family values, so that joint policy ventures become more than just a document as an outcome.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

### *Identity and the 'Self'*

The discussion about identity as being foundational to self-determination has broadened my interpretation of self-determination as stated in the literature review. It seems that I had (for the most part) overlooked Alfred's (2005a) warning that there is always a danger in speaking of self-determination in theoretical ways, whether in a legal, political, or a sociological sense. Self-determination, Alfred (1999; 2005a) argues, happens through the individual; by reclaiming our culture we can challenge the state through the conscious coordination of individual powers of

self-determination. Such sentiment is highlighted by Kelly - “before we can get to a point where we can govern our communities [we need to] find those rules or those values in ourselves that we bring to any style of Aboriginal governance”.

However, Alfred (1990) also notes that Native leaders need to promote Indigenous empowerment on individual and collective levels. Additionally, the distinctly political position of Indigenous existence must inevitably engage with state governments at a level beyond the individual. In other words, I believe that there needs to be a balance between individual and collective paths to self-determination rather than simply promoting one over another, since each level facilitates the other.

The focus at the level of the individual as a path towards self-determination may be the result of the more practical and pragmatic roles and positions of the Native policy makers, in which broader philosophical theorizing about self-determination is not necessarily central to their roles. This is not a criticism of the participants, but an acknowledgement that this could explain why there is a focus at the level of the individual within these policy makers. The drawback of this approach is that it does not engage the idea of collective self-determination based on Native sovereignty of Indigenous Nations with the government and in government policy. However, this is also its strength. Any individual may, for example, learn their traditional language without having to receive consent from the government; the agency of Native individuals gives them the power to journey down a path towards self-determination at any time they are ready. However, the participants did also speak to collective aspects of self-determination when, for example, the participants spoke to the need to work with each other or similar groups in pressing government for Native priorities.



One particular strategy in the path to self-determination is to look back to our pasts, as Mason notes: “if you want to be proud of something [you] better find out what you going to be proud of. Therein lies that determination”. This theme is captured in the Maori saying, I nga wa o mua, which means to look in front of us to the past. My understanding of time as past, present, and future, is that they are not separate compartments of time, but are aspects of time that are always relevant, always present, and always related. The reinvigoration of Native communities, the revitalization of our culture, the (re)learning of our customs and languages, and the (re)connecting with our lands are all aspects of identity and self-determination that draw upon the past, present, and future by looking in front to the past.

#### *Indigenous Governance*

A number of concepts and processes were identified as being based on traditional teachings and governance systems. For example, it was noted that Native governance practices were focused on the level of the community, which respects the needs of all peoples by prompting a people-up approach to governance (Kelly). A consensus style decision making helps to maintain the balance of the whole, rather than promoting competition and factionalism. The use of holistic approaches to policy and the double helix were also seen as being based on traditional teachings.

Continuing the development and use of Indigenous governance patterns appears to provide the most relevant and effective policy making practices for many of the participants. Such governance practices ask better questions, gather this information in the most appropriate ways, privilege certain types of information and power structures, and provide the best outcomes for Native peoples. For example, the focus on the level of the community enables a people-up approach to decision making. Similarly, a focus on a network of interdependent relationships

rather than competing and separate factions is an approach that works well for constructing policy for Native peoples. The focus on relationships was found to be the most significant aspect arising in discussions with the participants.

### *Relationships*

In line with fostering connections, interdependency and balance, many of the participants focused on building a relationship with bureaucrats and dominant stream entities. The double helix model was discussed in terms of relationships; for example, Amanda noted that she saw strong connections between the double helix model and with the government and self-determination. From this perspective, self-determination in joint policy ventures is pursued through the creating and fostering of relationships with government individuals and organizations.

Whilst the double helix model itself seeks to represent the structuring of both the dominant and Native streams of sport, the data suggest that perhaps its best application is in communicating ideas about the relationship between Native peoples and the dominant stream of sport. Amanda spoke to the benefits of the double helix model when she described it as being readily understandable and not a contentious way of promoting the incorporation of Indigenous interests. As such, she felt it was a very good starting point to begin policy discussions. This can be compared to the thoughts of Kelly, who didn't like the scientific approach, but instead preferred an understanding of a more traditional concept - the two row wampum. Given that ideas like the two row wampum have been misinterpreted and subsequently devalued by non-Indigenous peoples, the double helix might be better in terms of facilitating self-determination and fostering the importance of relationships that are so crucial to Native

governance approaches; dressing the model in scientific clothes rather than traditional concepts may have more potential to communicate its meaning more effectively<sup>30</sup>.

The process of building relationships was a contentious issue, and could be described as a battle of ideas about how to move policy development forward. Government processes seemed to be about inputs and outcomes. Amanda pointed out that government officials looked for starting points and endpoints, rather than focusing on the process of policy development itself. Much of the disconnect between these two approaches could be explained by the holistic Indigenous approach to understanding issues, rather than separating components into silos. Mason spoke to this issue when he questioned the value of the silo approach, because from his perspective the silo approach inhibited relationships and linkages with other people and government departments. When discussing the destructive results of a compartments approach, rather than a connections approach to physical education (in a Maori context), Hokowhitu (2003) states that

the breaking down of Maori life into sections, subsections and categories that aligned with European perceptions of the world violated Maori knowledge. As a distinct subject area, physical education, for example, contrasted a Maori holistic view of health and physical activity (p.202)

Although this statement takes place within a specifically Aotearoa/New Zealand context, this theme was also central to *The Report on Consultations with Provincial/Territorial Aboriginal Sport Bodies on the Draft Policy Framework* (Sport Canada, 2003), in which Native Canadians argued that sport needs to be more broadly defined to include linkages with all

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30. However, Dylan did note that the idea of the double helix or parallel sport system was not an accepted part of policy development by government officials in his experience.

physical activities in the lives of Native peoples, including other recreationally based physical activities.

Ultimately, in Amanda's experiences, a relationship focus was not embraced; not only did government officials not embrace the kinds of relationships she was trying to promote, but they were looking at her like "deers in the headlights". There were similar calls for an increase in relationships between Native organizations and groups to strengthen the unity, oneness, and strength of the movement towards self-determination and community wellness by working together, identified in discussions with Mason, Kelly, Melanie and Dylan.

*Moving Beyond the Policy Document as Outcome: Family relationships and 'the spirit of the policy.'*

In terms of building relationships, family type relationships were identified as being particularly desirable. As Mason said, he attempts to promote an environment of openness and trust by saying "we are all family, family. And keep harping at that. That we are family". When attempting to understand a holistic approach to relationships, I like to use the model of the four sided house (te whare tapa wha) as part of a holistic approach to wellness (Durie, 1994). One aspect of the four sided house is family (whanau), which is an important concept for Maori. It suggests that family and social relationships are legitimate concepts in areas such as health, business, or education. For example, a family group member may be considered more appropriate to teach in school than an outside professional. I believe this goes some way in explaining why Native peoples want family relations as well as professional relations. Dylan makes this point about connecting with others in the comfortable environment that other Native people provide, rather than professional and corporate environments that exist within dominant stream policy development structures. Morgan also makes this point when she spoke to her

experiences working within an Indigenous context, because people knew each other and they had a ‘common purpose’ about the community.

Mason, Morgan, Amanda, and Melanie all spoke to the importance of connecting back with the Native community. Morgan spoke to this when she said that working with the government system in the city

you get quite removed from the [Native] community...[getting back to the community] really grounded me again... you get to touch and feel the people.... If we don't get back to who it's all about, we sort of, forget, we forget what we are supposed to be doing.

From this perspective, a focus on a bottom-up approach (Kelly), in which there is a community level focus (Morgan), and in which relations are ‘humanized’ (Mason), captures the perceived strength of Native governance systems and family relations in developing policies with government entities. Continuing to promote these kinds of relationships, and promoting them as a legitimate and effective concept in joint policy ventures, appears to be a good strategy for developing effective policies for and with Native peoples.

When looking at the nature of joint policy ventures between Native peoples and state governments, Mason asks, “what is the spirit of our gathering?”. This question probes at deeper philosophical aspects of this relationship and what policy documents represent. It is a question that seeks to underline the values being promoted by relationships. For some Maori, the debate around the Treaty of Waitangi in Aotearoa/New Zealand involves a focus on the essence or spirit of the policy, rather than arguing and debating the particular meaning of a particular word, and how that changes the meaning of a document<sup>31</sup>. What is important is its essence. This idea was also noted by Patricia Monture-Agnus (1995), who when taking notes in a meeting with elders,

was told to put her pen down, so she could listen with her heart rather than make notes about specific details.

Amanda noted in the development of one policy that there was a lot of wordsmithing going on during the exchanges of the early drafts of the policy. She also noted that the wordsmithing became a game after a while and she would begin to fight over the use of a particular word. To me, this 'game' represents a symptom of a process that was (at least partially) about a narrow focus on the outcome of the policy between two competing groups, rather than a focus on process between collaborators. This is not to condemn the policy makers for their decisions; they were attempting to create the best policy they could within the framework it was being developed in. Morgan and Dylan similarly spoke to the importance of finalizing something in policy, so that Native peoples could hold the government accountable to it once a policy is approved<sup>32</sup>. Rather, my intention is to acknowledge that work needs to be done so that policy development reflects the collaborative and consensus approach rather than the competitive and defensive approach; this is facilitated by an open and honest assessment of the spirit in which the policy is developed. This approach is characterized in a quote by Maaka and Fleras (2005) noted in a previous chapter, which is worth repeating at this time:

indigenous claims to self determining sovereignty are not synonymous with independence or closure but embrace references to *relationships* that need to be nurtured

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31. The particular wording of the document is extremely important, but I argue that the essence of the policy is of primary importance. Furthermore, it is not just the policy document as an outcome that is important, but the process of the development of the policy documents is also of central importance.

32. Although, it should be noted, this does not guarantee anything in practice. For example, Aboriginal rights are firmly entrenched in the Canadian Constitution, but have had limited application because the term lacked definition. This point was also noted by Dylan, who repeatedly acknowledged the importance of cementing Native priorities in policy, whilst recognizing that action following these statements was where the real benefits of policy development take place. He also acknowledged that the government may not be living up to the stated values in their policies.

in partnership rather than borders that must be defended (p. 59, original emphasis).

What is desired is development of sound relations,

so even if the programs or whatever gets developed because of these policy things, those relationships would still be there, and people will find a way to make things work - even after those other tools [e.g., policies] are gone. Because if you don't build relationships then there is no concern for the other" (Amanda).

When the Native sport communities and government officials get together, I argue that establishing the right spirit of the gathering is one of the most fundamentally important aspects to creating effective policies and relationships. Whilst it cannot guarantee the development of effective policy, it appears to be a highly desirable characteristic of the relationships between those who develop it.

When Amanda notes that the policy making experience she had was not collaborative, but merely consultational, I ask, what is the spirit of this gathering? When government departments attempt to "extract information without going through the formal stages of consultation?" (Melanie), I ask, what is the spirit of this gathering? When policy drafts created by Native peoples enter the government system - where Native people lose the ability to work on that policy (Kelly) - I ask, what is the spirit of this gathering? When Indigenous sports organizations need to ask themselves if they are meeting the needs of their communities or are simply serving the needs of the government (Melanie), I ask, what is the spirit of this gathering? In an attempt to build relationships based on trust and openness that do not appear to be reciprocated by government bureaucrats (Amanda), I ask, what is the spirit of this gathering?

### *Conclusion*

#### **Are Indigenous sport leaders involved in the pursuit of the self-determination of Indigenous peoples in Canadian sport?**

The discussion above suggests that Native sport leaders are involved in the pursuit of self-determination in joint policy ventures with state governments; three central points can be drawn from this discussion. Firstly, identity for Native peoples is essential to self-determination. (Re)Connecting with our governance systems, lands, communities, histories, traditions and values through physical activities (or otherwise) is central to moving forward. The identification and promotion of such values for Native peoples was identified as an important aspect in contributing to policy development.

Secondly, forming relationships was the central theme outlined by this group of participants in the pursuit of self-determination in joint policy making. These relationships would be based on family type relations as well as professional relationships, and would humanize a relationship for the future. The relationship focus fits with an Indigenous approach to policy development, and also has the potential to create the most effective policies and future in sport for Canadians.

One upshot of this relationship focus is the third point, in which the spirit or intentions of joint policy making focuses on the process and not just the outcomes of collaborative ventures with state governments. Native/state relations historian J. R. Miller (1990) believes the most obvious trend in Native/state relations from contact to present is that the outcome will be the result of the intentions of the relations at the outset. Whether Indigenous peoples and the state see each other as equals working together, or see each other as impediments to their own objectives, the outcome will likely be the result of which perspective is taken.



## CHAPTER 6

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

#### *Sub-Problems 1 and 2: A Discussion*

The policy theme of equity/equality did not feature significantly in the themes as identified by the participating Native sport leaders. Equity/equality was a theme that was promoted by the government (in this case the federal/national government, and for the most part through Sport Canada) in the analyzed documents, as part of its agenda for equity/equality within Canadian society. Native peoples assume that they themselves and their perspectives are equally legitimate, and therefore there appears to be no need to promote this concept specifically.

The government, on the other hand, constantly reaffirms equity/equality in policy because it holds this stated value highly and also because it knows that in practice this value is not always present in the day to day lives of many Indigenous Canadians. However, I believe that Indigenous Canadians know that equity/equality in this form is (at least partly) rhetorical, for Native Canadians know that their choices, values, perspectives, worldviews, and ways of being are not considered equitable/equal to those of the dominant stream. Otherwise there would exist Native streams of sport, education, health, and justice equal to the dominant stream in Canadian society. Instead, there exists a shameful history of government attempts to eradicate these very ways of being. In the context of this study, such elements are being overlooked in the area of sport policy whenever Native ways of being significantly challenge the accepted belief that the Canadian government is the final arbiter of the rights of Indigenous Canadians. This point was best highlighted by Dylan, who noted the complete dismissal of the idea of incorporating a parallel approach in policy. Such an approach was combined with the acceptance of Native peoples as a “client group” whom the government identifies as being under-represented, rather

than as equal powers joining together as they work toward their collective goals and responsibilities.

The policy theme of Native distinctiveness seems to underlie much of what was discussed with the Native sport leaders. This is not surprising, given that Native distinctiveness was pursued by Native interests within policies, and would thus likely be relevant to the Indigenous policy makers. Native distinctiveness very neatly tied into the theme of identity, in which understanding, promoting, and living Indigenous values were considered an important part of self-determination; without knowing who you are you cannot be determining for yourself. Additionally, the idea of relationships and the double helix also ties into the notion of Native distinctiveness, in which being both connected and distinct are the basis for shaping the sport system in Canada for Native peoples. Dylan talked about how the importance of traditional teachings and the double helix were part of a process that “sought ways to explain why we are different, and why we take a different approach” , yet he had to do so “in a way that government could accept” .

The largest connection between the two sub-questions is where relationships are central to the current and ongoing basis of sport policy making. Whilst the second question points to the need to develop relations, the analysis of the policy documents themselves also make a telling point; that a relationship may undercut the needs of a rights based claim to Native self-determination as suggested in sub-question 1. Thus it is not as simple as promoting relationship building; the *type* of relationship that exists will significantly impact its outcome. The focus on similarities and mutual interests at the expense of other Native interests could be a result of the power dynamic between the government and Native sport leaders. A relationship that is based on an honest appreciation of shared histories and an openness to the legitimacy of an Indigenous

way of life, is best suited to building on tensions and differences. This is a sound basis for moving relations between Native sport leaders and state governments forward in the development of policy; this is looking forward to the past.

When attempting to focus on a difference or tensions approach to policy, challenges may be too difficult to work at in any given instance. For example, Dylan noted that a parallel system was rejected by government officials, and that communication broke down to a standstill when discussing this. The problem then becomes: how do you discuss a tension when that very tension completely shuts discussion down? Simply focusing on tensions will thus not guarantee addressing it successfully and could guarantee that a policy shuts down completely. Yet the focus on tensions whenever possible and wherever possible still appears to be a very useful approach to facilitate real engagement over the tough issues between Native peoples and government officials.

The focus on relationships is without question a focus on power. It is about shifting from a power-over approach, to power-with approach. It involves a restructuring of power to a set of interconnecting, horizontal, or circular power dynamics rather than the current power framework, which is more of a top-down hierarchical power dynamic. It would be naïve to believe that simply implementing this form of a relationship or Indigenous governance systems will mean the power framework will suddenly be (dis)solved. However, I believe there is still a place to focus on relationships, as such an approach may help to offset some of the power imbalances. For example, Amanda noted how in a government policy meeting the room was arranged like two rows of opposing tables which, in part, lead to a confrontational type arrangement. Whereas Kelly noted how the physical setup of the room was different when it was led by Native peoples and could promote a more dispersed set of power relations. This could be one small example of

how incorporating Indigenous governance styles may help to promote the kinds of relationship building that Native sport leaders desire.

Developing family type relations (as suggested by Mason) may also help to offset power imbalances by loosening political positioning, because it will promote making policies with real people in order to provide relevant opportunities to “real people” (Dylan). It promotes opportunities for real people rather than promoting opportunities for a faceless abstraction like a category of people: “Native peoples”. By humanizing the relationship (Mason) and by creating concern for each other (Amanda), policy processes could develop an environment that creates interest in facilitating each others’ needs. This is no easy task given the divide in perspectives between some Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. But it is about developing relations *with* rather than *for* Native peoples, and also promoting the centrality of people. What is the most important thing in the world? (He aha te mea nui o te ao?) It is people! It is people! It is people! (He tangata! He tangata! He tangata!).

*The Central Problem: A Discussion*

**How can Indigenous peoples learn from their teachings and experiences in order to enhance the self-determination of Indigenous peoples’ sporting practices, through the development of sport and physical activity policies and programs?**

There are, I believe, a number of insights provided by this study with regards to the role that traditional teachings play in the pursuit of self-determination for Native peoples. The role of traditional governance systems appears to be the best route for developing policies for Native Canadians. This includes a focus on relationships, on horizontal or circular power structures rather than a top-down power dynamic, and on a consensus rather than competing factions and working in silos. Such teachings are also backed up by the experiences of those participating in

the study, who found that building relationships with individuals within the dominant stream of sport was a significant project for them in how they promoted self-determination within sport through policy. The experiences also suggest a need to move beyond the policy document as output, and to develop good intent and spirit within policy development.

This process, though, is not only a challenge to the current power dynamic, but a challenge to how power itself is understood. A shift from a power-over dynamic to a power-with dynamic would require that state governments come on board with Indigenous governance patterns, and this study offers partial insights into how that process could move forward (for e.g., building family type relations). It appears that building on Native histories and traditions of the past does offer a legitimate basis for moving Native/state relations forward. What situates itself in the centre of this issue is whether Native distinctiveness (as understood by Native peoples), can be considered a truly legitimate means to develop policy and relations by both Native sport leaders and state governments. In other words, when will we see the end of policy statements regarding Indigenous Canadians as *equals* within the Canadian sport system? And when will Native worldviews and values be considered *equal* to those of the dominant stream?

#### *A Discussion of Self-Determination and Self-Government*

Whilst the focus of this study has been on the self-determination of Native peoples through sport policy, I also briefly detailed the related role that self-government plays in policy development (in Chapter 2). Fleras' (1999) four levels of self-government are useful for looking at the context of Native sport policy. The first two levels (statehood and nationhood) appear to be beyond the context of recent sport policies.

The third (municipal) level of governance refers to control of culturally based community governance that works with and in the dominant stream structures. This third

level appears to closely represent recent sport policy making because the Native leaders worked with and in dominant stream structures to participate in directing sport opportunities.

The fourth (institutional) level of governance refers to the provision of meaningful representation to decision making powers through institutional accommodations. This fourth level is very similar to the types of processes involved in the development of recent sport policies. For example, Native peoples were able to make contributions to the CSP (2002) through provisions for providing equitable representation, such as the Indigenous roundtables in the development of the policy. The prominence of the theme of equity/equality speaks to the importance of providing institutional representation. Native leaders were also able to make very meaningful contributions to the SCPAPPS (2005) document, as they were key consultants in the development of the policy.

Yet, the role of consultants rather than collaborators suggests that efforts for self-determination do result in some self-government type effects in policy. This should be no surprise; this is the current approach to Indigenous policy in Canada, regardless of what the policy focus is (e.g., on band governance, resource management, or sport). It appears that the Canadian government is 'giving' Indigenous Canadians a limited measure of control over their sporting practices through measures of institutional accommodations that bring Native peoples into dominant stream governance patterns. This unfortunately, and perhaps unintentionally, legitimizes the myth that the Canadian state has the ability to adjudicate over the lives of Indigenous nations.

Notwithstanding the discussion above, Indigenous policy also has the capacity to achieve higher levels of self-government. For example, the development of P/TASBs (which have strong roots in federal/national policy) have been able to facilitate what resembles the third level of self-government. Thus, whilst Fleras (1999) would never propose that any example would fit neatly into any particular level of self-government, this study does show some of the complexity involved when looking at self-determination and self-government in policy. What Fleras' levels of self-government do show, is that the higher levels of self-government appear to be more aspirational than actual within the context of current sport policy administration.

### *Conclusion*

This study started out with questions about the nature and prominence of self-determination of Native Canadians in federal/national level sport policies. This study attempted to build upon an Indigenous perspective and understanding of knowledge and research to investigate the ways in which Native peoples' thoughts and experiences could provide insight into the processes relevant to self-determination in sport policy making.

In the first sub-question, three themes were identified as central in the frameworks for the development of eight federal/national level sport policies and documents – interest and goal directed policy, equity/equality, and native distinctiveness. Interest and goal directed policy suggests that the policies should work to the interests of both Native peoples as well as the dominant stream of sports. However, the focus on mutually beneficial aspects of sport development means that many Native interests never become an important part of the policy making process because they may be considered by federal bureaucrats as being outside the interests of the dominant stream of sports.

Because of this, I suggest that when developing policy a focus on tensions between Native peoples and the government officials could be an effective way to seriously engage in the issues surrounding Indigenous difference, rather than simply working around them. The second theme of equity/equality was similar to the first theme, in that it focused on similarities, equality, and sameness rather than difference. Such an approach suggests that it is only inequity for Native Canadians that is enabling *Indigenous sport policy development, rather than claims for Native rights to a self-determining future.*

The final theme spoke of Native difference as being central to the development of sport opportunities for Indigenous Canadians. Thus, how similarities and differences are dealt with in sport policies is a key idea identified by the analysis. What is at issue is not difference per se, but rather how difference is legitimized and understood. The assumption of Native difference that is based on Native peoples being an ethnic minority who is equal to other Canadians - and who shares the same needs and wants as other Canadians - is readily accepted in the development of sport policy. However, Native difference that is based on Native peoples as a national minority - with claims to sovereignty, Native rights, and a nation-to-nation basis for relationship with the governments - was not identified as being relevant to the development of sport policies.

The discussion with Native sport leaders also provided a number of insights about how self-determination was pursued in the development of sport policies. Identity was recognized as being an important part of self-determination, as it is essential to know who you are as a people in order to be determining for yourself. Relationships were also seen as a central way in which self-determination was pursued through policy development.



Developing relationships, particularly family type relationships, was considered an important avenue for promoting Native control over their sporting and physical activities. Part of this process is moving beyond the policy document as an output of policy making, and focusing on the processes of policy development in which values that form the basis for relations between Native sport leaders and government representatives are crucial to the outcomes of Indigenous sport policy making.

Based on this study, I suggest that prioritizing Indigenous perspectives, worldviews, and values in governance structures presents an effective path for policy development. Indigenous governance systems, however, challenge the current framework for policy development, and promote a power-with approach over the current power-over approach. Although a relationship focus is promoted by Native sport leaders, my analysis of the policy documents suggests that not just any kind of relationship will work. A relationship that seeks to engage on issues of Native difference, and ultimately takes Native distinctiveness seriously, will be a significant step forward for Native self-determination in physical activities.

This study has now come full circle; in the introduction section I quoted Fleras (1999) when he stated that although “Indigenous-State relations are constructed and conducted through official policy and administration... [they] are secured at the level of tacit assumptions and patterns of engagement” (p. 191). The tacit assumptions in sport policy include the idea that Indigenous peoples are a group of people totally subsumed within government jurisdiction who are not sovereign peoples with the right to self-determination, which has led to a mutually benefiting approach towards policy making. The assumption that the Native community will work towards the needs of the

government, rather than the other way around has led to the promotion of government interests in sport policy. The assumption that Native peoples are equal to (or the same as) others has led to an approach towards inclusion that builds on the inequalities of Native peoples rather than a nation-to-nation basis for this relationship, which has led to sport policies promoting the governments' sports interests whilst overlooking some Native interests.

Developing policy within the patterns of engagement that were largely structured by the government has led to a policy-directed, rather than a people-directed approach. This approach focuses on professional relationships, in which competing factions bid for support, funding, and prioritization of their goals. Policy documents become outputs of government systems, rather than part of a process to build and maintain a healthy and empowering sport system. This top down approach has led to Native sport organizations following the leadership of government officials, rather than meeting the needs of their communities. Patterns of engagement of ideas in sport have been shaped by a focus on similarities, rather than engaging in tensions about competing interests, knowledges, and needs in sport, all of which have severely limited what sport policy can achieve for Native peoples. Fleras' (1999) point turns out to be strikingly accurate in discussing recent Indigenous sport policy at the federal/national level in Canada.

#### *Strengths of the Study*

- Grounding research in an indigenous perspective, to ask questions most relevant to Indigenous communities, to build on traditional knowledges, to gather knowledge in ways that are appropriate for Indigenous peoples, and to report research in ways that Indigenous peoples can access, promotes an extremely rich path for the future of

Indigenous research. This very point was unfortunately obvious to me in a recent Native research conference I attended, in which many of the Indigenous led research projects were stimulating, asked good questions, and provided paths to move forward. This was not necessarily the case with non-Indigenous led research on Indigenous issues. I found that these presentations were often initiated through government agencies, were sometimes not useful, not relevant, or did not provide possibilities for future direction for or by Indigenous peoples in the research.

- The other main strength of this research is that it contributes knowledge in an area that is not widely published. Not only is there very little research done on Native policy within the field of sports, but there is very little research within Native studies on sports. Given the number of research areas within the field of Native studies and sports, this means that there are many areas that have very little in the way of research. For example, research on sport policy and Native peoples has not been widely published, nor has there been much in the way of theoretical developments in Native studies on sports. This study hopes to offer a very small contribution to this gap in the literature. I could perhaps better characterize this gap as a lack of researchers, students, political will, prioritization of Native research issues, and a history of overlooking and denigrating Indigenous theory and knowledge as a legitimate means in the production of publicized knowledge.

#### *Recommendations for Future Research*

Exploring the ways that relationships can be forged, strengthened and maintained between Native and non-Native peoples would help to create a new process for moving forward together through policy. Such research could include looking for models or best practices where successful relationship forming has taken place. In addition to this, I think it would be vital to

investigate how the results of policy making can be evaluated in terms of strength of the relationship building processes in policy making, and how this affects the effectiveness of policy. This would include examining how good relationships can positively or negatively impact policy making in both the short and long term. Another point worth investigating is the degree to which communities that exercise more self-determination over their physical activities, can or cannot initiate more relevant, appropriate and empowering practices for Native peoples, including policy development.

In terms of the policies themselves, developing a more in-depth analysis and knowledge of specific policies and how they were made would be beneficial, with specific emphasis on SCPAPPS (2005). A further discussion on specific measures that policy makers believe are the best paths forward in policy development – which was not a focal point of the study - would go some way in helping to provide possibilities for future policy making. In addition, a discussion with government representatives/ bureaucrats to understand how they approach a partnership/collaboration/relationship would also be very important in terms of facilitating a mutual engagement on Indigenous needs and understanding how they would best proceed on future policy development. However, given that there is so much missing from Native sport literature, let alone Native sport policy literature, there are truly many areas within this field that could positively impact the literature.

As a final point, it appears that recreation may offer the most robust opportunities to be self-determining in physical activity, because moving into the mainstream for high performance opportunities, coaching, leagues, or events will require necessary and significant compromise. Recreation can be locally controlled, community specific, and is much less dependant on outside input. I believe that further research into this area may offer new insight about where Native

peoples should prioritize their efforts in terms of creating the most relevant and empowering physical activities for their people.

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APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

## Document Analysis Framework

Title:

Date:

KEY ACTORS	
LEGITIMATION(S)	
PROBLEM DEFINITION	
ATTRIBUTIONS	
DECISION FRAME	

## APPENDIX B

## Document Analysis Framework – example 1.

Title: Sport Canada's Policy on Aboriginal Peoples' Participation in Sport

Date: 2005

KEY ACTORS	Sandra Roach Alwyn Morris Rick Brant
LEGITIMATIONS	<p>An Aboriginal sport system has been emerging</p> <p>Building on progress in relations with Aboriginal people and state</p> <p>Building on progress on recent policies/documents that have facilitated equity in sport (CSP, Physical Activity and Sport Act)</p> <p>Building on progress of recent developments in Aboriginal Affairs (e.g., Creation of committee on Aboriginal Affairs, Aboriginal Secretariat, Aboriginal Peoples' Sport Roundtable)</p> <p>Continues the key values and four key goals of the CSP</p> <p>Sport has the potential to decrease health spending, develop Native peoples socially, promote pride in heritage.</p> <p>There is a need to be inclusive of all Canadians, so that everyone may benefit from sport</p> <p>Incorporating all stakeholders into a cohesive sport system will work best for Aboriginal peoples</p> <p>Sport can be used to overcome negative statistics in education, suicide, health</p> <p>A number of barriers exist with regards to participation: awareness, economic circumstances, cultural insensitivity, coaching capacity, distance, jurisdiction, racism, and sport infrastructure.</p>
PROBLEM DEFINITION	Establish a direction for inclusion and participation of Aboriginal peoples that builds upon the values of the CSP, and hence incorporate Aboriginal peoples as stakeholder to create a sport system that caters to all Canadians.
ATTRIBUTIONS	<p>Aboriginal peoples are important part of Canada</p> <p>Promote the importance of traditional culture, and physical activity</p> <p>Recognize Aboriginal peoples are comprised of a heterogeneous group</p> <p>Respect traditional customs</p>

	<p>Incorporate remote communities' interests</p> <p>Work with Aboriginal leaders to achieve common goals</p> <p>Develop Aboriginal sport from playground to podium</p> <p>Work with the existing Aboriginal sport system</p> <p><u>Participation:</u></p> <p>Create equitable access to sport system</p> <p>Recognize unique needs and diversity in Aboriginal population</p> <p>Be inclusive of Aboriginal peoples, and their sports</p> <p>Include traditional aspects in coaching programs</p> <p>Promote major games, which can build pride and provide competitive opportunities</p> <p>Use sport to combat social problems</p> <p><u>Excellence:</u></p> <p>Create opportunities to develop athletes into high performance levels</p> <p><u>Capacity:</u></p> <p>Work with Aboriginal peoples in developing policy and programs</p> <p>Promote the need for quality and appropriate resources for Native sport</p> <p>Strengthen Aboriginal leadership in sport</p> <p>Promote access to coaching development opportunities</p> <p>Promote Aboriginal sport research</p> <p>Policies and programs need to be culturally sensitive and flexible</p> <p><u>Interaction:</u></p> <p>Federal relations with Aboriginal peoples can facilitate government and Aboriginal objectives</p> <p>P/T relations with Aboriginal peoples is good for P/T and Aboriginal governments</p> <p>Sport organizations (NSOs, MSOs, P/T sport bodies) can play a key role in partnerships within the sport system</p> <p>Supporting Aboriginal peoples reflects Canadian values</p> <p>Implement an action plan</p>
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DECISION FRAME	Aboriginal peoples are an important part of the Canadian sport system, and the state must work with them to increase inclusion and relevance of sport for Aboriginal peoples. This includes promoting the use of traditional teachings, building Native leadership, and developing the Native sport system in order to achieve common goals that work to strengthen the Canadian sport system and its values.
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## APPENDIX C

## Document Analysis Framework – example 2.

Title: The Best Report

Date: 1992

KEY ACTORS	J.C. Best (Chairman) Marjorie Blackhurst (Member) Lyle Makosky (Member) <b>Alwyn Morris</b>
LEGITIMATION(S)	<p>Sport is important to Canada and its government Sport is good for Canada Sport is a means to desired ends Sport is important to Canada's own national identity Sport is important to Canada's international standing High performance sport is more important than participatory based sport Canada should continue to work towards high-performance sport Uncertainty exists in the Canadian sport system, prompted by Dubin's questioning of values and ethics. The crisis is damaging to the sport system and the government; it needs to be resolved The Canadian sport system lacks cohesion, harmony, a united vision, and common goals The Canadian government needs new direction to leave troubles in the past A more efficient sport system is a better sport system Sport should serve the purposes of the federal government</p> <p><b>Indigenous peoples are deserving of particular attention in policy because they have been largely overlooked</b></p> <p><b>Indigenous peoples are not really part of the Canadian sport system</b></p> <p><b>There is a lack of high performance athletes</b></p> <p><b>Indigenous sports lack facilities, management capacity, and professionalism</b></p> <p><b>Lack of connection with the mainstream</b></p> <p><b>Sport has the capacity to develop individuals and communities in terms of traditional values, spirituality, leadership and role models</b></p> <p><b>Social problems (e.g., substance abuse) and social adjustment for Natives in mainstream institutions are key barriers</b></p> <p><b>Native peoples should contribute to the Canadian sport system, and to high-performance</b></p>

	<p><b>competitions</b>  <b>The mainstream sport system is the desired endpoint for all Canadian athletes</b>  <b>Native peoples are a disadvantaged group who deserve a fair go in the Canadian sport system</b>  <b>Moving Indigenous athletes into the mainstream will help to maintain the common vision of a national strategy for Canadian sport</b></p>
<p>PROBLEM DEFINITION</p>	<p>Stakeholders should identify the purpose and place of sport in Canada, the values and ethics sport should hold, and the roles for each stakeholder within the sport sector. The specifics of the report are to include three major themes: values and ethics, a national agenda for sport, and shared leadership.  <b>How can access and equity be facilitated within the Canadian sport system for Indigenous peoples?</b></p>
<p>ATTRIBUTIONS</p>	<p>There is a need to identify the government's future role and relationships within sport.  Need for non-government entities to play a bigger role in sport. Involve a broad range of stakeholder opinions, yet incorporate them into a government directive  Promote sport as part of Canadian culture  The role of the federal government is to provide national leadership  Develop a national plan based on shared leadership and integration  Sport has a social obligation to human rights and should be accessible and equitable for all  Creating a unified and collaborative approach to sport at the national level will enhance the system's efficiency and productivity  <b>Develop a secretariat to improve connection and communication with the mainstream sport system</b>  <b>Providing a voice for Indigenous communities will promote access to sport</b>  <b>A holistic approach to sport that is based on traditional teachings, will provide strength and pride for Native athletes so they can move into the mainstream sport system</b>  <b>Developing high-performance athletes will promote inclusion in the Canadian sport system</b>  <b>Including Indigenous peoples into the mainstream sport system will promote a harmonious sport system</b></p>

DECISION FRAME	<p>The sport system is best for Canada and the government if it can become more efficient and productive. Promoting more participation and more high-performance athletes will be best served by a national plan that incorporates all stakeholders' perspectives into government directives.</p> <p><b>Indigenous peoples should be treated as an under-represented group, whose needs are best met by facilitating access and equity to the mainstream sport system. From this perspective, Canada's sport system should be as inclusive as reasonably possible.</b></p> <p><b>Indigenous peoples deserve relevant and empowering sporting practices that promote traditional teachings. The Canadian sport system should accommodate these needs, when incorporating them into the mainstream system. Developing high-performance athletes will help both Indigenous and government objectives. In this way sport can promote 'harmony' in Canada. Indigenous interests should be included in the government's objectives.</b></p>
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## APPENDIX D

### DETAILING THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE DECISION FRAMES

In order to create the decision frames I undertook four steps that will be used in an example below to help explain how this process worked. The example will work backwards to break down the process, yet in practice they were developed in reverse order to how they are presented here. The steps are:

1. Identifying the decision frame.
2. Identifying the problem definition.
3. Identifying the attributions.
4. Identifying the legitimations.

#### 1. Identifying the decision frame.

The following is the decision frame for document 8 (as per Appendix B):

Aboriginal peoples are an important part of the Canadian sport system, and the state must work with them to increase inclusion and relevance of sport for Aboriginal peoples. This includes promoting the use of traditional teachings, building Native leadership, and developing the Native sport system in order to achieve common goals that work to strengthen the Canadian sport system and its values.

The decision frame was developed by using the problem definition, which for document 8 (as per Appendix B) is:

Establish a direction for inclusion and participation of Aboriginal peoples that builds upon the values of the CSP, and hence incorporates Aboriginal peoples as a stakeholder to create a sport system that caters to all Canadians.

Whilst using the problem definition as a basic outline for the decision frame, I also incorporated the attributions into it. For example, the following are some of attributions of document 8 (as per Appendix B) that are easily identifiable as being incorporated into the decision frame for that document.

Aboriginal peoples are an important part of Canada  
 Promote the importance of traditional culture, and physical activity  
 Respect traditional customs  
 Create equitable access to sport system  
 Recognize unique needs and diversity in aboriginal population  
 Be inclusive of aboriginal peoples, and their sports  
 Include traditional aspects in coaching programs  
 Strengthen Aboriginal leadership in sport

Policies and programs need to be culturally sensitive and flexible  
 Federal relations with Aboriginal peoples can facilitate government and  
 Aboriginal objectives  
 Work with Aboriginal peoples in policy and programs  
 P/T relations with Aboriginal peoples is good for P/T and Aboriginal  
 governments  
 Supporting Aboriginal peoples reflects Canadian values  
 Promote access to coaching development opportunities  
 Work with Aboriginal peoples in developing policy and programs

## 2. Identifying the problem definition.

The decision frame was developed by using the problem definition, which for document 8 (as per Appendix B) is:

Establish a direction for inclusion and participation of Aboriginal peoples that  
 builds upon the values of the CSP, and hence incorporate Aboriginal peoples as a  
 stakeholder to create a sport system that caters to all Canadians.

The decision frame was developed from the document itself, along with the legitimations.  
 The building of the values of the CSP is a legitimation of the policy, as well as one of the  
 document's key guiding values. Similarly, the inclusion and participation focus was a  
 legitimation as well as a guiding value in the document.

## 3. Identifying the attributions.

The legitimations were important because they helped to frame the attributions and the  
 decision frame. For example, the following are two of the attributions (as per Appendix  
 B) of document 8.

Federal relations with Aboriginal peoples can facilitate government and  
 Aboriginal objectives  
 P/T relations with Aboriginal peoples is good for P/T and Aboriginal  
 governments

These attributions were created, in part, by the legitimations. The following are some  
 examples of the legitimations of document 8 (as per Appendix B) that were important in  
 developing the above attributions:

Building on progress in relations with Aboriginal peoples and the state  
 Building on progress on recent policies/documents that have facilitated equity in  
 sport  
 Building on progress of recent developments in Aboriginal Affairs (e.g., creation  
 of committee on Aboriginal Affairs, Aboriginal Secretariat, Aboriginal Peoples'  
 sport roundtable)  
 Continues the key values and four key goals of the CSP

The attributions were developed through the document itself. The following are two quotes of document 8 that are important to the examples of attributions of document 8 above.

a) Enhancing Aboriginal Peoples' participation in sport can make significant contributions to advancing the Government of Canada's objectives. Building stronger relations with other federal departments to identify and collectively address shared objectives through sport will maximize results;

b) Enhancing Aboriginal Peoples' participation in sport can make significant contributions to advancing the objectives of Provincial/Territorial and Aboriginal governments. Stronger relations among all Federal and Provincial/Territorial government departments and Aboriginal governments in support of Aboriginal Peoples' participation in sport will maximize individual efforts to the benefit of Aboriginal Peoples;  
(SCPAPPS, 2005, p. 8)

#### 4. Identifying the legitimations.

The legitimations were shaped by the document itself, and were often found in the initial parts of the documents, which spoke to the importance, basis, rationale, and background information of the policy. The examples of legitimations as used above are:

Building on progress in relations with Aboriginal peoples and the state  
Building on progress on recent policies/documents that have facilitated equity in sport  
Building on progress of recent developments in Aboriginal Affairs (e.g., creation of committee on Aboriginal Affairs, Aboriginal secretariat, Aboriginal Peoples' sport roundtable)  
Continues the key values and four key goals of the CSP

These legitimations were based largely on the document itself. The following are two extracts of document 8 that helped to form the above legitimations:

The Government of Canada has undertaken a number of steps and commitments to bring meaningful and lasting change in the relationship with Aboriginal Peoples and has situated Aboriginal issues in the upper echelon of federal policy and program priorities.  
(SCPAPPS, 2005, p. 1)

*Canadian Sport Policy...and... Physical Activity and Sport Act...* confirmed the Government of Canada's policy regarding the full and fair participation of all persons in sport and mandated the federal Minister responsible for sport to facilitate the participation of under-represented groups in the Canadian sport system.  
(SCPAPPS, 2005, p. 1)

## APPENDIX E

DETAILING THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE KEY THEMES FROM  
THE DECISION FRAMES

The three central themes in the document analysis (e.g., interest and goal directed policy) were identified from the analysis of the decision frames. The following is an example of how this was done.

The decision frames were coded into themes.

For example, the decision frame for document 1 (as per Appendix C) is coded (in bold type) as follows:

Indigenous peoples should be treated as an under-represented group, whose needs are best met by facilitating access and equity to the mainstream sport system. From this perspective, Canada's sport system should be as inclusive as reasonably possible. **(Equity and Equality)**  
 Indigenous peoples deserve relevant and empowering sporting practices that promote traditional teachings **(Native distinctiveness)**.  
 The Canadian sport system should accommodate these needs, when incorporating them into the mainstream system **(Native distinctiveness, mainstream objectives)**.  
 Developing high-performance athletes will help both Indigenous and government objectives. In this way sport can promote 'harmony' in Canada. **(Mutual interests)**  
 Indigenous interests should be included in the government's objectives. **(Mutual interests)**

This was done for all of the decision frames, and then all themes were collated together, and separated into like categories.

For example, the following is an extract from the above decision frame, followed by a coded extract from the decision frame of document 8.

Indigenous interests should be included in the government's objectives. **(Mutual interests)**

... develop Native sport structures in order to achieve common goals that work to strengthen the Canadian sport system and its values **(Mutual interests, mainstream objectives)**.

Because both these extracts are similar with respect to the promotion of developing mutual interests, they were collated together to form part of the theme of mutual interests. This was done until all of the themes found in the decision frames were arranged into key

themes of the data (but two themes were not used because I chose to discuss dominant themes).

## APPENDIX F

## Interview guideline

(Firstly, share a bit about my background)

Would you like to share with me a little bit about your background?

Tell me about your involvement in sport throughout your life.

What is your role in sport and sport administration now?

How has the policy-making process worked when you have been involved?

What did you like or dislike about it?

Are there traditional Native practices being incorporated into that process?

If so, can you give me examples to make clear how they work?

Do you believe there is a difference between self-determination and self-government?

Do you believe there is a connection between sport and self-determination?

If so, can you give me any examples in your experiences in sport?

How important do you believe Indigenous self-determination is when making policy?

Does your idea of self-determination impact the ways in which you contribute to policy making?

Can you provide some examples of how this happened in your experiences?

Have you noticed any differences when working with Indigenous and non-Indigenous policy makers in developing Aboriginal sport policy?

Are you familiar with the double helix model for understanding Aboriginal sport within the Canadian sporting system?

How helpful do you find this model in expressing your understanding of the Aboriginal and mainstream sport systems?

## APPENDIX G

### LETTER OF CONSENT FORM



#### CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Title of Study: Indigenous Peoples, Politics, and Policy: Self-Determination and Federal Sport Policy in Canada.

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Braden Te Hiwi, a graduate student from the Kinesiology Department at the University of Windsor, as part of the thesis component of the Masters of Human Kinetics degree.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel to contact either Braden at (519) xxx-xxxx, or by email to [tehiwi@uwindsor.ca](mailto:tehiwi@uwindsor.ca), or to the Faculty supervisor, Dr. Vicky Paraschak at (519) 253-3000 ext 2445, or by email at [parasch@uwindsor.ca](mailto:parasch@uwindsor.ca).

#### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to explore the potential of indigenous knowledge, as is contained within traditional teachings and principles, as well as in the experiences of aboriginal peoples within sport policy circles, to best promote the self-determination of aboriginal sport practices through policy.

#### PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

1. You will be asked to participate in an in-person or telephone interview, and discuss any thoughts or experiences you would wish to discuss as we see relevant to a study on self-determination and aboriginal sport policy. I plan for each interview to be approximately 30-45 minutes in duration.
2. You will also be asked for your permission to have the interview recorded on an audio tape, in order to transcribe the interview to a word document. I will provide you with a written transcription of your interview for you to edit as you will.
3. I will also contact you (by phone or email) after the interview process to enable you to review relevant aspects of my analysis before the study is finalized in print, and make any edits or comments that you feel are necessary – however I have no expectations as to whether you wish to take part in this process, or to what degree you choose to.

#### POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

I anticipate there will be no physical, psychological or emotional harms done by the study. There is the possibility that you may be in sensitive occupation or role (e.g., a government position) that requires that there is no identification of yourself either explicitly or implicitly as part of the final study document.

Confidentiality will be offered to you, and any information you provide in the interview will be screened by you to see if it contains any information you do not want to be revealed. I will also offer the chance for you to review areas in the final document that refer to your interview, and let you and make changes to your quotes as you see fit. This will ensure that any information you see as undesirable will be not included in the study.

## POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

The study may also provide a chance for each participant to reflect on how self-determination may impact on their roles as policy makers. Exploring the complexities of self-determination in sport policy, may offer better insight as to the promotion of self-determination in other areas of sport, or indeed, other areas of aboriginal peoples' lives. The inclusion of self-determination in sport policy making processes would provide effective policy making possibilities, as it would be based on the needs and desires of sport as identified and directed by aboriginal peoples themselves.

This study takes an indigenous approach to studying sport, which offers a chance to offset the lack of attention of aboriginal peoples within sport literature. Additionally, whilst this study seeks to explore self-determination as focal point of the study, the use of indigenous-based theory and methods will also promote self-determination of indigenous research during the actual process of undertaking this research as well.

## PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

There will be no monetary payment for participation in this study.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

I will offer the opportunity for you to decide if you would like your comments to be made in confidentiality.

I will ensure that anybody that does not want to be identified in the research will not be. I will use a pseudonym or code name (i.e., Interview 1) to refer to each participant in the study report. The data, in the form of both audio tapes and written records, will be locked up and secured within a filing cabinet.

*Confidentiality will be offered to all participants, and any information you provide will be screened to see if it contains any potentially risky information, as per the sensitivity of your job/position. I will also offer the chance for you to review any quotes of relevance to you within the final document, so you can make changes as you see fit. This will ensure that information that you see as potentially risky will be not included in the study.*

## PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

## FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE SUBJECTS

Upon completion of the study, the final study report will be made available to you, in either a word document or in a hard copy. I will also send you a brief report of my initial findings once I have them.

## SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

This data may be used in subsequent studies.

## RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact: Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; e-mail: [ethics@uwindsor.ca](mailto:ethics@uwindsor.ca)



**SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT/LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE**

I understand the information provided for the study Indigenous peoples, politics, and policy: self-determination and federal sport policy in Canada as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Subject

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Subject

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR**

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Investigator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Revised February 2008

## APPENDIX H

## CODING THE INTERVIEW DATA INTO KEY THEMES

I will use the theme of the state governance systems working in silos to explain how I identified and sorted all the data into themes.

The following is an extract from an interview,

... learning to accept the way of life of bureaucracy... to understand that you are in a silo, that you have a specific mandate and it's very fixed and tight. How do you relate with someone that you should be talking to next door? (Mason).

This extract was initially coded as the theme 'connections and compartments', which meant that bureaucracy tended to foster an environment in which different compartments of the public sphere worked individually, rather than looking at fostering connections and areas of mutual interest. The extract was subsequently collated with other extracts that spoke to the 'silo' approach of government.

Examples of other extracts that were coded with the theme of silos are:

When discussing the prevalence of connections between the government organizations and Native policy makers, Amanda says that "there really weren't any linkages.... there is still a lot of silos".

Morgan said that in the government system people "worked in silos", and went on to contrast this to her experiences within a Native context in which people worked together with common purpose.

When referring to government organizations, Mason said that it is "very different because sometimes in my mind it is holistic. You guys [government departments] are all connected, [and] yet you [act like you] are disjointed".

All of these extracts referred to the dominant stream governance systems, but because they formed a significant aspect of the data they were arranged into a separate sub-theme that works under the broader theme of dominant stream governance.

This process was done with all of the coded data, until each of the themes were arranged into one of the key themes. However, there were many themes identified that did not fit well with the rest of the data and were subsequently discarded as not being a dominant aspect. Because the number of interviews is small (i.e., six), the interviews often spoke to different ideas and subsequently many themes were only discussed by one of the participants.

## VITA AUCTORIS

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