The Values in Community Curling: A Case Study

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Abstract

This qualitative case study research shows that within the realm of curling, the professionalization of the sport, at the national level, has limited to no effect on the core values of respect, belonging, and giving back that the grassroots level of curling identify as important.   Through an interview process with twelve community level curlers, from four separate clubs within the Niagara region, data were collected and analyzed using traditional coding techniques.   Utilizing institutional theory, the research shows a growing gap between the national level of curling and the grassroots level.   Data also shows that value alterations, at the community level, are based on the changing Canadian environment in regards to legislation (smoking and drinking laws) and social behaviours (the busier Canadian lifestyle) rather than changes at the national level.   These findings have a profound effect on how sports are administered in the Canadian sport system.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

Introduction

Curling has historically been a sport that reflects strong Canadian values (Mair, 2007; Mair, 2009; Weiting & Lamoureux, 2001; Maxwell, 2002).   As curling has such strong roots in Canadian culture one would assume that significant current research exists surrounding the sport, yet, limited academic research exists.   Mair (2007) described the role curling plays in defining the fluid Canadian identity, and also identified potential dramatic changes to curling due to both internal and external pressures.   Mair (2009) furthered her research through an ethnographic look at a day in the life of a small town curler – finding that curlers identify their curling club as a safe and homey place for social interactions. Leipert, Plunkett, Meagher-Stewart, Scruby, Mair, & Wamsley (2011) utilized a photovoice methodology, utilizing photos as data, and found similar results as Mair (2007, 2009) in that curlers find the curling club to be a place of social interaction and both physical and mental wellbeing.   These three studies significantly differentiate from the Canadian media narrative, which focuses on elite curling results due to Olympic success in both Vancouver and Sochi; as well as the current timing of the Scott Tournament of Hearts and the Tim Hortons Brier.

Curling, while current and academic research is limited, has been studied from a historical standpoint, especially within the popular literature environment (Maxwell, 2002; Pezer, 2003), While this lack of academic research makes understanding curling and participation in the sport challenging, there are insights and understandings that can be gathered through the data available in terms of television followership, major event attendance, and registration numbers. Such registration, attendance, and television

viewership information is gained through yearly Annual General Meeting minutes of both the Canadian Curling Association (CCA) as well as the member provincial and territorial associations.

To give an idea of participation in the sport in Canada, the CCA has approximately 1,000 member clubs (Canadian Curling Association, 2010).That translates into about 1,000 curling clubs in Canada who are operating and paying association fees to the Canadian Curling Association. As well as the number of clubs, the Canadian Curling Association boasts membership from each and every province and territory in Canada. While there are a handful of operating curling clubs that are not affiliated with the provincial and national association, those clubs represent a small percentage in terms of the total amount of clubs operating in Canada (Canadian Curling Association, 2010). In the 2013 Annual Report the CCA proclaimed to have almost 1 million curlers actively participating in curling.   In the same year, 2013, Hockey Canada showed approximately 650,000 individuals registered in programs – unfortunately adult leagues are not under the scope of Hockey Canada and as such a significant amount of participants are not included in that number (Hockey Canada, 2014).   These numbers attest to the widespread nature of curling in Canada and paint a picture of participation across the country.

A review of curling participation statistics provides demographic information about the average curler in Canada. Males comprise approximately 57 percent of Canadian curlers while woman comprise the remaining 43 percent, showing a sport that continues to have a strong pull towards equal participation by both genders (Lunt & Potwarka, 2011). Over 25 percent of curlers have a post secondary education and over

50 percent of curlers participate in volunteer activities within their communities (Lunt & Potwarka, 2011). In terms of age, 23 percent of curlers are between 35-49 years of age, 18 percent are between 25-34 years of age, and 16 percent are between 50-64 years of age (Lunt & Potwarka, 2011). An awareness of the age, gender, and educational background of the average Canadian curler provides a snapshot of the typical curler in Canada.

Another way in which the relevance of curling to Canadian society is measured is through television viewership. In 2010, the Season of Champions (The Men's Canadian Championship, the Woman's Canadian Championship, and the Canadian Junior Championship) saw its largest ever television ratings. The 2011 season had similar success beating out all past championships minus 2010, with 2010's massive numbers being associated with the Olympic Trials event (Canadian Curling Association, 2011). Again, these numbers alone do not fully describe the entire story of curling, curling participation, and the reasons why people interact with the game. What these television numbers do show, is a sport that Canadians embrace, at least in terms of multimedia viewership. Utilizing the registration numbers with these television numbers an even stronger case is made for the importance Canadians place on curling.

Notwithstanding the spectator and participation support that exists, this knowledge lacks any insight as to the meanings and values people associate with participation in the sport of curling. Research describes small town, community-based events – which traditionally focus on socialization and social development - while current information from the CCA is based strongly around financial numbers and elite curling events (Maxwell, 2002; Mair, 2007).There is an inherent tension between the focus of

community based curling clubs described by academic research (Mair, 2007; Mair, 2009) and the business and elite focus presented by the CCA. This disconnect between two understandings make explaining curling as a culture difficult.

If, as stated earlier, curling is a significant part of our Canadian identity, it is essential to understand the ways in which people interact and engage with the sport. As Canadian National Sporting Organizations (NSO) transition from kitchen table management (Stevens, 2003), to Olympics success (Kikulis, 2000), and further towards the Sport for Life and Athlete Development model it becomes important to gain an understanding of how, or if, these cultural changes and policies have affected engagement in curling. Therefore it is logical that there is a need for research on the current state of curling, specifically at the grassroots level.

Grassroots Sport

Grassroots sport is defined as a volunteer run organization that takes place at a community level (Sharpe, 2006). Typically the focus of grassroots sports organizations is the production of viable sports options for youth with the goal of participation and increased physical health within the community. Traditionally, curling clubs within Canada have fit within this grassroots area of recreation. Curling clubs, especially in Western Canada, were built not just for the sport itself (Maxwell, 2002; Pezer, 2003), as the clubs were considered to be multifaceted. The local curling club was the local gathering spot, the town bar, the town hall, weddings were held there, parties were held there, and generally it was an open and accessible place for all members of the community (Maxwell, 2002; Russel, 2003; Pezer, 2003).

This accessibility and multifaceted dimension mirrors the philosophies that Butler (1940) discussed in his definition of community recreation. Butler (1940) defines community recreation as "recreation services that are provided for the benefit of all the people" (p. v). Butcher & Haywood (1994) furthers this definition by including community recreation as a branch of community practice, where community practice is a decision making and service delivery approach that public service providers can utilize. Curling clubs have been seen as a place in which there is a focus on community, community engagement, and community building.

While there is an idealistic focus to grassroots organizations there are drawbacks and obstacles that these organizations must face. For a grassroots organization to succeed there is a need to leverage their internal resources to meet their goals (Sharpe, 2006). In many cases, especially in sport, this ability to leverage and maximize organizational capacity is extremely hard – capacity being the ability to function to the full extent of the abilities of those within the organization. In the case of the Appleton Minor Baseball Association (Sharpe, 2003) the league was unable to fulfill its mandate of fun and fair play because of a lack of resources within the organization. Following this concept of capacity, Kelly and Caputo (2005) suggest that community capacity takes more than strictly physical resources. Rather to have the capacity to succeed there must also be the ability to "identify, mobilize and address social problems" (pg. 235) through the usage of "human, physical, financial and social resources" (pg. 236). To this point, professionalization tends to minimize the unreliability of individual grassroots organizations ability to produce quality products/services through their ability to leverage resources that are human, physical, financial and social.

Grassroots recreation mirrors the ideologies presented by the traditional curling

communities as described by Mair (2007; 2009).   Capacity is one of the areas within

community development research that is leading communities and organizations towards

a focus on professionalization and structured management within sports and recreation

organizations.   Community capacity suggests that community groups must function with

a certain amount of professionalism to minimize unreliability and mismanagement.

There is a tension inherent in the professionalization of community based sport and

recreation.   This tension will be described further in the following corporatization of

sport section.

Corporatization of Sport

While the professionalization and corporatization of a community based sporting

organization may produce a more reliable product or service (Kelly & Caputo, 2005),

there is an ideological tension around the professionalization of recreation and the

consequences of it. Mason (2007) discusses the historical contexts of the

professionalization of European football (soccer) and one of the main arguments for non-

professionalization is that "to accept professionalism would mean accepting that what up

until then had been a voluntary leisure activity run by the participants for the participants

would in the future become a business" (p. 98). This statement implies a significant

difference between organizations run for amateur sport and those run for professional

sport athletes and economic gain. Within the sport of curling, the shift towards

corporatization has brought up many tensions and debates about how the game has

changed with respect to both its cultural significance and history (Weiting & Lamoureux,

2001; Mair, 2007). While not all researchers view this tension with the same lens or

intensity, a notion still exists that these two types of activities are mutually exclusive or,

at the very least, professionalized sport differs from community recreation – where we

find grassroots sport.

In the United Kingdom, there has been a call to reflect upon and understand how

elite sport has shaped policy and, through that, affected community sport (Green, 2004).

Green (2004) argues that this change has given priority to elite sports and, in turn, has

constructed a class system within recreation in school sport and recreation programs.

Green (2006) also argues that while the United Kingdom has a federal policy entitled

Sports for All, its focus on Olympic success and childhood obesity is leaving a significant

amount of the population out of recreational funding. While these findings are not

directly related to Canada or to the curling community, they do raise the question of

whether the same patterns are occurring within the Canadian curling system due to a

similar focus on Olympic and international success. Considering these patterns Mair

(2007) states;

> On the one hand, the values of small, locally-based clubs are appealing
> aspect of what many Canadians consider to be enduring, national
> qualities: amateurism, sportsmanship, socializing, volunteerism, and so
> on. On the other hand, the drive to make curling and Canadian curlers
> dominant in the global sports arena brings in contradictory tensions
> such as professionalization, standardization, and sponsorship. (p. 55)

This statement strengthens the idea of ideological tension between grassroots sport and

corporatized sport. Within curling the national level tends to reflect this corporate

model, while research accounts represent the grassroots model. Within this tension is

where this research will take place.

Institutional Theory

One way to help explain the current situation in Canadian curling is by using an institutional theory framework. Institutional theory asserts that organizations exist within an institutional field and those values, beliefs and standards that are commonly accepted within the field are considered legitimate and as such organizations within the field accept the values as appropriate (Dimaggio & Powell, 1983). These values are the context in which these tensions between grassroots and corporatized sports are born. At their core, grassroots sports and corporatized sports carry and maintain different value and belief sets. For example grassroots sport tends to focus on participation and social benefit rather than profit as seen in professional sports (Smith, 2000). Within the framework of institutional theory, since grassroots sport and professional sport share an institutional field, there needs to be a change in taken for granted beliefs and values – provoked by institutional pressures - by either one or both parties to reach/create the standards of the field.

Corporatization, as stated earlier, is based around profit, and meeting previously defined standards. Through research it is possible to gain an understanding of the current state of community level curling, and as such, understand how the tensions between corporate sport and grassroots sport have impacted community curling. This research is interested in identifying the values of the community level of curling, and understanding if those values relate to a grassroots or corporate focus. As well, interest will be paid to how or why these values have been associated with either grassroots or corporate ideologies. Understanding this focus of community level curling values will enable a deeper understanding of potential pressures, future directions, and potential changes

within the participation at the local curling clubs.   With these tensions in mind, institutional theory will be used to frame the way we understand the values in curling, particularly at the community level

Research Question

Due to these recognized tensions within curling, the purpose of this research was to investigate the values of a local curling community to see if they reflect the grassroots approach or the corporate approach to sport. This study utilized a qualitative case study analysis by interviewing community level curlers within the Niagara region in Canada. Using institutional theory, this research focused on the perceptions and values of those that participate in the sport of curling at the community level. Therefore the purpose of this study was two-fold:

1 – What are the values of community level curling?

2 – Are these values within community and national level curling similar/dissimilar? Why?

Summary

Curling has been identified in both academic research (Mair, 2007; 2009) and popular culture literature (Maxwell, 2002; Russel, 2003; Pezer, 2003) as an important part of the Canadian culture and identity.   Within current research there is a gap between the current information regarding the professionalization of curling and the traditional aspects of amateurism and community focus in the sport of curling.   As such, this research focused on curling and the values that exist within the curling environment at the community level.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

This literature review is arranged around three distinct sections. The first section focuses on the changes that have occurred in the sport of curling since its induction into the Olympic Games. The second section focuses on grassroots sports/organizations by explaining what makes an organization a grassroots organization as well as explaining its role in communities.   The third section explains institutional theory and how this theory is applicable to the current situation in curling.   Within the institutional theory section values are discussed. These three sections will tie together to form the framework in which the research question will be studied.

Changes in Curling

Curling, while popular in Canada, has its roots in Scotland as far back as 1511 – the date inscribed upon a curling stone that was found near Stirling, Scotland (Maxwell, 2002). While there are many interesting stories regarding the first curling game in Canada, they are all based on speculation. What we do know is that Canadians have adopted the game and consider it their own. As Maxwell (2002) explains;

> While we know we didn't invent the game, we know we have made it
> our own. We also think we know more about curling (we don't) and
> we think we are better at curling than anyone else (we aren't). And we
> are certain that curling belongs to us more than to anyone else (it
> doesn't). (p.15)

Curling has become a part of the Canadian cultural landscape. The sport itself has been a cultural signifier and "has made a unique and valuable contribution to the social and sports histories" of Canadians (Mair, 2007, pg. 41). While it is acknowledged that hockey is Canada's national sport, curling - with its amateur appeal - plays a strong role

in Canada's social and cultural setting as well (Weiting & Lamoureux, 2001; Mair, 2007).

Curling is culturally significant due to multiple factors, including what some would consider the ceremony or tradition surrounding its game. Within the curling community, there is a strict adherence to respectable manners as well as a small town focus (Maxwell, 2002; Leipert et al., 2011). A simple glance of the official CCA rule book (2010) and one can see the emphasis on fair play and the "unwritten". On the first page of the rule book, fair play is defined for a curling atmosphere;

> Fair Play begins with the strict observance of the written rule; however, in most cases, Fair Play involves something more than even unfailing observance of the written rule. The observance of the spirit of the rules, whether written or unwritten, is important. (pg. 3)

While most sports, especially at the grassroots level, can be played without an official, curling is unique in its ability to be played without official intervention even at the highest level. While all Ontario Curling Association sanctioned events must have an official on-hand, rarely is their presence needed by the athletes. Curlers, understanding the traditions of the game, will call their own foul. Even in the Hollywood film about curling *Men with Brooms*, the protagonist calls his own foul on the most important shot of the movie, because it is in the best interest of the game (Gross, 2002). These themes paint the story of a sport that is acknowledged as being amateur driven and culturally built.

Within the sociological literature on recreation, Mair (2007; 2009) discusses curling, specifically in the Western Canada, and her interviewees are often farmers who have free time to participate during the winter months. These individuals see the curling club as a place of socialization and, in many small rural Canadian towns, the community

center, town hall, and pub. Maxwell (2002) writes, "There was nothing fancy about most clubs. What was important was the sense of belonging, of becoming involved in a game that attracted most members of the community" (p. 58). Following this line of thinking, Mair (2009) describes a curling club as a "third place" (pg. 461), or a "neutral place, which acts as a social leveller in that individuals participate equally" (pg. 461). Approaching community curling as a "third place" speaks to the traditional amateur appeal as it is a place of socialization and community as much as it is a place of sport and competition.

The traditional marketing of curling focuses on how Canadians have socially constructed the game and how they believe that it is "an accessible sport" (Mair, 2007, p. 40). The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) marketed the 1996 Olympic demonstration event by quoting Mike Harris, the skip of the Canadian team, "the curler is your neighbour. It's a small town game. It's a grassroots game anyone can identify with" (Mair, 2007, p. 40). There is also the idea that, while curling is not just an outlet for physical activity, it is an essential social hub and, in many cases, a support group, especially for seniors (Mair, 2009). All of these are explicit examples of ways in which curling has been linked to the concept of a third place.

Most histories of curling repeat the values Mair (2007; 2009) discusses, yet, the current state of curling produces a different, more professionalized, narrative. Wieting and Lamoureux (2001) introduce the idea of this changing narrative through the concept of tension between community sport and elite sport;

> Every sport that becomes part of the summer or winter Olympics'
> program has gone through a series of professionalization steps. These
> have included the increasingly refined codification of rules,
> standardization of playing venues, the generating of capital to sustain

events, and eventually the provision of prizes, salaries, and expenses
for elite players. Curling has experienced these relatively recently, and
certainly, as has been the case with other sports, not without
considerable controversy. (pg. 150)

Furthering this thought, Wieting and Lamoureux (2001) define one of these controversies

as "the need to maintain the purity of the sport's history and integrity in Canada and the

attempts to make it a popular and marketable sport in other countries" (pg. 141). This

statement implies that a significant difference exists between organizations run for

amateur sport and those run with corporate mandates.

Over the last twenty years, there have been points of reference for how this

tension that Wieting and Lamoureux (2001) speak of has developed within the curling

fraternity. Through the course of this review, multiple points of reference will be

discussed to explain the change in curling at the national level. Some of the major events

include; curling becoming an Olympic event, the formation of the World Curling Players'

Association (and the events that led up to its creation), and the hiring of Greg Stremlaw

as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the CCA. These points are crucial to the

understanding of the change in curling as they all represent significant movement towards

a professionalized state of curling in Canada.

Curling in the Olympics.

As it is apparent that entrance into the Winter Olympic environment is a

benchmark event for Canadian curling, this section is dedicated to describing major

events starting from curling being introduced as an Olympic demonstration sport in 1992

to the present time. Within these descriptions there will be an understanding of how

these events have shifted the organizational values or outlook of the CCA at the national

level.

While curling had been a demonstration sport in the 1932 and 1988 Winter

Olympics, the 1992 Olympics was a significant landmark. In 1992, curling was included

in the Olympics as a demonstration sport for the second Olympics in a row and,

following the games, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) gave curling official

medal status for the 1998 Nagano Olympics (World Curling Federation, nd). The

introduction into the Olympic community identified curling as a sport that was

considered to have worldwide participation as well as a strong organizational structure

(both are pre-defined criteria to be an Olympic sport). While the entrance into the

Olympics is a momentous moment of change for curling, the ability to reach this moment

is actually a signifier of change that had already occurred. For curling to be accepted, the

sport had already made the necessary changes.

The World Curling Federation (WCF) had been trying to make curling an official

Olympic event from their beginnings in 1959 (Maxwell, 2002). Through this process, the

WCF encountered a significant amount of politics with the decision making process at

the IOC, as well as with the policy regarding entrance into the Olympics. One of the

major hurdles the WCF faced was that for a sport to be included in the Olympics

competition, it must be played by at least 25 member countries on 3 or more continents.

To this end, the WCF went on a recruitment spree to reach the mandated amount of

countries, filling this requirement in 1991 (Maxwell, 2002).   However, there was still the

issue of convincing the IOC's member nations that curling was worthy of Olympic status

through a voting process. While the WCF now had the required member nations, its

proposal was voted down twice. In 1992, the IOC finally accepted curling as an official

Olympic sport for the 1998 Nagano Olympics. Many believe that the acceptance was

based upon the organizers of the Nagano bid personally lobbying IOC President Juan

Antonio Samaranch to include the sport (Pezer, 2003).

Inclusion in the Olympic program marked a significant milestone for curling.

Through the ability of the WCF to adapt and change to meet the requirements of the IOC,

curling was accepted into the Olympics. However, this acceptance changed the face of

curling.   They received a global audience and, through their participation in the 1998

Olympics alone, the WCF received $3.8 million in television rights (Maxwell, 2002).

These "professionalization steps" (Weiting & Lamouroux, 2001) show a concrete change

in the function of the WCF from a small non-profit federation focused on amateur

competition to a larger, corporate focused, politically driven, money making entity.

World curling players association.

While curling at the Olympics gave the sport a more global feel, there was also a

local (Canadian) push to provide curlers with more access to prize money. To this end,

Ed Luckowich and Arnold Asham helped to create and develop the World Curling Tour

(Maxwell, 2002). In 1997, make use of the Olympic momentum; the International

Management Group (IMG) signed a contract with the World Curling Players Association

to run and maintain its curling properties (Weiting & Lamouroux, 2001). Through this

partnership grew the Grand Slam of Curling, four major events during the World Curling

Tour season. The "Slams", as they are often referred to, have significant prize purses,

have teams with no provincial or territorial association, and have no direct affiliation with

the CCA. The invention of the Grand Slam of Curling was not a subtle and insignificant

addition to the curling landscape. Prior to the Slam's introduction, most of the country's

top teams boycotted the Brier – the CCA's most marketable and profitable property – to

play in the more cash lucrative Slam events.

The boycott was based on disagreements between the players and the CCA over

sponsorship rights and finances for the players. Said bluntly by one of the World Curling

Players Association's (WCPA) most outspoken players, Ed Werenick,

> What the CCA has done is destroy the history of the game by being
> stupid. It all came down to a little bit of money. Now [Edmonton's]
> Randy Ferbey has won three Briers in a row. He didn't win anything.
> Look at who he played. There should be an asterisk in the record
> books. (Gatehouse, 2004)

Another of the most recognizable faces in curling, Russ Howard, was introduced to a

sports agent who looked over the CCA contracts with the players and called them

"legalized prostitution" (Howard & Weeks, 2007). The CCA enabled itself to use the

players in advertising campaigns and make money off the larger events (The Brier, The

Scotties, etc.) while the players received very little financial compensation in return and

were unable to wear their sponsorship logos at the major CCA sanctioned events. As a

result, curlers were the product and not receiving any compensation for their services.

The boycott was finally resolved after the CCA began to realize the power the

players held and that such politics were affecting the Brier, its most popular event

(Howard & Weeks, 2007). The boycott had led to a participant field that was below

standard, and as such, spectatorship was affected. In turn, while the CCA was trying to

protect sponsors rights, they were hurting the value of sponsorship of the CCA properties

by negatively affecting viewership. This realization has led to,

> Better compensation for players at both the Brier and Tournament of
> Hearts. Better scheduling of playdowns. More big-money events.
> More televised events. Increased co-operation between the Canadian
> Curling Association and the players. (Cameron, 2007)

While this change seems to have benefits for all sides of curling, that curlers have been

commercialized into profit-making "products" completely contradicts the traditional

approach of who a curler is and what values and ideals a curler represents.

Another of the socially prescribed attitudes towards curling is the idea of the

purity of curling. In the book *Sandra Schmirler: The Queen of Curling* (Lefko, 2000)

there are multiple references to awaiting the ice to freeze, in the years before refrigerated

arenas, and the significance the local curling bonspiel has to a small town community. In

countless books, the same story of the beginning of curling greatness is told, living in a

small town, having parents who curled, and practicing while parents enjoyed the social

aspects of the game (Howard & Weeks, 2007; Maxwell, 2002; Pezer, 2003). This purity

is the ideology that the game is somehow grown out of the small town, open hearted,

honest people of Canada, and that professionalizing it will change this purity. Maxwell

(2002) goes even further detailing the Canadian purity when he says "we know how

important it is to play the game with honour, and fairness, and a respect for the opponent"

(p. 18). And while both of these statements speak to this wholesomeness, Maxwell

(2002) dedicates an entire chapter of his book to the fair play and 'Victorian' rules of

curling and ends with this summing statement,

> The most common aspect of that Victorian respect is the ritual
> handshake between players before and after each game. It is a vital
> element of curling that says, in gesture, we've agreed we'll play
> according to the rules, with dignity and honour. And afterwards, thanks
> for the game. (p. 68)

While the traditional handshake is not an act isolated to curling, it does show another way

in which curling enacts a sense of honour and purity. This Victorian respect is what

Weiting and Lamoureux (2001) speak of when they use the term purity and consider the future direction of the values and beliefs of curling in Canada.

If we consider both the induction into the Olympic movement and the fight for autonomy by the players, we see that there is an obvious shift from this curling purity. The Olympic movement grew the sport globally. This growth has changed the WCF's focus to that of growth and financial gains, while the creation of the WCPA and the Slams has defined the elite level curlers as products. This commoditizing of the players pulls them further and further away from Mair's (2007; 2009) understanding of the top curlers as everyday individuals and their participation in the ideal third-place communities that community level curling clubs typically represent.

An example of this splintering between the grassroots club curler and the elite curler is the Dominion Curling Club Championships. The Dominion Curling Club Championships are under the CCA's banner of championship events, but the event is put on by The Dominion, an insurance company, with eligibility rules attached. According to its rules, the event is "formulated for true club curlers, not elite, past or present" (Dominion of Canada, 2012). One of the main eligibility rules states that "each team will be allowed only 1 player who has … participated in a Grand Slam event in the current of previous 4 years" (Dominion of Canada, 2012). This again shows an obvious disassociation from the competitive "Slam" curlers and those that participate at the grassroots level.

Hiring a new CEO.

While these examples show that there has been a noticeable change at the national and elite level of curling, the most recent and most obvious sign of change has been the

hiring of a new CEO in the CCA. In September 2007, the CCA hired non-curler Greg

Stremlaw to lead the organization. The search committees' explanation for hiring

someone outside of the curling environment was;

> What we're really challenging Greg with is to get the organization
> financially sound and to let the rest of our people do their good work.
> Finances are our No. 1 priority. There are so many good things that
> our technical staff are ready to deliver, but we can't do that until we're
> financially very solid. (Niagara Falls Review, 2007)

Stemlaw himself admitted that his addition to the CCA family marked a significant

change from the past administration; "I think what the CCA was looking for is a new

style of leadership and somebody to come in with a fresh perspective" (Niagara Falls

Review, 2007). Stremlaw's hiring by the CCA and the new direction the CCA is now

embracing (financial stability and commercial practices over traditional grass-roots,

kitchen table type management) mirrors the research of Robinson (2003).

Robinson (2003) conducted research on the commercialization of sport within the

realm of state- run and not-for-profit sport. Robinson (2003) states that,

> These organizations have undergone substantial cultural and
> operational change within the last decade, as managers have moved
> towards a business-like approach in the management of their
> organizations. This led to changes in the basis for decision making in
> these organizations which have come to reflect those of commercial
> organizations, also reflected in organizational strategies. (p. 166)

This correlates with Mason's (2007) findings that there is now a focus on financial gains

and business benchmarks, rather than the good of sport for the individual. These ideals

on financial gains and business benchmarks mirror the thoughts and ideals of the new

CCA CEO.

As with the Olympic movement and the Slams, the change at the CCA offices

with the addition of Greg Stremlaw once again shifted the priorities of curling at the

national level. A sport that historically has been focused on grassroots and social

foundations now has a strong and clear focus on profit and fiscal responsibility. This

modification is similar to the changes presented in non-profit sporting research,

specifically Amis, Slack and Hinings (2002), as they suggest that within National Sport

Organizations (NSO's) in Canada there has come an organizational shift towards a "more

professional and bureaucratic design" (p. 456). This transformation has been based upon

strong governmental funding and the need to function within the government's guidelines

to continue to exist.

The changes presented here are based upon a differentiation from the classical

outlook of community based curling. The modifications that have been produced come

from many different levels and from many different areas. As shown above, the CCA

has become focused on business principles that have changed from their traditional

grassroots focus. The elite level players, those inducted into the World Curling Players

Association, too, have lobbied for more money and status in the curling hierarchy.

Again, this leads away from the traditions of amateurism and community based sports.

While these changes in themselves have no negative or positive effect attached to them, it

must be considered whether they have affected grassroots level curling, and if so, how.

This leads to the basis of the research question which is; what is the current state of

grassroots curling in regards to the values that are enacted at the community curling club

and how do they compare to the values at the national level?

Grassroots Recreation

Grassroots organizations have long been both a focus of academic study as well

as an outlet for community engagement in many Canadian towns. Grassroots

organizations are defined by their volunteer participation, as well as a focus on either

community development, community action or a combination of both (Staples, 2004).

Bendle and Patterson (2009) explain that often grassroots organizations come to be

through an organic process; "collective efforts evolve into grassroots associations, which

are locally based independent non-profit voluntary membership based established to

cooperatively facilitate the common leisure passion of its members" (pg. 273). Another

similar definition of grassroots associations comes from Smith (2000) who defines a

grassroots organization as;

> Locally based, significantly autonomous, volunteer-run, formal nonprofits (i.e.,
> voluntary) groups that manifest substantial voluntary altruism as groups and use
> the associational form of organization and, thus, have official memberships of
> volunteers who perform most, and often all, of the work/activity don in and by
> these nonprofits. (pg. 7)

Under a different guise, the concept of community recreation is also based around

the idea that organizations provide recreational opportunities for the public as the Charter

for Leisure emphasizes. Butler (1940) defines community recreation as "recreation

services that are provided for the benefit of all the people" (p. v), or as a branch of

community practice that offers a decision making and service delivery approach for

public service providers (Butcher & Haywood, 1994). To further the point Butcher and

Haywood (1994) calls us to think upon how power and established organizational

structures must be changed and altered to allow for a truly community based

organizational structure. This model emphasizes the public as active participants within

the planning and implementation process of all community recreation decisions. This

model is also reliant on horizontal communication and power structures rather than the

historical top down "bureau-professional model" (Butcher & Haywood, 1994, p. 6).

Connected to this idea, Haywood (1994) defines six key concepts of community

recreation. These six concepts being;

> 1 – a collective response to needs and problems.
> 2 – the importance of co-participation between providers and users,
> 3 – recognition of the value of indigenous resources within community groups,
> 4 – emphasis on the needs of disadvantaged people,
> 5 – recognition of cultural diversity, and
> 6 – appreciation of the significance of different dimensions of 'community', e.g. locale, cultural, attachment, interest. (Haywood, 1994, 26)

Utilizing these definitions and conceptualizations of community recreation, it becomes

apparent that community recreation organizations often share the same mission and

mandate as grassroots organization. The only difference between grassroots associations

and community recreation is that the later has the power to morph into a government-run

organization due to perceived community need.   The main link between the concepts of

community recreation and grassroots associations is the focus on providing for the

community in which they both serve.   Again, the mandate and mission of providing a

social need is essential in both community recreation and grassroots associations.

Also within the community recreation literature is the philosophy of focusing on

the benefits of recreation. When looking at the list of benefits developed by Driver and

Bruns (1999) there are similar themes and tensions as those within the Canadian curling

system. For example, one of the social/cultural benefits of recreation is the pride of

community and nation that fosters while another is the reduction of social alienation.

When these two benefits are placed side by side, within the context of a non-profit

national sporting organization, the ability to produce community pride can be enacted

through elitist sport.   Within elitist sport, winners are produced in which communities

can cheer for. However, the very term 'elitist' is contradictory to the process of reducing

social alienation that is also said to be part of recreation.   Elitism, by definition, includes

privileging individuals and alienating others. That being said, there is an area of research

which argues that perceptions of quality of life are defined through perceived availability

of recreational activities (Dobos & Jeffres, 1993). This creates a new avenue for

community level sporting organizations to produce a positive benefit to the community

rather than the elitist production of champions. Again, this dichotomy reflects the same

tensions between the CCA professional curler and the local, community curler.

　　　　While Driver and Bruns' (1999) research focuses on the benefits approach there

are many other researchers who have focused upon specific end result benefits of

participation within community recreation. One of the end result benefits that results

from participation in grassroots organizations is the building of social capital (Glover,

Parry, & Shinew 2005; Glover, 2004; Yuen & Glover, 2005). Sharpe (2003) and

Stebbins (1996) discusses the value of volunteerism, while not always positive there is a

general consensus that skill building and asset acquisition does take place. These studies

show how grassroots recreation produces non-financial benefits to the end users.

　　　　Butcher and Haywood (1994), Butler (1940) and Hayward (1994) each discuss

community recreation within the context of governmental recreation. Karlis (2004) on

the other hand recognizes the evolution of the social work field into community

development. The principle theory taken from the social work field is that there is a

"need for people to work together collectively to address the social concerns of the

community" (p. 141).

　　　　Again, community development shares a strong link to Smith's (2000) definition

of grassroots associations in their altruistic goals. Here the difference being that often

those who are participating in community development are not volunteers rather paid

staff. Grassroots associations are community development agencies but the focus on a

part of the community in which there is a perceived need that is not being met by current

organizations (Sharpe, 2003). Staples' (2004) also links grassroots organizations with

community development in his definition of a grassroots organization. Staples' (2004)

explains that there are two modes of action within a grassroots organization – social

action and community development. While this definition does not mean that all

grassroots organizations are community development based, it does mean that

community development has a strong link to grassroots organizations. Sports

organizations at the grassroots level, share this ideology of community development and

social action. Due to this focus on community development, social action and volunteer

management, local community sport can be defined as being run by grassroots

organizations. Sharpe (2006) furthers this link between a grassroots organization and a

community organization by defining grassroots recreation as being "volunteer-run

informal organizations that deliver sports and recreation at the local level" (pg. 385).

   Within the larger sporting literature there is a significant amount of research

explaining the importance of grassroots associations.   Green (2007), tracing the history

of policy and fund allocation in sport in Canada, the UK, and Australia, points out that

even at the national level, who traditionally focus on international success of sport, there

is debate over the need for focus on elite sport or growth in the grassroots realms of sport.

Phillpots, Grix and Quarmby (2010) follow this same historical dialogue to show how the

United Kingdom has embraced grassroots sporting associations and through policy

change are trying to enable these organizations to increase overall participation in

grassroots level sport. While both of these research articles indicate an acceptance of the

importance of grassroots sport they also show that elite sport has been given priority over

these grassroots initiatives.

Grix and Carmichael (2012) argue that this prioritizing of elite sport over

grassroots sport is based upon the unfounded philosophy that sporting greatness leads to

national pride, which in turn, leads to participation. This parallels Driver and Bruns

(1999) conclusions indicating that grassroots associations can have a positive effect on

pride. This participation increase is also seen as an opportunity to have more viable

options to create elite athletes who can further this "virtuous cycle" (Grix & Carmichael,

2012, 76). This principle is what has led to debate in South Africa regarding their funding

of mega-stadiums for the FIFA 2010 world cup rather than funding grassroots football in

the country or other social programs (Alegi, 2007).   This debate is defined by the thought

process that "public subsidies for stadiums often lead to cut backs or more expensive use

of community sporting facilities.   If this were to occur in post-apartheid South Africa it

would undermine, rather than strengthen, sorely needed development of grassroots

sports" (Alegi, 2007, pg. 327).

These arguments regarding commercialized and professional sports versus

grassroots recreation mirror some of the tensions presented between the CCA and the

grassroots curling communities. As Alegi (2007) states, "professional sports … is a

multi-billion rand international industry and is a growing threat to the development of

sport in underprivileged and economically poor communities" (pg. 315).While Canada,

and most curling countries, are far from economically poor, the same point stands true as

funding is being allocated through policy towards elite level sport, leaving grassroots

sports to fend for themselves and compete on an uneven playing field (Green, 2004).

Community level curling clubs, and their membership, in Canada often mirror the

definitions provided for grassroots organizations in that they focus on fulfilling a

community need, while utilizing a community based decision making system.   While the

CCA has been shown to focus on professionalization, and offer corporate based programs

to the community level clubs, the way in which the clubs within the CCA are operated

are grassroots.   As such, it would be logical to say that the tensions between grassroots

and elite sport would exist in curling as well.

Institutional theory

One of the frameworks within organizational theory that can be used to

understand the values of curling is institutional theory. Institutional theory focuses on

"understanding organizational interpretations of, and responses to, contextual pressures,

by stressing the political dynamics of intraorganizational behaviour and the normative

embeddedness of organizations within their contexts" (Greenwood & Hinings, 1996, pg.

1024). As such, institutional theory is an appropriate framework for understanding how

change at the national level has affected community level curling.

Institutional theory has the ability to link national level curling and community

level curling through the concept of "contexts" (Greenwood & Hinings, 1996). Within

the institutional literature, this concept of context is described as being within an

"institutional field" (Dimaggio & Powell, 1983; Greenwood & Hining, 1996). Dimaggio

and Powell (1983) define an institutional field as "those organizations that, in the

aggregate, constitute a recognized area of institutional life: key suppliers, resources and

product consumers, regulatory agencies, and other organizations that produce similar

services or products" (pg. 148). The CCA and community level curling live within the

same institutional field; the CCA is the governing body for the sport, the local

community curling clubs pay membership dues to the CCA, and the CCA is responsible

for all nationwide marketing directives. These links make the CCA a regulatory agency,

a key supplier, and a resource for community level curling and, therefore, falls within

Dimaggio and Powell's (1983) definition. Accepting that community level curling exists

within an institutional field with the national body is important given that "institutional

theorists declare that regularized organizational behaviours are the product of ideas,

values, and beliefs that originate in the institutional context" (Greenwood & Hinings,

1996, p.1025).

Understanding the organizations that exist within an organizational field is crucial

to understanding change as they represent functional markers of change. Washington

(2004) identifies changes in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) based

upon the study of applicable schools and concludes that "membership changes, while not

the catalyst for institutional change are often good markers of the change; when the

membership has changed, then the institution must have changed" (p. 409). Using the

same criteria, we can conclude that the organizational field - what Washington (2004)

calls the institution in which the CCA inhabits - must have changed as there are new

members, the WCPA. As such, community level curling will be under similar pressures

of change as it functions within the same organizational field.

There is a significant amount of research on the organizational field of NSOs in

Canada. Kikulis, Slack & Hinings (1995) describe a detailed account of change for

Canadian NSOs that are part of the Olympic community.   Specifically, Kikulis, Slack &

Hinings (1995) utilize institutional theory and resource dependency theory to explain

why the NSOs in Canada have assumed a homogenous state with one another.   These

findings were summarized by Kikulis, Slack & Hinings (1995) as,

> The resource-dependent nature of NSO's in Canada created a situation
> in which they were required to engage in a major organizational
> reorientation.   The direction of this change has been towards a more
> professional and bureaucratically structured organizational design.
> Movement in this direction has been facilitated by values and beliefs
> about the appropriateness of this particular organizational form. (pg.
> 129)

When we consider the description of change in curling, the other Canadian NSO's

also went through a similar change from volunteer run organizations with a focus on

amateur sport to the corporate managed model. One of the most relevant points from

Kikulis, Slack and Hinings (1995) research is that there has been significant change not

only within curling, but within all of the Canadian NSO's that participate in the Olympic

Games. This change again strengthens the idea that the organizational field in which

community curling is situated has changed and will be enacting pressures for change

upon all levels of curling.

Institutional fields are essential to understanding institutional theory. This

importance is due to the main premise that organizations that exist within an institutional

field with one another begin a process of becoming likeminded. This like mindedness is

accomplished through the adaption of key organizational characteristics (Dimaggio &

Powell, 1983). The concept of becoming similar or sharing key characteristics within

institutional theory is called isomorphism.   DiMaggio and Powell (1983) define

isomorphism as a "constraining process that forces one unit in a population to resemble

other units that face the same set of environmental conditions" (pg. 149). Palmer and

Biggart (2002) similarly define the concept as when "uncertainty about the characteristic

of alternative forms generates a social comparison process with other like organizations,

and eventually there is a convergence around a dominant form, a 'safe bet'" (pg. 264).

While these two definitions are very similar, DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) definition

includes the idea of force rather than choice, which is implied in Palmer and Biggart's

(2002) definition. More importantly, however, the essence of the concept is strong in

both definitions; a single ideal form exists that organizations strive to become. This

single form is achieved when, within an institutional field, organizations are selected out

or transformed until "those which remain are isomorphic with each other" (Slack &

Hinings, 1994). In other words, a structure and value set is adapted by a grouping of

organizations as they become legitimized within the organizational field. As values and

beliefs become taken-for-granted and legitimized within a field, the organizations share a

similar value set, and become isomorphic with one another. Institutional fields,

isomorphism, taken-for-granted beliefs, and legitimacy are therefore essential to

understanding community level curling within an institutional framework.

     Legitimacy within the institutional field takes place because "new practices can

become, in Selznick's words, infused with value beyond the technical requirements of the

task at hand. As an innovation spreads, a threshold is reached beyond with adoption

provides legitimacy rather than improved performance" (Dimaggio & Powell, 1983, p.

148). At that point organizations assume that a value is valid, even when its

implementation will have no direct benefit to the organization other than the perception it

receive within the institutional field. When this happens, a value no longer has benefit to

the organization's mission; rather to be taken seriously within the organizational field they must adopt these ideas.

Similar to the concept of legitimacy is the concept of taken-for-granted beliefs. A taken-for-granted belief occurs when "actors unwittingly accept the prevailing template as appropriate, right, and the proper way of doing things" (Greenwood & Hinings, 1996). Tolbert and Zucker (1983) found when looking at sources of change within social reform that once a reform measure became taken for granted, it was known as "social fact", and as such adopted by all other cities within that institutional field. The differentiating characteristic between legitimacy and taken-for-granted beliefs is the acknowledgement within legitimacy that they organization is being influenced through the organizational field. With taken-for-granted beliefs, the isomorphic characteristics are taken for granted and as such not associated with a pressure from an external agency. This idea of social fact, taken-for-granted beliefs, and legitimacy all lead to organizations accepting certain characteristics no matter their mission or purpose and as such they become similar in many significant aspects.

Understanding taken-for-granted beliefs and legitimacy is important to understanding institutional change, but it is also essential to understand how an organization within a field or the organizational field itself can enact these taken-for-granted beliefs on other organizations. Institutional fields pass along these messages through the concept of pressures (Dimaggio & Powell, 1983). Baum and Rowley (2005) describe institutional theory in detail and through their description there are three pressures presented; coercive, normative, and mimetic. These pressures define how change occurs in the most basic sense.

Coercive pressures occur when individuals/organizations, often defined as leaders, use power dynamics and relations to force or control change. Coercive power is also closely linked to legitimacy as it "stems from political influence and the problem of legitimacy" (Dimaggio & Powell, 1983, 150). Coercive pressures are often linked to powers of state and government as they can mandate change in certain situations. Being that the CCA is a regulating body for community level curling, it is plausible that coercive pressure is being enacted on the community level curling clubs.

Normative pressures also focus on the act of legitimacy. Normative pressures occur when individuals/organizations change to gain approval by the greater population (Baum & Rowley, 2005). Also within normative pressures is the idea of filtering (Dimaggio & Powell, 1982). Filtering takes place through the hiring process, as organizations allow likeminded individuals into their group. Normative pressures and filtering are often "associated with professionalization" (Dimaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 152) as professionalization defines "the conditions and methods of work" for an institutional field. Again, the existing documented organizational change at the national level suggests it is plausible there are normative pressures being enacted on community level curling.

The third type of pressure that can be found in an institutional field is mimetic. Mimetic pressures occur when individuals/organizations change to copy another individual/organization that they believe to be successful or effective (Baum & Rowley, 2005). Mimetic pressure is often associated with uncertainty within an institutional field. "When organizational technologies are poorly understood, when goals are ambiguous, or when the environment creates symbolic uncertainty, organizations may model themselves

on other organizations" (Dimaggio & Powell, 1983, 151). Again, this pressure is based

around legitimacy as the organizations that are modeled are those that have higher

legitimacy within the field. In other words, organizations model themselves after those

assumed to be legitimate, regardless of their competency to combat uncertainty. As with

the other pressures, it is plausible that community level curling can perceive the

institutional field in which they are situated as uncertain due to the change at the national

level. Therefore, mimetic pressures may be enacted upon community level curling.

   If we consider the values and changes in community level curling and the core

concepts of institutional theory, there is evidence to suggest that institutional theory could

explain some, if not all, changes or similarities in values between grassroots curling and

national curling. While there are documented accounts of corporatization of curling at

the elite and national level, how this change has affected community level curling is still

unknown. The concepts within institutional theory lay out a framework for

understanding how organizations within an organizational field are influenced through

the need to be legitimate, as well as the taken-for-granted beliefs that exist within that

field.

Values

   While institutional theory can explain the rationale for values being enacted

within an institutional field, it is practical to have a deeper understanding of values

themselves. Values are critical to understanding if the community level curling club has

adapted the mindset of the national level body. Values have been traditionally defined

within two contexts. The first context being that a value can be understood as something

"inherent in an object" (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998, pg. 353), and the second context is that

a value is something that is "possessed by a person" (pg. 353). Any value in an object is

subject to the belief system of the individual viewing that object. Therefore, values are

based from within the individual promoting them (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998). So while

these two separate viewpoints exist, the inertia leading them is from within the subject

(individual), as such, it is prudent to understand values from the perspective of those that

are intertwined with the shared values of community level curling.

Agle and Caldwell (1999) identified five separate levels of values. These levels

are individual, organizational, institutional, societal, and global. These separate levels

are on a hierarchy from a micro level (individual) towards a macro level (global).

Research regarding individual values often stems from the research of Rokeach (1973)

and is focused on the values of a person or individual. Also, values of organizations look

past individual values and search for collective meaning often called organizational

culture in the business management literature (Agle & Caldwell, 1999). Organizational

values often grow from individual values and acknowledge the existence and interactions

of individuals within an environment. Agle and Caldwell (1999) identified institutional

values as the hardest to categorize due to the diversity of institutional fields and the need

to understand how organizations interact with each other (Scott, 1995). Societal values,

as defined by Agle and Caldwell (1999), are values of countries or cultural identities, and

in research are most often investigated by comparing and contrasting the value sets of

differing cultures or countries. Finally, global values are the values that Agle and

Caldwell (1999) have identified as the most understudied values. The lack of study can

be due to the ideology that universally accepted values are challenging to discover, but

with the globalization of business and accepted business practices, there is an emerging

field of global value research (Agle & Caldwell, 1999).

This study focused on identifying and understanding values at the individual and

organizational level, as the more macro levels of values are outside of the scope of this

study. Accepting that this research project will be done within an amateur sporting

organization atmosphere, there is a need to understand values from an individual level

(those participating), as well as an organizational level (values of the curling community

as a whole). At the individual level, there have been multiple definitions of what values

are, and how they play out within the decision making process.

One of the foremost researchers within the values literature at the individual level

is Rokeach. Rokeach (1973) defines a value as "an enduring belief that a specific mode

of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or

converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence" (pg. 5). This definition, along with

others, stipulates that an individual believes they understand the repercussions of their

actions. That a systematic process of decision making occurs based upon their

perceptions of the end results of their actions.

A different, but very similar, definition of values was formulated by Schwartz and

Bilsky (1990). This definition is based around five defining characteristics, which

defines values as: "(a) concepts of beliefs, (b) pertain to desirable end states or

behaviours, (c) transcend specific situations, (d) guide selection or evaluation of

behaviour and events, and (e) are ordered by relative importance" (Schwartz & Bilsky,

1990, pg. 878). This viewpoint of "held" values producing resolute actions has been

established through other research in which comparable definitions of values are utilized (Wiener, 1988; Edwards & Cable, 2009; Meglino & Ravlin, 1998).

While values on an individual level have merit; "a person's values do not necessarily reflect how he or she wants or desires to behave; but rather, they describe his or her internalized interpretations about socially desirable ways to fulfill his or her needs" (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998, pg. 354). Therefore, the interaction of a value and behaviour is based upon an individual's perception of some form of social environment. Within this social environment is where Ravlin and Meglino (1987, p. 667) describe the "oughtness" characteristic, which represents what an individual *ought* to do based upon the prescribed cultural norms. The shift from individual value to social value occurs when a person's actions are no longer based upon fulfilling his or her needs, rather "social values come to represent the efforts of a social system (e.g. group, organization, society) to impose concern for the welfare of the system as a whole on the actions of the individual members" (Ravlin & Meglino, 1987, p. 667). While Ravlin and Meglino (1987) discuss social values, their examples of social systems include organizations, and as such, their point is applicable within the context of organizational values.

Considering the literature, there is an obvious link between oughtness and the taken-for-granted beliefs from institutional theory. Oughtness is based around doing what the culture perceives as proper, where taken-for-granted beliefs is based upon accepting an ideology that has developed within an organizational field simply because that is what the norm believe. Oughtness is, therefore, the equivalent of taken-for-granted beliefs, just within the context of value literature rather than institutional theory. This link between these two frameworks is the basis for understanding if there has been a

change at the community level in regards to curling. Understanding these taken-for-granted beliefs and the characteristics of what a community level curler "ought" to do, will give understanding to whether the changes at the national level have affected community level curling.

How Institutional Theory and Values explain Change

　　　　While institutional theory and values help give us a framework for understanding of organizational fields and the environment in which organizations function, Kikulis (2000) argues that within a Canadian sporting context, NSO's go through a process of institutionalization that is not a black and white scenario. Kikulis (2000) utilizes the concept of pre-, semi-, and full- institutionalization – as well as deinstitutionalization - to grow the understanding of change and continuity with NSO's in Canada. Each of these institutional states has a different ability to resist change. At the pre-institutionalization stage, legitimacy and taken-for-granted beliefs are an act of habit. During the semi-institutionalization stage, legitimacy and taken-for-granted beliefs are based upon objectification. And finally, during the full-institutionalization stage legitimacy and taken-for-granted beliefs are cemented into the social fabric of the organizational field. As an organization moves from pre-, to semi-, to full-institutionalization, its ability to change and adapt becomes much more difficult. Understanding where on the institutional ladder community level curling sits can help explain both if it has become isomorphic with the NSO, or if it has been able to refute the pressures exerted by the governing agency.

　　　　Similar to this idea of a ladder or steps within institutionalization, Oliver (1992) suggests that for an organization to become isomorphic it needs to first become deinstitutionalized from its past context. Oliver (1992) furthered the idea of

deinstitutionalization by describing intra-organizational and environmental

(organizational field) predictors to an organization or an organizational fields

deinstitutionalizing – with each of these factors being placed within a broader category.

The categories that Oliver (1992) designed are; changes in political distribution, changes

in functional necessity, changes in social cohesion, competitive environment pressures,

social environment pressures, random external occurrence, and changes in constituent

factors. Considering we know that curling has changed at the national level, and

therefore altering the organizational field in which community level curling remains,

understanding if any of these precursors to deinstitutionalization have taken place or are

taking place is essential to understanding if community level curling has changed with it.

While understanding precursors to the act of deinstitutionalization, there is also

the need to understand how organizations react to pressures enacted on them from their

organizational field. Classic institutional theory suggests that an organization will

become isomorphic with the field. Oliver (1991) debates this claim, in part, as she shows

there are multiple strategic responses organizations can have to these external pressures.

These strategies have been categorized as; acquiesce, compromise, avoid, defy, and

manipulate – within each of these strategies lies multiple tactics or actions that an

organization can utilize when presented with a pressure from within their organizational

field.   These strategic responses are ordered from passive strategies towards more active

strategies.

The strategy of acquiescence has three unique forms as identified by Oliver

(1991).   These three forms are habit, imitation, and compliance.   As acquiesce is at the

passive end of the strategic response spectrum these responses lead to a strong

isomorphic state within a field.   In practice acquiescence normally takes place in highly

institutionalized industries such as that of teachers or professional and clerical positions

(Oliver, 1991).

Compromise is the next phase along the strategic response continuum.   The three

forms of compromise are to bargain, balance, or pacify the constituents within the field.

Oliver (1991) describes the main difference between compromise and acquiesce as

"compromise tactics are employed in the spirit of conforming to and accommodating

institutional rules, norms, or values, but in contrast to acquiescence, institutional

compliance is only partial and organizations are more active in promoting their own

interests" (p. 154).   As with acquiescence, compromise often takes place with highly

structured associations such as the healthcare industry.   Due to the healthcare systems

and their relationship with governmental agencies and funding, their need to not "bite the

hand that feeds them" (Oliver, 1991, pg. 154) leads them to compromising and accepting

minimum governmental guidelines yet maintaining their legitimacy within the medical

field.

Concealing, buffering, and escaping are the tactics associated with the strategic

response of avoidance.   Within Oliver's (1991) framework avoidance is utilized when

there is a "desire to circumvent the conditions that make conforming behaviour

necessary" (pg. 156). In practice, these strategies often take place in industries that are

governmentally inspected (Oliver, 1991).   These inspected organizations often change

their regular patterns and norms prior to inspections to fake acceptance of external

standards.   Also, specifically within manufacturing, companies will simply move

manufacturing facilities to new physical environments in which the pressure is not enacted (Oliver, 1991).

Defiance is the fourth strategic response and is positioned towards the active portion of the response continuum.   The tactics which can be enacted within the defiance realm are dismissing, challenging, and attacking. Organizations utilize the strategy of defiance when there is open rejection of institutional norms and values, as well as a lack of perceived consequence to defying the norms (Oliver, 1991). In research on affirmative action it has been shown that companies complied more to the institutional pressure if they felt there was a higher chance of being caught (Oliver, 1991).   Therefore, if companies do not believe there is a strong consequence or the chance of being discovered is low, as well as a dispute over the values and norms in question, then they are more likely to defy the norms.

The final strategic response on the continuum is manipulation. Included in the tactics of manipulation are the co-opt, influence or control of the institutional norms and values.   This strategy is the most active strategy and as such are used "opportunistically, to co-opt and neutralize institutional constituents, to shape and redefine institutionalized norms and external criteria of evaluation, and to control or dominate the source, allocation, or expression of social approval and legitimation" (Oliver, 1991, pg. 159). Oliver (1991) shows how social support agencies often align themselves with charitable organizations to try and brand themselves as a worthy cause for donors, rather than to alter their actual mandate or procedures.

As stated earlier, curling has changed at the national level and due to community level curling residing within the same organizational field; it is prudent to know if the

strategies are being enacted at the community level, and if so, which one. Each of the

strategies can define if there has been a change. Even further to understanding if there

was a change, we can utilize the strategies described by Oliver (1991) to explain how

they enacted with the external pressure, as well as using Oliver's (1992) predictors to

deinstitutionalization to explain if community level curling has weakened its position on

past isomorphic ideals.

Change has been explained in the Canadian NSO context through institutional

theory, but there are those that believe that there are elements of its organizational

structure that do not change to the same extent as others (Slack & Hinings, 1994). That is

to say, while the pressures defined above have affected organizational structure at the

NSO level, there are items in which NSO's original value sets are superseding these

pressures. In particular, organizational structures based around key areas of operation for

NSO such as roles of volunteers and authority structures have been found as more static

and rigid than other ideologies (Slack & Hinings, 1994).   Kikulis (2000) research also

found that there was a distinction between paid executives and volunteer management.

Through this research, the authors argue for multiple levels, or a spectrum, of

understanding in the process of institutionalization. Understanding a values' ability to

supersede pressures within institutional theory again defines a framework to help explain

the possible outcomes of this study.

As well as utilizing a strong institutional theory background to explain

community level curling, values are essential to the understanding of community level

curling as past internal organizational values are one of the main resistors to

organizational pressures for Canadian NSO's (Kikulis, Slack, & Hinings, 1995). More

specifically, "specific interest groups… may provide resistance or commitment towards

the desired form of an organization" (Kikulis, Slack, & Hinings, 1995, pg. 96). Along

the same premise Amis, Slack, and Hinings (2002) agree that

> If the pressure for change can be resisted, its effect will largely depend
> on whether the value structure within the organization is broadly
> supportive of, opposed to, or indifferent to the changes being
> prescribed. If the value structure of an organization is supportive or
> indifferent to a prescribed change, then the change will likely take place
> with little incident. If, however, members of an organization hold
> values that oppose the institutional pressures being applied, then
> resistance is likely. (p. 439)

While this is theoretically the case, Amis, Slack and Hinings (2002), also find that when

this resistance from Canadian NSO's took place, coercive pressures were able to

dismantle the resistance. Therefore, if mimetic or normative pressures are present within

a Canadian sports organizational field it may not be as successful as coercive pressures in

enacting change.

As stated earlier, there has been a dramatic and well-documented change in

curling at the national level. Curling has strived to become part of the Olympic

community, and as such has manipulated their mission and structure to reach that goal.

The elite level curler has created a players association with the goal of more financial

windfall for the player, and while that has occurred they have also separated themselves

from the community level curler and added another organization into the institutional

field. Finally, the introduction of a new CEO with a focus on financial management has

changed the focus of the CCA. All of these actions signify that there has been a

significant change within the organizational field.

Through an understanding of institutional theory it is apparent that this change in

the organizational field, which is due to this change at the national level, will have an

effect on the grassroots level of curling. What is unknown is what values exist at the

current grassroots level of curling. Also, we do not know how these values interact with

the larger organizational field to either become isomorphic with the field or to

deinstitutionalize from the field. These unknowns are the focus of this study. Utilizing

institutional theory, grassroots associations, and values (to link grassroots organizations

and institutional theory) we can find a deeper understanding of what has happened within

the grassroots curling environment.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

Research Design

One of the first decisions within academic research is to choose if your research question will be better answered through the use of qualitative or quantitative methods. Generally speaking, quantitative research is based in mathematics and generalizations to a larger population while qualitative research has a focus on deep, rich, and descriptive analysis (Newman & Robson, 2009). Qualitative researchers produce this rich data by "study[ing] things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomenon in terms of the meaning people bring to them" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, pg. 3). Gillham (2000) clarifies the philosophical base of qualitative research with three main points

> 1 – Human behavior, thoughts and feelings are partly determined by their context. If you want to understand people in real life, you have to study them in their context and in the way they operate. 2 – 'Objective' research techniques – abstracted, controlling – can produce results that are artefacts of the methods used. An artefact is something that only arises because of the method that has been used. You get results, but are they 'true' for the people concerned in the practice of real life? 3 – How people behave, feel, think, can only be understood if you get to know their world and what they are trying to do in it. 'Objectivity' can ignore data important for an adequate understanding. (pg. 12).

This deep and rich data is essential as qualitative research aims to bring meaning and understanding about a particular phenomenon in the context in which it exists.

The research question of this study asks about the values of community level curling? Furthermore, this research asks whether these values within community and national level curling similar/dissimilar? And why? Accepting that qualitative research includes the context in which the phenomenon takes place is an essential element to understanding values, and as such, the curling club environment will need to be

extensively explained by the participants. Meglino and Ravlin (1998) argue that values

are not stand alone emotions but rather are reflective of the environment in which they

are acted upon. Knowing that values are contextually sensitive, it follows that qualitative

research is the appropriate methodology.

To further support qualitative research methodology, Yin (2009) discusses three

general questions that guide the decision between qualitative and quantitative, "(a) the

type of research question posed, (b) the extent of the control an investigator has over

actual behavioural events, and (c) the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to

historical events" (p. 8). This study has a research question that asks what values the

grassroots level of curling holds, the environment is not controlled by the researcher, and

the timeframe is linear and focuses on the present.

This research utilizes a case study approach. Cresswell (2007) describes case

study research as existing when "the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or

multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection

involving multiple sources of information, and reports a case description and case-based

themes" (pg. 73). Neuman and Robson (2009) explain that case study research is best

utilized when researchers search for "detailed, varied, and extensive data" (pg. 18).

Being able to get rich data allows the researcher to describe the case in detail and have a

deeper and stronger understanding of the phenomenon. In the case of this study, a

bounded system exists and the research questions are formed in a way to produce highly

rich, environmentally sensitive data.

To undertake case study research it is essential to understand what a case

represents. Academically a case can be described as an individual, a group, an

institution, or a community (Gillham, 2000; Creswell, 2007). The case becomes what is being studied, or put in other words the bounded system that will be investigated. In this research the case or bounded system is grassroots curling in the Niagara region.

During the research process ethics approval was granted by the Brock University Ethics Board, and then an extension was granted to enable the completion of the data collection. Ethics clearance was granted under the condition that participant confidentiality would be maintained through the use of pseudonyms in the transcription and data analysis portions of this research. Due to the chosen participant selection process however, complete anonymity was not possible to obtain. This lack of anonymity is not a concern, and is thus identified in the ethics application, as there is no recognized negative consequence to the participant for contributing to the study.

Participant Selection

For this research it is imperative that the methodology produced information rich data. Understanding this need, a purposeful sampling technique was utilized to select participants. Patton (2002) defines purposeful sampling as sampling that is "information rich and illuminative …offer[ing] useful manifestations of the phenomenon of interest" (pg. 40). In essence, participants must be selected upon their ability to provide a large amount of data as well as depth to ensure a holistic view of the case (Creswell, 2007).

To ensure that the selected participants fulfilled these purposeful standard, pre-determined criteria was followed during this research. The first criterion states that the participants must have actively curled over the past five years, with the goal to have an average years curled in excess of ten years. This criterion ensures the participants have sufficient experience at the club to speak to both actual and enacted curling club values.

The second criterion requires that half of the participants had once served as a member on

the Board of Directors at their local curling club for at least one year. This criterion was

set to ensure there is an equal mix of individuals who have been introduced to the

business of curling through their Board membership and those that have no direct

corporate experiences within curling.

Since the research is focused on curling in the Niagara region, participants were

chosen from four curling clubs across the region in order to ensure a more representative

sample. These curling clubs included the Grimsby Curling Club, the St. Catharines

Curling Club, the Welland Curling Club, and the Niagara Falls Curling Club.   There was

one curling club, the St. Catharines Golf and Curling club, which was omitted. This

omission was due to The St. Catharines Golf and Curling Club not being a standalone

curling club, and potentially, holding unique values that relate to the sport of golf rather

than curling.

Twelve individuals were questioned through the interview process.   Since there

are four curling clubs in which the participants have been sampled, there is an equal

distribution of participants – three from each of the curling clubs.   However, the criteria

was unequally distributed between the curling clubs, two Board members and one non-

Board member from two clubs and one Board member and two non-Board members from

two clubs. This sample size is consistent with other qualitative, interview based research

(Crouch & McKenzie, 2006; Baker & Edwards, 2012). Stevens and Slack (1998)

interviewed 13 individuals in their case study research regarding organizational change in

a Canadian woman's hockey organization.   O'Brien and Slack (1999) interviewed 20

individuals, setting similar criteria as this study to ensure they spoke to executive level

individuals as well as those on the periphery, in their case study research on deinstitutionalization of a Rugby Club.

Within table 1 is a brief description of each of the individuals interviewed. All names are pseudonyms to protect participant confidentiality.   Only identifiers that relate directly to the participant selection process are described.

Data Collection

Utilizing a purposeful sampling technique the data collection took place through multiple steps. The first step was to contact the four curling clubs to receive permission from either their Board of Directors or General Manager to come into their club. To expedite the process the researcher went to the curling clubs to speak to the managers directly and to provide an official letter of invitation (appendix A) informing them about the study.

Once access was granted from the Club Managers, the researcher was able to approach the potential interview participants at the earliest available time.   At this point the researcher introduced the study verbally to the curlers. The researcher when to the clubs on nights in which co-ed leagues were playing, did a brief presentation before teams played their nightly game. A ballot box was left on the bar counter with ballot slips available (appendix B).   Due to the social atmosphere at the curling clubs before the games, the researcher found getting full attention of the participants hard to gain as the explanation of the project took place.   Often, potential participants seemed to be more concerned about starting their impending game then understanding the research project, and subsequently, some potential participants may not have signed up for the study. While the amount of potential participants was well above the minimum needed

Table 1 – Participant Demographics

Pseudonym	Gender	Years Curled	Board Involvement
Alice	Female	Over 20 years, two at current club	No Board involvement
Alex	Male	Over 40 years experience.	Has held multiple Board positions over time. Not currently on Board.
Amy	Female	Over 20 years curling experience.	No Board experience, but has worked as a coach and consultant for the CCA.
Ben	Male	19 years curling experience.	No club Board experience, but has been a Board Member for the Ontario Curling Association.
Brian	Male	Approximately 30 years experience.	No Board of Directors experience.
Brittney	Female	18 years curling experience.	No Board of Directors experience.
Carly	Female	8 years curling experience.	Has sat on the Board of Directors in the past.
Chris	Male	Approximately 28 years curling experience.	Has sat on the Board of Director Multiple times.
Carter	Male	16 years curling experience.	No Board of Directors experience.
Dave	Male	Approximately 42 years curling experience.	Has sat on the Board of Directors multiple times, with a 25 year gap in-between terms.
Denis	Male	6 years curling experience.	Currently sitting on the Board of Directors.
Darlene	Female	14 or 15 years curling experience.	No Board of Directors experience.

participants, the researcher (as an individual who has spent a significant amount of time in curling clubs) was still surprised at the lack of participation by many club members. Another problem that arose during the participant selection stage was many participants left email addresses for contact rather than phone numbers. While all that were contacted via email did respond, the researcher was initially concerned that email requests for interviews could potentially be more problematic than phone requests due to the ease of being able to ignore emails.

Eight interviews took place at the curling club to ensure that the data was collected in the curlers' natural setting as described by Denzin & Lincoln (2005). Four of the interviews took place in external locations as requested by the participants. It should also be noted that these four interviews took place during the curling off-season, and the ability to enter into the physical curling club would have proven more difficult than an external, public, non-threatening location.

Interview

The semi-structured interviews were based upon an interview guide approach to ensure detailed and rich data while leaving the researcher/interviewer the ability to probe and limit the gaps in the interview (Patton, 2002). The interview guide approach limits the ability to compare data across the interviewees (Patton, 2002). However, given the fact that the interviewees all had unique experiences within curling, they all had different expectations and interpretations of how it functions and the cultural ideologies that exist within the curling club environment. This semi-structured interview approach is similar to Stevens and Slacks' (1998) research within the organizational change literature.

Therefore, utilizing a semi-structured interview process meets the demands of academic research and mirrors already existing research methods.

Each interview was recorded using an audio tape and recording device. The interviews ranged in length from twenty five minutes to over an hour. Each recording was given a label, and no interview participants' names were used in full to protect the individuals' identity. Before each interview started, the participants were given an informed consent letter (appendix C). This informed consent discussed the details of the interview as well as any potential risks that may come from participation. No interview began until the informed consent letter had been signed and returned to the researcher.

The interview itself was split into two separate sections (appendix D). The first section focused on the individual's perceived values, their values relating to the curling club, and their general feelings regarding their grassroots curling club. The second half of the interview included questions about whether they have seen changes in curling values over time, and if so, how such changes have affected the local curler and curling club. Before the second half of the interview a short script was read to the participants. The script (appendix D) reads as follows; "Curling at the national and elite level has gone through a significant change. Elite players are now paid significant amounts of money – almost to the point of being professionals. The Brier, Scotties, and World Championships are boasting record crowds. Elite curlers no longer participate in local curling club events, rather travelling the country playing in high end 'slam' events. Traditionally curling has been seen as an amateur, 'homey', social activity. This change at the national level counters some of these ideals."

The design of the script was not to alter answers rather to inform participants of recognized knowledge.   The information within the script reinforced, contradicted, or had no relation on the participants' responses from the first section of the interview.   The remaining questions were designed to discuss the how and why of the similarities or differences of the values of the community level curlers.

Data Analysis

Data analysis in case study research "consists of making a detailed description of the case and its setting" (Creswell, 2007). With that in mind Creswell (2007) defines four distinct forms of data analysis that will enable a strong data analysis. These forms are; categorical aggregation, direct interpretation, establishing patterns, and naturalistic generalizations (Creswell, 2007, p. 163). To fully understand these data analysis techniques each must be defined. Categorical aggregation can be described as when "a researcher seeks a collection of instances from the data, hoping that issue-relevant meanings will emerge" (Creswell, 2007, p. 163). Direct interpretation is the exact opposite as the research tries to establish meaning from an instance as it stands alone rather than grouped (Creswell, 2007, p. 163). Establishing patterns is a continuation of categorical aggregation but in this instance the researcher will look for relationships between categories (Creswell, 2007). And finally naturalistic generalizations are "generalizations that people can learn from the case either for themselves or to apply to a population of cases" (Creswell, 2007. p 163).

Neuman and Robson (2009) describe a similar yet distinctly different method for analysis of qualitative data. There is a coding process that must take place, with each pass of the data coded with a different lens or focus. The initial pass of coding is

considered "open coding", the second pass is "axial coding", and the third is "selective

coding" (Neuman & Robson, 2009, p.337-339).   The research utilized all three of these

coding passes when analysing the data to ensure the coding process was academically

sound.

During the "open coding" period the researcher defined and assigned themes to

help condense the data set. The themes identified during this phase represented "a low

level of abstraction and come from the researcher's initial research question, concepts in

the literature, terms used by members in the social setting, or new thoughts stimulated by

immersion in the data" (Neuman & Robson, 2000, p. 338). Almost all interview data

were identified into one theme or another and the categories were not restricted in any

way by theoretical frameworks. Rather any and all categories were considered (Burnard,

1991).

The axial coding was done by taking the categories that have been created in open

coding and making connections to other created categories (Neuman & Robson, 2007).

These links were created by focusing "on the on the conditions that give rise to a category

(phenomenon), the context (specific set of properties) in which it is embedded, the

action/interactional strategies by which the processes are carried out, and the

consequences of the strategies" (Kendall, 1999, pg. 747). Therefore two categories may

be linked in this stage through an understanding that they both give rise to a category, or

through shared process, or even the end results of their existence.

The third pass, selective coding, refers to grouping themes together into larger

groupings in which they had some semblance of similarity (Neuman & Robson, 2009).

Scott (2004, pg 121) describes this phase as "the process of integrating, interpreting, and

refining the theory … we develop the story line and interpret the emerging theory". This

was done by linking the categories and networks created in the axial coding stage to the

main or central phenomenon of the study.

Themes were confirmed according to data saturation, which according to Guest,

Bunce and Johnson (2006) is the point at which no new information or themes are

observed in the data.   Bowen (2008) explains saturation is reached "when the researcher

gathers data to the point of diminishing returns, when nothing new is being added" (p.

140). In terms of evidence of saturation, this study was guided by two strategies – first,

Bowen's (2008) concept of theoretical saturation was utilized to finalize conceptual

themes within the data, and second, Guest et al.'s (2006) recommendation that saturation

may be reached at a sample size of 12 was followed.

This coding process was enhanced through the understanding of institutional

theory literature. This literature was utilized to develop and direct the initial coding

process, through the utilization of a framework of concepts. It is important to note that

while institutional theory guided this qualitative research process, it was open to

emergent themes.

Trustworthiness and Soundness

While qualitative research has long been considered an acceptable research

methodology there are specific strategies and techniques that must be implemented

throughout the process in order to strengthen the trustworthiness and soundness of the

research. Patton (2002) describes these strategies as the criteria for 'social research,'

which include authenticity, triangulation and reflexivity. All three of these methods were

included in this study to strengthen the research.

Triangulation was a crucial aspect of creating a trustworthy and sound data set. "Triangulation is a validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study" (Creswell & Miller, 2000, pg. 126). Denzin (1978) in Patton (2002) describes four separate ways in which to achieve triangulation in a study and therefore strengthen it; data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, and methodological triangulation. However, Patton (2002) adds a fifth triangulation category, triangulation of interview questions. While not all triangulation strategies were utilized in this research, multiple strategies will be implemented in the research process.

To triangulate in the interview process, a minimum of one question had to be asked from each of the six categories defined by Patton (2002); experience/behaviour, opinions/values, knowledge, sensory, felling/emotion and background/demographic. These categories are designed to enhance the results of the research as well as a way to increase reliability through what Patton (2002) calls triangulation of question design.

Experience/behaviour

- How has this curling club changed since you became a member here, if at all?

Opinions/Values

- Why do people curl here?

- What do you gain from participation in curling?

Knowledge

- Do you know of any unwritten routines within the club?

Sensory

- If I walk into your curling club on a night that you curl, what will I see?

Feeling/Emotion

- How do you feel curling clubs treat their members?

These questions listed are not exhaustive of the interview guide. Rather, they are

examples of Patton's (2002) approach to the criteria for establishing triangulation through

multiple question types. The full interview guide can be found in Appendix B.

Another triangulation technique that was utilized in this research is that of data

triangulation. Mays and Pope (2000) describe data triangulation as "compare[ing] the

results from either two or more different methods of data collection or, more simply, two

or more data sources". As described earlier in this paper the researcher interviewed

twelve unique interview participants from multiple curling clubs. As well as utilizing the

data from the interviews, historical data from popular literature, as well as financial and

annual documents from the CCA was analyzed. The use of these multiple data sources

helped triangulate the data.

Triangulation alone is not enough to strengthen this study to a point of academic

acceptance. The researcher also utilized the strategy of reflexivity. Mays and Pope

(2000) define reflexivity as "sensitivity to the ways in which the researcher and the

research process have shaped the collected data, including the role of prior assumptions

and experience, which can influence even the most avowedly inductive inquires"(pg.

51). Reflexivity was established through the simple act of explaining the researchers'

background and stance. The researcher has an extensive history with the sport of curling,

specifically within Canada. The researcher was a high performance athlete and currently

a high performance coach. The researcher is also a student with a focus in community

recreation. These differing experiences have defined the researcher as a person and he

would be remiss to state the opinions and beliefs he has developed through these experiences. The main belief, along with that of constructionist, is that there is more to be gained from community sport than elite/professional sport. That is not to say that elite sport does not have its benefits and values, but that community sport produces a better quality of life for a greater number of people.

A third strategy that was implemented is that of authenticity.   "Authenticity involves a set of criteria…which commits the constructivist researcher to a set of actions. If the researcher fails to meet these commitments, the quality of the research is questionable" (Manning, 1997, pg. 94). Similarly to reflexivity, authenticity is concerned with whether the researcher will analyze an informant's data in a way that is not reflective of the ways in which the researcher feels but rather be true to the participants feelings. To overcome this, member checking was attempted.   Once the interviews were completed, and the recordings transcribed, a copy was offered to the participants. None of the participants accepted the offer as they were comfortable with what they remembered stating during the interviews and as such deemed the interview to be a valid representation of their views. Therefore, member checking cannot be described as taking place, rather, member checking was attempted. The participants were requested to contact the researcher within 24 hours if they found the transcripts to be unsatisfactory, but keeping with ethics approval, they were made aware they could pull out of the research project at any time.

Through the use of multiple qualitative research strategies this research will stand up to the rigors of academic research. Utilizing authenticity, triangulation and reflexivity strengthened the quality of the research and ensured that the researcher maintained a

professional course of action during the data collection stage of the research process. As

such, this research has met the rigours necessary for qualitative research.

Chapter 4 – Findings

This research project has two research questions, what are the values of community level curling and whether the values within community and national level curling are similar or dissimilar and why? The first section of this chapter will address the first question and describe the values of the community level of curling as identified by the participants.   Here, the values are presented within an institutional theory framework.   As such, all values are categorized as eroding, existing, or emerging – conforming to the institutional theory framework.   This is followed by an overview of the finding surrounding how the values of community level curling are considered legitimate within the community curling clubs, again, conforming to the theories within an institutional framework. The third section of this chapter explores the growing gap between the values of the national level of curling and the community level as identified by the participants.

The Values of Community Level Curling

The data analysis reveals that community level values exist as both competing and correlating with traditional community level values – as described in the previous literature review chapter.   Through the analysis process the values described by the participants were allocated into one of three a priori categories: existing, eroding, or emerging.   Existing values are those which have been maintained over time as, "organizations have to conform to institutionally prescribed values and beliefs in order to receive and maintain legitimacy" (Danisman, Hinings, & Slack, 2006, pg. 302). Eroding values are instead those that have been identified as a traditional value but either have changed from their base beliefs or have ceased to exist in current value identifications.   This erosion takes place when, "prevailing ideas and values [lose]

legitimacy and become discredited" (Oliver, 1992, pg 565).   Emerging values are values

that have been identified as a current value but are different from traditional values.   A

new or emergent value gains legitimacy when "other alternatives are seen as less

appropriate, desirable, or viable" (Dacin, Goodstein, & Scott, 2002, pg. 47).

Existing values.

In all interviews multiple values were identified by the participants, and almost all

were universal in their agreement.   The main values identified as existing are the values

of *respect* and *belonging*.   These existing values mirror traditional values that are

commonly identified with the culture of curling.

Value of respect.

The value of *respect* was identified as an important part of the local community

curling club.   This value is enacted through a code of ethics, being honest, as well as

self-policing.   Below are examples and descriptions of each of these behaviours and how

they are enacted at the local community curling club.

Respect enacted through a code of ethics.

Many of the participants believed that respecting themselves, the game, and

others was an essential value for those that participated in their curling community.   This

thought of *respect* was identified as a thread that held the game together.   Amy, a curler

with over 20 years' experience, discussed how this respect is enacted through a code of

ethics,

> There is a code of ethics for curlers and coaches.   And it is essentially
> meant so that the game is played in an honorable way.   It is very
> similar to golf, except with a fraction of the rules.   And people have
> much less knowledge of the rules.   It is things like being still while the
> other player is throwing, shaking hands before and after a game,
> congratulating good shots, or never booing a missed shot, or applauding

a missed shot.   It is about not making contact on the ice and body
checking, things like that right.   It happens sometimes.   About not
banging your broom and displaying huge swings of emotion.

Similarly Brian spoke of these same ideals but not in terms of a code of ethics but rather

the way in which people are raised, and those individuals bringing their same value sets

to the game of curling,

I'm a huge fan of the sportsmanship of curling.   I like people who are nice to
other people and I am not a big fan of a lot of ridiculous showboating in sports
and growing up as a junior in curling just the values that the sport brings to the
table are the same values I was raised with.   So, be polite, be a good sport, lose
like a man, win like a man, kind of thing.   And I have really found almost
without exception that most curlers I know share those values.

Respect enacted through honesty and truthfulness.

Another important response in regards to understanding the truth ingrained within

curling is the participants' steadfast belief that the words and actions of those in the

curling community are genuine.

I know here when you say good curling at the beginning of a game, you mean it.
You don't say I want you to lose, it's not like some sports, you really want to
have a good game, and if you win that game because you play a little bit better
then that's good.   It's not like you're lying when you say good curling, and shake
hands (Darlene).

All of these actions at the community curling club such as having a code of ethics as well

as sharing values of being polite, not showboating, being a good sport, and honesty all

illustrate the strength of the value of *respect* within the curling club.

Respect enacted through self-policing.

Another important aspect to the curling community in regards to *respect* is the

commitment that members of the local community curling clubs do not need officials as

part of their game.   This became apparent when Carly discussed the idea of self-policing

the game,

> I like the fact that it is self-policing. You are expected to follow the rules and do the honourable thing. If you burn a rock, call it. That kind of thing. And that people do. And it is not the kind of thing where it is like let's see how much we can get away with to give us an advantage.

The idea that a participant has to call her/his own foul, and that it does occur, is an example of how the value of *respect* is enacted at the local curling club. Denis also identified self-policing through the rule of "hogging a rock" again furthering the concept of respect between the members at the community curling club. Darlene spoke with passion regarding the value of respect being important to the sport of curling, to the point that it is "instilled in you as a young player". This shows how the value of *respect* is deemed so important by the membership of the local community curling club that it reaches into all aspects of the game – both adult and children's leagues.

Self-policing is obviously an essential act within the community level of curling. In community level curling the importance on *respect* and being honourable leads to a self-policing control over the game which in turn negates the need for officials within the game. While not specifically stated by any of the participants, the lack of an official body presiding over matches (in the way of a referee of an official) enables the local community level curling environment to stay at an arm's length from the regulatory bodies within sport. The value of *respect* within the game guarantees the community level curlers police themselves under the belief that the game must be played with integrity and by the rules, as well as through a code of conduct to further ensure honesty is maintained within the community. This strict adherence to the "gentleman's code" enables the community level of curling to maintain this *respect* within the game.

Value of belonging

The value of *belonging* was also recognized by participants as an essential part of the community level curling club.   This value was identified if participants thought of the club as a safe and homey place, if they tended to focus on fun at the club, as well as the importance of camaraderie when participating in the sport.   Below are examples and descriptions of each of these behaviours, as identified by the participants and how they have been enacted at the local community curling club.

Belonging explained through a homey place.

One characteristic that permeated through multiple interviews was the idea that the curling club is a homey place, as well as a place in which the members are comfortable.   This hominess describes the emphasis of the value of *belonging* within community level curling.

> My favourite thing about the club is that it is home.   And I think it is home for a lot of people.   I think a lot of people really like that come October you are ready to get back into the club.   When you walk into the club…When I walk into the club for 30 years, and it is going to be there and very much like that for another 30 years.   And I think the word curling club is incredibly appropriate instead of "Ice Plex" or "Rec Center", it really is a club.   It is like a fraternity (Brian).

Furthering this, Brian went on to describe what he would hypothetically do if he had to move.

> The second reason is I grew up in that club.   I was a junior there.   I played all of my competitive life representing [city name] and I have an affection for the membership with the club and the club itself.   So I do like playing there, in fact I am not sure if I moved to [city name] if I still wouldn't drive into [city name] to curl.   I love the Niagara Falls curling club and I love the people there, but I grew up in [city name] so it is my club.   It is my home club.

Moving from one club to another is a reality in a society where we change locations for schools, employment, and other reasons. Alice explained how her experience of changing clubs allowed her to understand this sense of belonging.

> They kind of make you feel at home. Like coming from one club to the new club, it was really hard for me to get out there because I was so attached to my old club. Like I still am attached.[City name], I don't know if it will ever be home for me, but they made it more enjoyable. So if you think about Friday night mixed, they made us feel like we were a part of the club as opposed to outsiders coming in.

Brittney took this sense of friendliness and belonging and explained how it enabled her to become a more outgoing person when at her local curling club.

> I find people very kind to each other around here, always nice to each other and everybody's gonna help out somebody who's new or somebody who may be shy or something like that. I mean I'm not the most outgoing of people, but I find when I'm in the curling club I can be. I'll go talk to people whether I know them or not and you're in that zone where everybody knows you're a curler so it's OK.

The concept of the local curling club as a comfortable and safe place mimics the traditional amateur values that are historically described as the values of curling. The focus on tradition and established themes such as inclusiveness and socialization – that directly relate to the value of *belonging* - enables the community level of curling the ability to maintain the status quo through change at other levels of the sport.

Belonging enacted through having fun.

The value presented by eleven out of the twelve participants interviewed when recalling characteristics enacted on the ice was *respect*, but the themes of choice quickly shifted to socialization, camaraderie, and having fun – which are all the behaviours associated with the value of *belonging* - when discussing the curling community. When asked why people participated in curling Alice responded with,

> they come out, they have fun. They don't care if they win or lose. They come out for the exercise. They like to have a good time after the game and they go

home. It's not about winning or losing. It's about going out there and having some fun. Talking with your peers. And then going home.

This idea of having fun and socializing with your peers suggests that a sense of *belonging* is felt at the community curling club level. Alex responded with a very similar response, again rebuffing the idea that the game itself is a main factor in participating in curling.

They are doing it for social reasons; they aren't doing it for competitive reasons. They already did their competitive stuff. They played baseball. They played hockey. They played whatever and they were doing their thing there. And they come to curling A – because they have time, b – because they probably can't do some of the other stuff anymore because of age and physical limitations.

Understanding an individual's rationale for participation is important in understanding the values of community level curling. As Alex stated, people register and participate in curling for social reasons and have limited or no competitive intentions with the game of curling. The lack of competition and a focus on camaraderie again reinforces the idea that *belonging* is a strong value within community level curling. Along the same lines Amy said, "It is not a sport you play to get fit. You go out to have a good time and you go out to have fun".

Belonging enacted through camaraderie.

Seemingly linked with this idea of a lack of competition is a focus on friendships, conversation, and general sociability within the sport, "I enjoy the camaraderie and the friendship of the sport, which is something I like to do with people. I like people. I like the lasting friendships that come from the sport" (Amy). Likewise Carly stated, "most people that curl there really enjoy the people and it works for them". This idea of camaraderie and socialization – the actions associated with the value of *belonging* - was mentioned in twelve of the twelve interviews within this study. Obviously then, the value of *belonging* is important within community level curling. As well, the enacting of

this *belonging* through social protocols such as sharing drinks with the opposing teams

after games is important.   If community level curling has placed such an emphasis on

these ideals the origin of this routine of social drinking with the sport would also be

known within the curling community.   When asked about this phenomenon a typical

response was,

> Well it certainly preceded me.   As far I have always known, the social part of the
> game is pretty much as important as the on ice part of the game.   Afterwards you
> sit around and tell tall tales about the game.   The shots you missed, relive one or
> two you made and you have a couple drinks and that's just what it has always
> been (Alex).

> This camaraderie was also discussed by Brittney when considering what people

liked most about the club, "I love the people in the club.   I think if I ever left that would

be what I would be the most upset about, leaving the staff and the members".   This

camaraderie can even exist outside the physical establishment of the curling club itself.

Brian discussed the idea of taking the community of curling outside the physical walls of

the curling club,

> [They will] host you for dinner and they will take like four teams in and all the
> wives get together and cook all the meals and everything.   And there is terrific.
> There is one guy who deep fries perch, he is an ice fisherman and he saves all his
> perch all winter and when the spiel comes around he does a big feed for
> everybody (Brian).

> The data shows that there were two main existing values identified by the

participants of this study.   The first value identified was that of *respect*.   The value of

respect was enacted mainly through the self-policing of yours own fouls.   This value of

respect was explained as something that was considered essential to the curling

community.   The second value identified was that of *belonging*.   The value of *belonging*

was enacted by the participants focus on socialization, camaraderie, and the feeling that

the curling club is a homey place.   These values concur with the traditional values of

curling as defined in the literature review chapter and as such have been labelled as existing values.

Eroding values.

As described earlier eroding values are values that have changed, either positively or negatively, from their original, or traditional, state. This change can be initiated for a myriad of reasons, and the participants' beliefs as to why these changes have taken place are discussed.   The two values that were identified in the data as eroding were the value of *belonging* and of *giving back* to the curling community.

Value of belonging.

The value of *belonging*, while being identified as an existing value, also was identified as an eroding value.   This value has been described in both the eroding and existing sections due to participants describing *belonging* as important to community level curling, yet still pointing to the significant changes to the value over time, including how it has been perceived in social events, and impacted by changes in legislations and changes in general time pressures of participants.

Erosion through a change in social events.

While twelve of twelve participants accepted the idea of socialization and camaraderie – the enactment of the value of *belonging* - as being essential within the curling community, 10 of 12 also mentioned that the social atmosphere has degraded from its previous form.   Alex explained his thoughts on the social changes at his curling club,

> a game with the mixed [league] used to be the entertainment hub in the winter for a lot of people and so, they had the piano there. They had singalongs. I have been told all these stories. You go back and look at the old picture books. They had dressup nights. I remember we used to do skits.

Alex continued on explaining how those events no longer take place in his particular

club. This lack of extracurricular social activities at the community level curling clubs

have been identified by the participants as something members no longer participate in.

Carter discussed the change in the social atmosphere at the club through the views of a

child with parents who curled who eventually became a curler himself,

> Friday night I remember like my dad coming home at like 2 in the morning just
> because there is bands on Friday night and they had food and they had all of this
> and they just can't do that anymore because there isn't the people to sustain it.
> People stay to like 11:30 if that.

While Carter himself was not participating with the social atmosphere, as a child of a

curler he knew that the accepted practice was late nights of drinking, food, and

socialization. Again, this socialization represents the *belonging* value.

Erosion to belonging due to legislative change.

These statements do not address any explanations regarding why there has been a

social change at the club, but it does present a picture and understanding that while

curling is still considered a social sport it is not the social hub it once was. Three of the

thirteen participants did explain the reasons why they believe the social atmosphere has

changed. Carter noted that the members themselves did not choose to participate less,

rather they have been forced,

> I think the stricter drinking and driving laws are definitely affect that 'cause
> people don't, there's almost the association between alcohol and the curling for
> most people and it's a night out but I mean like there are certain leagues, like
> generally speaking the men's league and then like the competitive open league,
> don't change that much I would say here.

The focus on drinking and driving laws has a significant effect on the local community

curling clubs. Data above describe curlers strict adherence to social protocols of drinks

and socialization, which define the strength of the value of *belonging*, yet the legislation

regarding drinking also limits members abilities to socialize and has hurt members ability

to enact their value of *belonging*.   Chris furthers this thought of legal drinking issues

affecting club participation in socialization,

> RIDE [Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere].   You know, that has changed big
> time.   Now it is a couple drinks.   When I joined this club people would stay until
> 4 in the morning.   So that has changed big time.   This club is empty at midnight
> now.   I would say that part has changed a fair bit.   We don't have as many big
> parties as we did have.   We used to have a lot of parties that went late.   We used
> to have New Years Parties.   We don't do that anymore.   So I think the partying
> side has gone down.

> Both of these statements describe a change in the socialization of the club.

Members of the community curling clubs are unable to drink the quantity and for the

amount of time that they previously could due to government legislation.   While the act

of drinking alone does not define socialization, the traditional definition of socialization

at the local community curling club includes drinking.   Curling as a sport has been

traditionally associated with alcohol, drinking becoming a part of the sport.   Brian

described the negative impact that continuing the traditional drinking culture could have

on the local club,

> I think that is the first thing, I think the culture of the game has changed.   It is a
> little less of a party sport, night in and night out.   You always hear the stories
> from the white haired guys about how the bartender would leave them the keys,
> and just whenever you leave just lock it up behind you right.   So the combination
> of the smoking ban and the really strict liquor laws.   Now the [inaudible] is not
> just telling you not to do it, they are coming to see that you are doing it and there
> are huge penalties – including the removal of your bar license – that just don't
> make those things a good idea anymore.

> The stricter legislative practices regarding smoking and drinking are an important

factor to the participants understanding of why the social aspects of curling have

changed.   All twelve of the participants identified that the social aspect of the sport is an

important part of the game, yet they almost unanimously agree that it has changed.   Not

all participants gave reasons why this change has occurred, but those that did utilized

legislative powers to explain the change.

Erosion due to general time pressures.

There were five of twelve participants that gave time pressure and a general

change in Canadian priorities as their reasoning for the change in the social atmosphere at

the club. Darlene's thoughts regarding extracurricular events, outside of typical league

play, show again the changing priorities of members,

> Yeah, people are really gung-ho to come out on a league night but they don't
> really come back to the club at any other point.   From my observations are less
> likely to come out for a 1 day bonspiel and for a fundraising spiel than they used
> to when I was younger.   'Cause on the weekend when I was younger everyone,
> all the adults would come back for the weekend for the Meatspiel or whatever it
> was that weekend.   This is what you did.   Now, I guess maybe changing life
> priorities or something it's not the same really.

Similar to the idea of changing life priorities, Brian described the change based upon

people's time pressures within their lifestyles.

> If there is a downside, I don't think the club is quiet as social as it used to be.
> And I think it is strictly a time pressures thing.   When people are together in the
> club they are very obviously enjoying themselves but instead of staying for two
> rounds everybody stays for one and then it is out the door.   It used to be that we
> had to have twice the number of tables in the club because the first draw would
> still be sitting upstairs when the second draw came off.   You don't see that
> anymore.

Both Darlene and Brian described environments that are still very social and provide an

environment in which curlers enjoy themselves.   The changes are based upon a curler's

busy life away from the curling club, which limits one's ability to participate for as long a

period of time, or as often, as they traditionally had been able to.

Within the same vein as personal time pressure, Ben described a lack of

participation on extra bonspiels and social events outside of the regularly scheduled

league play,

> When I first started there the social aspect of the [city name] Curling Club was huge. Our fun curling night, which was Friday night, was packed. We had two draws. You had to get there early. We had some fun mixed bonspiels…So that dropped part of the social aspect, also people weren't signing up for things. They weren't helping out as much. Slowly, what has happened over the years is the Friday night league is drying up a bit. I don't know if it is just people don't have the time to commit on a Friday night anymore.

Ben's description explores a lack of participation outside of regular league play.

Similarly, Carly described a lack of participation in many social based club events at her

club.

> One of the things that I am actually disappointed about since I started was when I started it was more socially then it is now. And we had a variety of events that were run outside of the leagues. So we would have an icebreaker bonspiel. And we would have various other kind of one day bonspiels. We had a Calcutta bonspiel at the end. Over the last 4 or 5 years those have dropped away. And partly because people weren't signing up. It is not like someone said , "we don't want to organize this". It was that attendance was dropping.

All of these statements refer to time pressure and a changing lifestyle for curlers

outside of the club environment. While curlers still have a strong social pull, they seem

to be unable to provide as much time in their lives to participate as they were traditionally

able to. This lack of time has affected not only the social atmosphere, the value of

belonging, but other values within the community level if curling as well.

Value of giving back

Traditionally curling, at the community level, has been a volunteer run

organization with a strong emphasis on *giving back* to the membership. Members took

roles throughout the club to ensure the smooth operation of the leagues and club in

general. Participants identified a substantial shift in the importance members place on

giving back. Through discussions participants described that *giving back* has been

eroded due to a lack of volunteering as well as general time pressures.

Erosion of volunteering.

If club members have external time pressures that are preventing them from

participating in club events, this same time pressure should exist with the volunteers

needed to run many aspects of the local curling club. Eleven of the twelve participants

interviewed identified the erosion of volunteering at the community curling club. As

Dave stated "I think you should volunteer for something in a club like this, it could use

that support. I think over time you should serve on the Board". Without those

volunteering their time to run events they do not get off the ground, and as such the social

gains from them are lost. Ben described how club members' busy lives have affected the

events at the club,

> As a social aspect, the non-competitive, the fun stuff, it has dried up. The
> volunteering and the events have dried up too.   We don't even have a Friday
> night mixed curling anymore.   We don't have a fun league at all. All of those
> bonspiels died.   I think part of it is the … how can I put it? People used to want
> to do stuff at the club, they wanted to help out. Now it is like, uh, I don't know, I
> have stuff to do. And I understand that life has gotten in the way for a lot of
> people, you have kids. I mean, I just notice myself, everything is just go, go, go.
> I mean that may be affecting it too, I don't know. I mean I wish the social aspect
> was there more because I think it would be better for the club, it would help the
> club.   More people involved, more people volunteering to do stuff, a healthier
> club.

While volunteering and giving back to the community can be linked to the social

erosion of the club, it can also be considered a value in itself that is eroding within the

curling club atmosphere. Historically member based clubs have survived on volunteers

and the membership giving back to the curling community. The participants spoke often

to the decline of the value of *giving back* within the club.   Chris specifically explained

how volunteering has changed at his club,

> I would say when I joined the club it was just at the beginnings of the changes.
> At one time there was probably a lot more volunteerism at this club.   We only

had a secretary, we didn't have a manager.   So the club was more run by the Board 27 years ago.

Alex furthered this thought that the decrease in volunteering significantly challenges the business of a curling club, noting that "you have to find the volunteers to run those programs. I think a general decrease in volunteering is impacting that as well. It is reducing what gets done". The reasons for the decrease in volunteering, and increase in paid work, such as the position of a club manager, are wide ranging but often mirror the rationales for the erosion of socialization at the club as well.   Amy explained her belief, as to why there are less people volunteering,

> I don't think that same volunteerism exists within the club environment always. You have say 350 members and about 80 of them are the ones who are volunteering every year over and over and over again.   So I think people are getting tired.

The idea that there is burnout within the curling community came up especially in this context of volunteering. There was also another train of thought on why volunteering has decreased. Brian believes people would rather just pay more money instead of volunteering due to their busy lifestyle.

> I think it used to be that probably you could probably get a little volunteer time out of just about everybody.   Now people really don't have a problem saying I am just too damn busy here is my cheque I just want to curl.

The changing mindset that people are both too busy, as well as are able to buy their way out of volunteering has altered how members *give back* to their local community curling clubs.

The idea of a busy lifestyle is brought up in the context of volunteering, and was brought up earlier within the context of erosion of the social atmosphere within the community curling population. Therefore it is reasonable to assert that the changing

Canadian lifestyle is having an effect on the local community curling club and how it functions "because I know even in our club everything's done by volunteers but it's not always easy to get the volunteers out" (Brittney).

Two main values have been identified as eroding from the data. Those values are the *belonging* and *giving back* to the curling community. The value of *belonging* was also identified in the existing section of this paper, the reason being, that participants identified the need for *belonging* as essential to the curling community as corresponding with the traditional values, yet their actions described that value as eroding. The act of *belonging* within the curling community seems to be in flux as participants' words and actions seem to contradict each other in terms of this very important value.

Emerging values.

Currently no data was presented to show emerging new and unique values that have been legitimized within the community curling community. Multiple opportunities were given to the participants during the interview process to identify values of curling with open ended questions. Each value that was identified by the participants related to historical values, as identified in the literature review chapter of this document, as such they cannot be considered emerging as curling develops towards the future.

This does not eliminate the possibility that there may be new emerging values at the local community curling club. Rather the participants choose, for unknown reasons, to discuss how the curling club has evolved or maintained value sets based on comparisons to a historical view of the curling community. This resulted in no meaningful new emerging values being identified within the data for this study.

Through the interview process multiple values were identified by the participants. These values have been identified as currently existing within the curling community,

eroding values that have changed or ceased to exist, or emerging values that have arisen

and are new when compared to the traditional values of community level curling.   The

strongest values that have been identified as existing currently in the community curling

atmosphere are that of *respect*, that the club is a homey place which allows *belonging;*

and the importance of *camaraderie* – most often through socialization - to the existence

of curling.   With respect to the values that have changed the most significantly, or

eroding, from the traditional values of curling was that of *belonging* and *giving back*.

The changes affecting the curling community's traditional value of belonging were based

upon legislative changes that have affected people's ability to participate in drinking and

smoking at locations such as a curling club, which in turn have diminished the

socialization at the clubs.   Furthermore, the diminished participation in volunteering has

been deemed to be based upon the changing life values of all Canadians, not specific to

the curling community, yet has eroded at the value of giving back.   Through the

interview process no values that would be defined as emerging were identified by the

participants.

Legitimate Beliefs in Community Level Curling

Alice described the general feelings of how people need to act to be seen as

legitimate within the curling club "you sign up for curling you have to go along with the

norms of society..or the norms of the [club name]".   The theme of learning the social

norms from the membership begins the moment a new curler enters into the club.   Carly

recalled her entrance into the curling environment and the funnelling into a specific

section – "Friday nights tend to be the night's new people join.   If you're a couple you

join on Friday nights at our club.   They pair up the new people with some established

curlers".   Carly later in the interview, furthered the idea of partnering up new curlers

with experienced curlers to help learn the ropes.

> And actually, that was probably one of the biggest thing when we first started and
> we had the mentors who were teaching us.   They made sure we got that
> information.   And in fact I think the etiquette, if the etiquette breaks down that
> becomes a problem sooner than anything else becomes a problem.

> While all learning in regards to curling club values does not necessarily stem from

the placing of new curlers with experienced curlers the idea that the older generation

moulds and teaches the younger generation is extremely prevalent within the interview

data.

> One of the big things about curling is it's like being passed down, you learn
> traditions, you learn etiquette, you learn everything from older more experienced
> curlers.   Whether it be a coach or someone on your team, you learn that from
> playing, and if you don't have that same passing down of skills and even
> coaching, I think it will have an impact down the road (Darlene).

One participant identified this learning and teaching experience as an integral part of the

culture within the curling community. Alex stated that "I think there is a culture at the

clubs too that may have an impact on that even more then what they see on TV. The

culture of – especially people who are coming to a club new so they are playing front

end, they are learning from the skips and vices".   In conjunction with the idea of learning

and community, this learning from others is not isolated to those you share a team with.

Dave explained this learning,

> It is not every sport where you can rehash a game, or even talk during a game
> with the opposition about strategy or outcomes.   And sometimes it isn't
> appropriate either, but in club curling it very much is.   You will find, I find, that
> in our competitive league if my team is moving up from say a B to an A based on
> our success on a draw, you are welcomed and you go in there and you learn
> something.   And the people up there are for the most part are very happy.   They
> are happy to beat you, but they are happy to help you as well.

Joined with the idea of partnering with established curlers for learning purposes is

the concept that new members are being partnered with established curlers for social

reasons. Denis explains,

> I like how welcoming people are here that they really take the time to get to know
> you to really teach you the sport and say hey if you want to become a member we
> are starting, we have teams that are looking for people to play and we'll put you
> right on a team.

According to Ben, those that fit into the experienced curler role seemed to feel a

heavy responsibility to ensure that this learning takes place; "right down to guys who are

brand new.   And what you do is you take those guys and more or less try and help them

along.   Put them on a team, coach them, teach them".   This coaching and teaching also

goes past the idea of the basics of the game,

> They [the experienced curler] have a responsibility to not only get them up and
> through 8 ends, but to try and help them play better.   Try to help them enjoy the
> game.   Try to help them understand there are other things you can do in the game
> (Alex).

While it makes sense that a lot of the learning would come at the entrance into the

curling community there is also evidence of a prolonged learning and teaching within the

curling community.   Experienced curlers found it important to realize their effect on the

new curlers as well as the effect of other curlers on them through their ability to come out

and say,

> 'Hey, want some help' then you'll say 'yes I want some help'. So it's that two
> way street.   And I think a lot of curlers have that in common.   I mean, there is
> the odd one who doesn't, but most of the time people are there to learn, to teach,
> and it goes all the way around because I'm still learning.   And I've been curling
> for 20 some odd years (Alice).

This idea of the older, experienced curler teaching the younger curler the values and

acceptable behaviours and the effect that has on the culture and values of curling can best

be summed up by Brian's thoughts, "Those values perpetuate themselves over time so the

same types of people keep coming into curling and staying in the sport and the culture

stays intact over hundreds of years".

The way values have been passed down is obviously important within the curling

community, as seen from the statements above. Equally as important are the ways in

which the curling community deals with opposing ideals and values that try and enter the

curling community.   This dealing with opposing ideals is based in the perpetuation of the

taught and learned values.

> I think that people who … don't fall into that mold as the curling nice guy don't
> get asked to play in a lot of cases.   And so eventually when you run out of people
> to play with you are out of the sport kind of thing (Brian).

Or put by Alex more bluntly,

> Curling weeds out bad people.   You can golf on your own, but you can't curl on
> your own.   If you are a golfer that nobody wants to play with, well then go play
> at six in the morning and play by yourself because no one is going to want to play
> with you.   But it is pretty hard to curl if you can't find 3 people who want to curl
> with you.   The real bad kind of personality kind of people tend not to be in the
> game for the most part.   You are not going to find too many real rotten eggs to
> play with.

Such notions suggest that certain actions are enforced within the local curling

community, and others deterred.   These actions, identified through these interviews,

generally revolved around the social protocol and human interactions within the club

environment.   Through the mentoring and passing down of acceptable knowledge by

placing new members under the guidance of the experienced community level curler,

these legitimized actions become the norm. These normalized beliefs and values then

become perpetuated over time within the club environment, and as such, are the accepted

social protocol. These concepts will be argued further in the discussion section of this

paper.

Community Level Curling and Disconnects to National Level Curling

In chapter 2, a comprehensive understanding of national level curling values was presented. The introduction of curling into the Olympics, the creation of a World Curling Players Association, and the CCA's hiring of a new CEO with a focus on financial functions has developed a professionalized value set within the national level of curling. Interview participants discussed multiple values within the context of the national level of curling, but the focal point of most of the conversations focused on the disconnect between community level curling and the national level of curling.

Throughout the interview process all twelve participants provided thoughts on how the professionalization of national level curling has affected the community level of curling. Alex sums up the general point of view and opinion of the participants,

> There are not that many people that would care. Most people who are curling there are there to curl their one night a week. Whether the OCA [Ontario Curling Association], some of them probably don't even know there is an OCA. They know there is a Brier, but they probably don't even know there is a CCA [Canadian Curling Association]. I guess they know there is some kind of association but they couldn't tell you what it is or how it works, or anything about it. So I don't know that necessarily translates to the grassroots curling.

The idea that the common community level curler has no interest or knowledge of the national level governing body and how it affects the sport was directly pointed to by Ben as well,

> No we [the club] are part of the OCA, but what I am saying is we are not a competitive club. Most of the people in the club don't have the foggiest idea about the OCA. Usually we get maybe a seniors team in, and it will probably involve me and another guy.

Aside from the lack of common knowledge regarding the provincial and national level associations there were also comments regarding people's interest in reaching the highest level of the sport, and as such the "growing gap" that now seems to exist not only

in skill levels but value sets. Those that participate in curling at the most basic

participatory level seem to have a lack of interest in the competitive loops of curling,

> I could be wrong, but I sense that there are fewer people that care about competitive curling. As a smaller percentage of curlers that curl care about competitive OCA curling than there used to be. That is just a sense I get, again because I see the number of entries being less and less even in our zone I think it is less and less, but certainly across the province they have charts on how many entries all these different events are getting and almost without fail it is on a downward trend across the Board (Alex).

As well as understanding that there are less people participating in the elite level of

curling, a participant described a potential reason as to why this decrease has taken place.

The community level curlers, especially Alex, seem to understand the skill and time that

an elite level curler must put into the sport.

> I am not sure that there is a correlation between the two. Partly because I think people, and maybe this is answering your question. I am not sure people necessarily aspire to that. Just because Glenn Howard is out there doing all the things he is doing, doesn't mean that Joe blow curler thinks that he can be Russ or Glenn Howard. They recognize the time and effort that they put into the game. People just aren't necessarily willing to do that.

> These statements imply that community level curlers are disinterested in all areas

of elite curling, yet the fact that the participant explains those feelings based upon

registration levels and time commitments implies that community level curlers are only

disinterested in participating in elite level curling and still have a high interest in being a

spectator. Brittney had similar thoughts regarding spectatorship being the main

interaction between community level curling and elite level curling, noting that,

> I don't know if it affects everybody on the whole, it's not necessarily everybody would be trying to reach that goal. I think in a sense it probably helped because it's getting more people watching it on TV, so it's probably helping more than anything else, getting everybody out. It's like we do the open houses and classes and things like that, where we're bringing people in to teach them how to curl. And the majority of people will say they saw it on TV, that's why they wanted to try it out. It's not necessarily a word of mouth thing, normally that's how they

get brought into the club, is somebody that they know, but usually it's something they saw on TV and they thought to themselves that they want come out and try it.

The idea that elite level curling is disconnected from community level curling is therefore based upon the community level curlers lack of interest in competing in the elite level of curling.   While the disconnect in participation is occurring, there is a link in terms of the elite curling as a marketing tool for participation in the community level of curling through spectatorship of the elite level events.   Brian did disagree with this sentiment that there has been a positive windfall from the professionalization of curling stating that

> We had this enormous upswing in money into the sport, in terms of advertising, and the Olympic money.   And now just private sponsors like JVC, Tim Hortons, and Scotties. The Brier sponsorship is worth over a million bucks now.   And all that tv time really hasn't translated into an enormous influx into the sport.   At least at our club.   I don't know if they are seeing it in bigger centers, I don't know, but we aren't seeing a change.

While this statement disagrees with the idea that community level curling has benefited from the professionalization as Brittney suggested, the notion that there is a disconnect between community level curling and national level curling still remains.

This participation disconnect is so strong interviewees could not even identify a link between the community level curler and elite level curlers,

> I can't see why it would.   I mean I can't think of why [professionalization of elite level curling] would affect anybody.   People have their curling favourites, you know fans of curling.   The only thing I can see is it could make someone come in the door and try curling.   I don't see it as ever affecting anybody (Chris).

The suggestion that community level curlers seem to have no interest in the elite levels of curling other than as spectators has a large effect on understanding how, or if, community and elite level curlers exist within the same organizational field.   Despite the idea that

there seems to be little interest in the governance of curling from community level

curlers, those that did show interest seemed to have a complete lack of knowledge

associated with said governance structures.

> I think you see most of those guys at the Tankard play downs don't you? Like if
> they are going to go to their provincials….I am not real big, I don't happen to
> know a lot about the provincial structure, but Glenn Howard and those guys they
> have to play if they are going to advance if they are going to represent the
> province for things they have to play in those don't they? (Carly)

Darlene acknowledged that she personally had knowledge of the organizational

structure, but admitted that it seems as though the average community level curler does

not,

> I think the changes behind the scenes happened and that's what people are doing.
> I think they've branded it in a way that people, the everyday club people might
> not notice it as much as someone who's more knowledgeable of what's actually
> happening.

There are two conclusions that may be drawn from this data.   The first being, community

level curlers do not have enough knowledge or understanding to comprehend the changes

happening at the elite level of curling.   The second being, elite level of curling is

branding their change in a way to try and have as limited an effect on community level

curling as possible.   This was the first and only time in which a participant mentioned the

elite level of curling purposely trying to maintain the status quo of values at the

community level of curling.

This lack of knowledge is not isolated to the understanding of how elite level

curling is governed.   Through the interview process it was shown that there is a both a

lack of knowledge in how the community level of curling is governed and a lack of

professionalism within the Boards that manage and maintain the community level of

curling.   Ben explained how his club views the provincial body governing the sport of

curling,

> No one has the foggiest idea what the OCA is.   There are a few, I will stand up
> and mention stuff and they forget about it 10 minutes later because there is no
> interest.   Our club reps are boneheads.   And I will be frank about that, they really
> are.   They are such boneheads that when people do have entries they come
> straight to me with a question about the OCA.   They don't go to the club rep
> right, they come to me.   And that is fine I will answer the questions but I really
> wish they would because it isn't my job and it doesn't enlist the people that are
> supposed to be doing the job.   So the club is kind of….I wish they were out there
> more.   I wish they were more forward.

If the community level curling membership is unaware of how the provincial

body functions then it will be challenging for these higher level agencies to govern or

emit change on the community level of curling.   Carly described in detail some of the

issues with community level club management,

> I think actually to me a bigger issue is turnover on the Board.   On our Board
> there are some people…the way that people get into the Board is they can be just
> a member at large, or they can represent one of the leagues.   And sometimes the
> people who are there to represent the league think that their only job is to
> represent the league.   So we have a problem on the Board with the number of
> people on the Board who don't do anything related to general Board activity.
> And then there is turnover, so we had no system for bringing new people in and
> acquainting them with how things work.   They were just kind of tossed in.   So to
> me it was more of an issue of this continuity problem.   That nobody, because at
> one point the Board was very strong and very committed to these types of things
> and really did a lot of work on them.   Then people changed, that fell by the
> wayside.

She then further explained some other issues with basic club management.

> There are issues with the way that the club is run behind the scenes that no one
> ever sees and no one really knows about, but that could definitely be done more
> effectively and more sort of to the rules of the constitution.   This year they forgot
> to have and Annual General Meeting.   And that is a pretty serious violation of the
> constitution.   I said are you guys going to have one this year? So there are some
> procedural things.

Both of these statements describe organizations that are either struggling with, or not

interested in, basic management structures that focus towards professionalization.

The data show that the link between the community level of curling and the national level of curling would be considered weak at best. Participants described national and elite level curling being so far removed from their abilities that it didn't permeate into the ways in which they interacted with the game of curling. While seven of the twelve participants identified that they were spectators of the elite level of curling, the only benefit identified was that elite curling brought visibility to the sport, yet participants believe it has not changed the way in which the community level of curling is played.

Analysis Summary

The initial research question asked what are the values of community level curling? The data have identified multiple values in which the community level of curling has defined as important. These values fall into the categories of existing and eroding. The significant existing values are that of *belonging* and *respect*. The significant eroding values are that of *belonging* and giving back.

The second research question asked, whether the values within community level curling and national level curling are similar or dissimilar? The data have shown the links between the national level of curling and the community level of curling are weak at best, and the gap is so large that changes at the national level have little to no effect on the participation in the sport at the community level.

Also, important data were given that described how values are maintained or changed within the local curling club environment. Examples of how values that the club deem as acceptable, or legitimate, are   passed down and communicated over time

are presented.   The ways in which values are maintained or created, in the opinions of

the participants, will be linked to institutional theory.

Chapter 5 – Discussion

This research project had two research questions, the first being: What are the values of community level curling? This question is answered in regards to what the values are and if they are emerging, eroding, or simply existing.   The second question is: Are the values within community level curling and national level curling similar or dissimilar? The findings identify that the community level curling has a strong focus on the values of *belonging*, *giving back* and *respect*.   The data also show a growing gap between the value sets of national level of curling and the community level of curling. Utilizing institutional theory as a base, the data are explained and potential reasons for the findings are discussed in this section.

Institutional theory is considered one of the preeminent theories to explain organizational change and organizational structure in multiple fields including management and sports management (Washington & Patterson, 2011).   The information presented in the previous findings chapter presents multiple linkages that can be made to institutional theory as well as explain the current state of values within the community level of curling.   Discussions regarding the data are presented within the scope of multiple theoretical concepts.   The first theoretical concept is the understanding of institutional pressures – coercive, mimetic, and normative – and how these pressures explain the current state of values at the community level of curling.   The second is the concept of institutional fields and how the concept of institutional fields can explain the differing values between the national level of curling and the community level of curling.

Current Values Explained Through Institutional Pressures

Taken-for-granted beliefs are a significant factor within the institutional framework.   Institutional theory states that, within an institutional field, values become taken-for-granted due to institutional pressures and become necessary for an organization to be deemed legitimate within the field (Dacin, Goodstein, & Scott, 2002).   As stated in the literature review, there are three unique pressures initiated on organizations that form the taken-for-granted beliefs: normative, mimetic and coercive.   The section below will briefly describe these pressures and explain the participant data using an institutional pressures framework.

The data suggests multiple instances of coercive pressures taking place. Coercive pressure, within an institutional context, is pressure enacted upon the organizational field through political or power relations (Dimaggio & Powell, 1983). "While this often looks like strong governmental or regulatory pressures these coercive pressures could come from any actor that has the potential to sanction organizations if they do not comply with their wishes or demands" (Washington & Patterson, 2011, pg. 3-4).   When discussing social changes at the community level of curling, participants identified the changing laws regarding alcohol and smoking as integral to driving this change.   These laws are the pure definition of a coercive pressure.   For a local curling club to be seen as legitimate, and to keep its liquor license, it must adhere to strict rules. As well, participants understand the consequences of drinking and driving laws and have altered their behaviour accordingly.

This legislative change regarding alcohol and tobacco has had an effect on the traditional values of curling.   Canada has amended the Criminal Code with respect to

drinking and driving laws (Asbridge, Mann, Flam-Zalcman, & Stoduto, 2004) and some

lower-tier jurisdictions have enacted new rules governing smoking in public areas

(Lemstra, Neudorf, & Opondo, 2008).   At the same time, there has been stricter

enforcement of liquor licenses.   Alcohol has been directly linked to sports participation,

including but not limited to curling, in Canada (Kunz, 1997). The drinking and driving

laws discourage participants from staying longer at the local community curling club as

they cannot get home if they consume more alcohol.   Smoking bylaws prevent curlers

from smoking at their local clubs. As such, those who smoke have less incentive to stay

after a game.   Stricter liquor license law enforcement often prevents alcoholic beverages

from being consumed while players are on the ice surface. Further, it places greater legal

responsibility on both the club and the bartender with respect to the wellbeing of the

patrons of the club. If the value of belonging, as identified by participants, is performed

within the curling community through social interactions, before, after, and during the

game, than this change affects the social interactions after the game.   Participants stated

that while individuals continue to sit and have two drinks after the game to fulfill their

social responsibility as defined by the membership, the traditional social culture of

staying late into the night, having live music, and other social events (Mair, 2007; Mair,

2009; Weiting & Lamoureux, 2001; Maxwell, 2002) has been detrimentally affected, in

some cases has ceased to exist within the community level of curling.

This coercive pressure is being enacted on the field from a source outside of the

institutional field.   Typically, institutional theory suggests that pressures are enacted

from within the field in which an organization exists. However, the wide reaching

implications of these legislative changes have had effects on a significant amount of

Canadian life. There has been research showing laws affecting other types of institutional fields through strong coercive pressures. Abrams and Settle (1993) show how a legislative change to the American banking system during the years of the Great Depression changed the taken-for-granted beliefs within the banking environment. The American Health Care industry also went through a coerced period of change during a period in which Medicaid and Medicare were implemented by the American government (Caronna, 2004). Both of these examples show how a direct legislative change can lead to a coercive pressure that alters the legitimized norm within an institutional field. The legislative change to drinking and driving, as well as tobacco use, has altered how the community level of curling participates in social activities while still be considered legitimate, similar to the US healthcare and banking system. In both of these examples, the industries and institutional fields adapted into a new homogeneous form and continued. The concept of a changing community level of curling is not a value judgment of the change; rather it is an acknowledgment of the adapting institutional norm in regards to tobacco and alcohol use.

These coercive pressures have led to a change in the value of belonging as identified by the participants. This pressure based change follows the tradition of coercive pressures within the institutional pressures literature (Slack & Hinings, 1994). The main difference in this research from traditional institutional research is that this research has identified the community level of sport. Most, if not all, sports based institutional research identifies the national level of the sport as the main focus of the study. Slack & Hinings (1994) focused on Sports Canada's pressure on Canadian NSOs, as well Danisman, Hinings, & Slack (2006) furthered institutional theory by focusing on

Canadian NSO's.   The research findings in these articles shows, similarly to these data, that coercive pressure from outside the sports realm through legislation can have a strong effect on sport culture.   The concepts of socialization and camaraderie are currently identified as important aspects of the community level of curling.   The coercive pressures enacted on the community level of curling in regards to alcohol and tobacco has minimized the ability of the social aspects of curling to enable as strong a community focus on *belonging* as past generations of community level curling.

Similarly, pressures have been enacted upon the membership base at the local community curling club from an external source revolving around available time.   Data regarding the evolution of the value of belonging through the denigration of social events at the local club is strongly linked to the suggestion that members now have a busier life, and, as such, cannot commit as much time to the local club and its events.   This idea of a busier life mirrors research by Cerin, Leslie, Suiyama and Owen (2010) who explain how individuals' busier life's correlate to a lowered participation in leisure time activities. Reichert, Barros, Domingues, and Hallal (2007) show that one of the most common barriers for participation is feeling too tired.   While Reichert et. al (2007) focused on physical activities, and a lack of social atmosphere is identified as a barrier, the commonality of time pressures leading to feeling too tired for participation again concurs with the data in this study.

Data did not suggest why or how the lives of members have become more time constrained than past generations. This has made linking the data to a specific type of pressure – mimetic, normative, or coercive – challenging.   Therefore, the linkage

between a busier Canadian lifestyle and participation at the community level of curling is, and remains, a potential area for future research.

Further, the data indicates multiple normative pressures enacted at the local community curling club. Participants identified multiple examples of how information is passed and how appropriate social protocols are maintained at the local club. Often, new curlers are paired with experienced curlers to show them the protocols at the club. Experienced club members feel it is their role to help new curlers. Curling, as a team sport, does not allow those who break these protocols to continue since "you can't curl on your own" (Alex).

All participants explained their introduction into the sport of curling involved either family involvement, school introduction or a pairing with an existing member. All three of these actions enabled the club to maintain traditional social protocols at the local club. Data from participants shows taken-for-granted beliefs are passed down from generation to generation of curlers through this teacher-student type relationship. Normative pressures are explained by Dimaggio & Powell (1983) through the concept of filtering and allowing likeminded individuals into the organization. As can be seen from the data, community curling clubs use these teacher-student relationships to explain the social protocols to the new entrants into the organization, as well as to displace those who refuse to adhere to these rules. Normative pressures are typically associated with the professionalization of an industry as schools, accrediting agencies and other powerful actors have influence over what new entrants to the field deem as important values (Dimaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 1987). As such, explaining a normative pressure within community level curling as permitting the organizations to maintain a non-

professional value set seems counterintuitive.   Yet, this normative pressure is enacted

from the membership base as a whole, which acts as the accrediting agency.

Normative pressures have had significant findings in the sports, especially

community sports, realm. Slack and Hinings' (1992; 1994) research on Sport Canada

and the isomorphism of Canadian NSO's did focus on coercive pressures, but they did

acknowledge the existence of normative pressures as well.   In this case, the normative

pressure was due to Sport Canada formally introducing a consulting firm to the NSO's

and the sharing of resources. Kikulis (2000) furthered this research stating, "for NSOs,

normative standards due to professionalization are also established from the broader non-

profit and sport communities that identify values and beliefs regarding appropriate

governance and decision making structures" (pg. 301) . Cunningham, Sagas, and Ashley

(2001) found during their research, while not on community sport, that black coaches

faced normative pressures through the professionalization of the coaching industry in the

NCAA.   All of these examples align with the findings of this study that normative

pressures can affect the values of non-profit sporting organizations.

Coercive and normative pressures have facilitated the current existence of the

values of respect and belonging, as well as the eroding values of belonging and giving

back within the community level of curling. The membership believes that to be

legitimate within community curling the acts of self-policing, socialization and enhancing

camaraderie must be maintained by the club membership. To do this, the traditional

social actions and accepted behaviours are distributed to new members from the existing

membership.   As well, the existing membership quickly extricates any non-conforming

individuals from the club.   The coercive pressures surrounding community level curling

has also eroded the value of belonging due to stricter legislation regarding alcohol and

tobacco, and the time pressures associated with a changing Canadian society.

Growing Gaps – Explained through Institutional Fields

One of the most important concepts within institutional theory is that of the

institutional field.   An institutional field is a grouping of organizations based upon a

"common meaning system and whose participants interact more frequently and fatefully

with one another than with actors outside the field" (Scott, 1995, p. 56). The

organizational field defines the actions and values that are deemed as legitimate for those

that exist within the field.   The concept of isomorphism then rises as organizations

accept taken-for-granted beliefs and actions to acquire legitimacy within their field.   As

organizations accept the belief and value systems of the field in which they are

entrenched, they gradually become part of the isomorphic form the field has deemed

appropriate.   Through this concept it is understood that all organizations in an

institutional field share certain key characteristics and values, and, in doing so, gain

legitimacy within the field.

The findings indicate that while traditional thinking implies that the national level

of curling exists in the institutional field in which community level curling exists, the

value sets of these two fields are not homogenous.   While the values may be eroding, the

data shows the community level of curling identifies with values such as belonging,

giving back, and respect. This contrasts with the focus of the national level of curling,

which has been identified within the literature review chapter as embracing values of

professionalization, fiscal responsibility and competitive success.

Utilizing the concepts within institutional theory, there are three possible reasons that will be discussed as to why community level curling and national level curling demonstrate different focal values.   The first argument will show that utilizing Olivers' (1991) strategic responses the local community curling clubs are able to avoid isomorphism in the institutional field yet continue to hold legitimacy within the field. The second argument is that these two organizations do not exist within the same institutional field.   While NSOs frequently interact with the base level of sport through their policy implementations, rules governance and marketing strategies (Skille, 2008), the distance from the NSO to the community level of sport is so large that their interactions do not occur at a frequency that is greater than other agencies, thus placing the community level of curling and national level of curling in different institutional fields (Scott, 1995).   The third argument will show that the national level of curling holds a differing institutional logic from the community level of curling, and as such, allows them both to remain legitimate within the field yet hold unique value sets.

Institutional fields – strategic responses to pressures.

Institutional theory focuses on maintaining values and beliefs through isomorphism within an institutional field, but there is also institutional research that focuses on why there are differences between unique organizations within a field (Oliver, 1992).   Often, this differentiation of a unit within an organizational field is due to a powerful actor within that field.   Scholars argue that these actors can themselves be seen as legitimate or having agency.   This agency or legitimacy allows these powerful actors to alter the taken-for-granted beliefs within a field, and as such, change the base structure of the homogeneous form within the field.

Furthermore, Oliver (1991) argues that organizations have the ability to make informed decisions regarding the institutional field and the pressures enacted upon them. Oliver believes that there are circumstances in which organizations will resist pressures enacted on them from the institutional field. While there are many in-depth explanations for organizations' strategic responses to pressure at the base level, Oliver (1991) states "organizations are more likely to accede to the values or requirements of the institutional environment when this environment is highly interconnected" (p. 171). At the opposite end of this spectrum, "environments that are highly fragmented or purely competitive impede the spread of institutional consensus and conformity" (Oliver, 1991, p. 171).

Oliver (1991) describes five overarching reactions an organization may exhibit based on the pressures enacted within the institutional field: acquiesce, compromise, avoid, defy and manipulate. Each of these strategic responses has "tactics" associated with it - actions an organization undertakes to manage the institutional pressure. This data fits within Oliver's (1991) definition of both avoidance and defiance. Participants recognized a large gap between the values of national level of curling and the community level of curling. When discussing the reasons for this gap, participants identified a complete lack of knowledge in how the governing body of curling interacts with the local club. These types of data lead to a conclusion that community level curling is defying, potentially, the institutional pressures through the tactic of dismissal. Participants were aware of the values at the national level, yet completely ignored their effect on the community level of curling.

One important piece of data from the interviews shows a strong focus on the reaction of avoidance through concealment. "Concealment tactics involve disguising

nonconformity behind a façade of acquiescence" (Oliver, 1991, p. 154). All participants

in this study were members of curling clubs where a volunteer Board of Directors

oversees the workings of the club. These boards imply a functional body that ensures

the success of the club, with success being defined by the membership as a whole.

Having a Board of Directors does not identify a value change of an organization towards

professionalization, but it does illustrate some acquiescence towards the idea of

accountability within the club. Information from participants described a lack of

protocol in these professionalized roles. One example included a club's Board of

Directors not holding an annual general meeting. While the act of not following

constitutions and by-laws does not constitute an intentional act to avoid institutional

pressures, the lack of full acceptance of the professionalized form of Board governance

can be seen as the Board's existence being a concealing act to avoid the pressures.

      The data within this research correlate directly to Olivers' (1992) theory of

strategic responses within institutional fields as well as Danisman, Slack, and Hinings

(2006) understanding of institutional logics. The community level curling has utilized

the response of concealment through a Board of Directors structure that is not fully

functioning. As well, the community level of curling is utilizing the response of

dismissal through the acknowledgement that there is little or no knowledge of the

functioning of the national level of curling from the community level if curling. Both of

these strategic responses explain both how and why the community level of curling and

the national level of curling can exist within the same institutional field and yet not share

a homogeneous form. While the data do show evidence of these strategic responses to

pressures, the data are minimal and do not describe a full picture of the case. With this

in mind, future research needs to be done to focus on the potential of specific strategic

responses at the community level of curling.   Furthermore, this research has identified a

stronger relationship within another theory within the institutional fields area.

Institutional fields – existing in a different field.

The Canadian sports system has historically functioned through a top-down

hierarchical approach (Green, 2007; Phillpots, Grix, & Quarmby, 2010).   Green (2007)

explains this top-down approach through an explanation of Sport Canada's relatively new

focus on increasing participation in sport.   Canada's focus on sport participation is

described in the Canadian Sport Policy (CSP) (Government of Canada, 2012) through a

vision for the CSP to have, "a dynamic and innovative culture that promotes and

celebrates participation and excellence in sport" (pg. 5).   The utilization of participation

as a main factor in this vision statement, and the following policy changes to focus on

participation in sport, illustrates the direct hierarchical link in the Canadian sport system.

Similarly, Phillpots, Grix & Quarmby (2010) argue for a dispersal of power in sports

towards a network of partnerships rather than the traditional top-down management

model, again presenting a description of the hierarchical sports model.

In curling, while the community level of sport operates the daily leagues of the

recreational curlers, the administration of the overall sport is overseen through a

hierarchical model by the provincial sporting body (which in the case of this study is the

Ontario Curling Association), and the national sporting body (Canadian Curling

Association).Through this hierarchical approach to sports, there is an assumption the

national sporting bodies' decisions impact those at the provincial level, which, in turn,

trickle down to the community level of curling. As such, studies imply that decisions

made and implemented by the national sporting organizations have a direct impact on the

community level of sport.

Therefore, with the information and research surrounding sports in Canada and

the hierarchy of the NSO's it is logical to assume that community level sport and national

level sport exist within the same institutional field.   Yet, the data show participants do

not feel connected to the national level of curling in any manner, often stating they don't

know the processes of the authoritative bodies and seemingly lack interest in knowing

about those agencies.   There are obvious connections between the national level of

curling and the community level of curling, but there is potential that these interactions

are not as frequent and purposeful as is essential to the existence of an institutional field

(Scott, 1995).   Danisman et. al (2006) identify the close nature of Canada's NSOs;

"These organizations had strong patterns of interaction with each other (they all had their

head offices in the same building in Ottawa!), with a central, legitimating organization in

Sport Canada; and they shared a common meaning system" (p. 304).   Understanding the

close knit nature of the NSOs in Canada, it can be shown that the institutional field in

which the national level of curling exists consists of Canada's NSOs, and, as such, the

pressures of that field are enacted on that level of organization while the community level

of curling is excluded from this institutional field.

With this understanding, the community level curling club can be shown to exist

outside of the institutional field that the national level of curling exists within.   National

sporting organizations have control over the rules that govern the sport of curling, as well

as control over the marketing of the sport, but, as Papadimitriou (2010) explains, the role

of the "national sports organization is confined to the promotion of the sport within the

country and the attainment of excellence internationally" (p. 205). This connection to the community level of curling through control of the rules and marketing of the sport as a whole fits within Scott's (1995) definition of existing within an institutional field but this link does not relate to the values in which community level curling define as important.

The existing value of belonging has been identified as being enacted through the club being a safe/homey place, participating for fun, and a sense of camaraderie. Due to the fact that these enactments typically take place outside of the game itself, the reach of the governing bodies is limited. As well, both the values of belonging and giving back were described as eroding due to influences outside of the on ice participation in the sport. Rather, legislative changes, and general life time pressures were shown to be the biggest influence of this change. Again, these pressures are from outside of the scope or reach of the NSO. As such, it can be shown that the community level of curling and the national level have a growing gap in their value sets due to the fact that they do not exist within the same institutional field.

Organizational fields – institutional logics

The growing value gap between national and community level of curling also fits within the institutional logic literature within the realm of institutional theory. Hinings (2012) describes institutional logics to be the "common meaning system" (pg. 99) that holds an institutional field together. This common meaning system defined by Hinings (2012) is almost identically to Dimaggio & Powell's (1983) explanation of taken-for-granted beliefs and legitimacy. Researching institutional logics, Danisman, Slack, and Hinings (2006) have found that,

> Institutionally prescribed values to be mostly monolithically adapted at
> the organizational level.   However, in spite of uniformity in most
> organizations as well as institution-wide strength, these values are also
> prone to be manifested distinctly around functional sub-groups across
> the field. (pg. 301)

Within the institutional logic framework the community level of curling could potentially represent a subgroup within the institutional field.   Within an institutional field, when sub-groups exist, "logics are at the field level and are thus upheld by a connectedness of field participants and not one dominant institution" (Washington & Patterson, 2011, pg. 8).   This subgroup explanation shows yet another theoretical concept to explain the value differentiation between community level curling and national level curling.

Participant data presented multiple instances of curlers identifying the need, or want, of increased volunteering within their clubs. This identification shows a strong link to the traditional grassroots sports ideologies. As Staples (2004) describes, volunteering and community development are key aspects to grassroots organizations. Participants identified giving back (enacted through volunteering) and belonging (enacted through socialization and camaraderie) as important values of community level curling. These values make it apparent that the community level of curling is a grassroots organization.

Another prominent descriptor of a grassroots organization is that it is essentially autonomous in its decision making (Smith, 2000).   The data have shown that there is an obvious value gap between the national level of curling and the community level of curling.   This gap has allowed the community level of curling to remain autonomous and make independent decisions.   Through the participants' identification of the community level of curling's autonomous nature, volunteer base, and sense of community, we can show participants believe community level curling is a grassroots organization.

Participants also identified a lack of understanding and knowledge of how the

CCA operates and the links it has to the community level of curling.   In the literature

review chapter, a strong case has been made regarding the CCA focusing on professional

values such as financial stability and elite level competitive success. As such, the

function of the CCA is significantly different than that of the community level of curling.

This differentiation of function describes two differing sub-groups within a larger

institutional field.

Southall et. al (2008) specifically research the differing views of the NCAA

organization and the NCAA woman's basketball tournament.   Similar to the case with

curling, these two organizations within the same institutional field had differing base

values – here defined as institutional logics.   Southall et. al (2008) have found that while

existing in the same institutional field the NCAA tournament had a focus on

commercialization while the NCAA organization holds the values of academic

responsibility and athletic growth.   Having differing values, while still being legitimate,

allows these two groups to remain heterogeneous within the institutional field.

Participants identified the values of community level curling that correspond to

the definition of a grassroots organization.   This identification characterizes community

level curling and national level curling in unique sub-groups according to institutional

logics research (Bettis & Prahalad, 1995).   Being in unique sub-groups explains how

community level curling and national level curling have been able to co-exist within an

institutional field and yet remain heterogeneous in regards to values.

The second research question inquires about the similarity or dissimilarity of

values of the community level of curling and the national level of curling.   The data

collected suggest that there is a significant and growing gap between the values of the

community level of curling and the national level of curling.   Utilizing institutional

theory and the concept of institutional fields it can be shown that there is a weak link that

the growing gap is based on a strategic response of concealment and dismissal to the

pressures being enacted on the community level of curling from an organization (the

national level of curling).   Due to the weakness of this link it is an opportunity for future

research in the field.   Furthering this idea of a growing value gap within the institutional

literature, this research has identified that the connectedness of community level of

curling and the national level of curling is limited.   This lack of connectedness relates

directly to the concept that either the community level of curling does not exist within the

same institutional field as the national level of curling or that due to differing institutional

logics the organizations are able to remain heterogeneous while existing in an

institutional field with limited connectedness.   Acknowledging this growing gap, future

research can move past the initial stage of identifying the gap and focus on strengthening

the understanding of why this gap is growing and the lack of effect of the

professionalization of the national level on the community level of curling.

Findings Summary

The first research question inquires about the values of the community level of

curling. The data presented has shown that respect and belonging are current values,

which have existed in the curling community over time due to normative pressures and

social protocols enacted that the local clubs.   Evolving values at the local level are

belonging and giving back.   The value of belonging has been shown to be evolving due

to coercive institutional pressure brought upon by changing laws regarding tobacco and

alcohol.   The value of giving back has evolved due to the mimetic pressure of time

pressures within a changing Canadian society.

The similarity or dissimilarity of the values of the community level curling club

and the national level of curling have also been identified.   Through the utilization of

institutional theory, the growing gap in the values, as identified in the data, between

national level and community level of sport have been explained.   Furthermore, it can be

shown that the community level of curling is enacting the strategic response of

concealment to avoid the pressures of professionalization and the response of dismissal to

acquiesce the pressure (Oliver, 1991), but this relationship seems weak at best.

Conversely, a strong explanation for the growing gap in the values between national and

community level curling can be presented through Canada's national sporting

organizations' close knit relationships with each other, which places them outside of the

organizational field in which the community level of curling operates.   As organizations

that do not exist within the same field, there would be no impetus for homogeneity in

values between national and community level curling.   As well, as the community level

of curling and the national level hold unique institutional logics they are able to remain

heterogeneous in terms of values sets.

Limitations

As this is qualitative case study research, there are limitations to this research that

mirror other qualitative studies.   Qualitative research focuses on rich detailed

information and transferability, rather than external validity that is available through

quantitative research methods (Bryman, Bell, & Teevan, 2012).   While external validity

is not attainable, it is believed that Chapter Four of this research gives "thick description

[that] provides others with the database they need in order to assess the possible

transferability of findings to other milieus" (Bryman, Bell, & Teevan, 2012, pg. 139).

This study has focused on four curling clubs in the Niagara Region of Ontario.

While the twelve participants did enable the researcher to reach theme saturation

(Bryman, Bell, & Teevan, 2012), this does not exclude the idea that other participants

from curling clubs in other areas of Southern Ontario potentially could have added

additional themes, ideas, and discussion to this research.

It warrants mention that participants often described stories and examples in

which they were not firsthand participants. When discussing the values and ideals of the

community level of curling, participants often linked their thoughts and feelings to past

images of what curling was. While these thoughts fit within a qualitative study, these

real and important stories to the participant's perception of curling may not be entirely

accurate in their descriptions.

One last limitation to this study was that no individuals from the national level of

curling were interviewed for this research. As such, all understandings of the values and

policies of the national level of curling were attained through media, CCA documents,

and other documented sources. Interviewing participating members of the national level

of curling, potentially, could have given a richer description to their values in this study.

Practical Implications

This study focused on the values of the community level of curling, and the

similarity/dissimilarity of these values to the values of the national level of curling. As

such, there are practical implications for the local grassroots curling clubs, those that

participate at the community level, as well as the national level of curling. The data

have shown that there is a significant disconnect between the national level of sport and the local level. This study shows that the disconnect is due to a differentiation in value sets, as well as the community level of curling focusing on social atmosphere outside of the game itself.

While the national level of curling provides leadership on game related policies (rules, facilities, playdowns, etc.) it does not have jurisdiction over social protocols within the individual clubs. As such, this study identifies the role of the national level of curling, in the eyes of the participants, as one of elite, national level governance with little to no impact on the community level of sport. Understanding how the grassroots level of sports perceives a national body can begin a discussion on how that same national body can best serve its membership base.

At the grassroots level of curling, this study describes and defines the values of the participants. Curling Managers, Boards of Directors, and participants at the local level can utilize this understanding of the values to provided more, or better, opportunities for their members. Acknowledging respect, belonging, and giving back as essential, yet changing, values can help management and volunteers focus their efforts to ensure the values are maintained through their policies and procedures.

Future Research

This research provides answers to questions regarding the community level of curling, specifically what values the local clubs enact and enforce as well as the values it refutes. Yet, there are still unanswered questions that have been brought to attention from this research. Future research could focus on understanding the growing gap in curling and take a definitive stance on understanding the strategic response to pressures

enacted by the community level of curling from within a field it shares with the national

level – utilizing the theories of Oliver (1992).

While this study focuses on curling in a specific region of Ontario, there are

research opportunities stemming from this research which could affect all community

level sport in Canada. The lack of understanding of how the values of national sporting

organizations affect local community sporting organizations has significant implications

all across Canada, and, potentially, in other countries as well. Knowing that national

level of sport, the assumed overall leadership group, has minimal effect on the local

sports community there is a need to establish either a new governance model, or

communication mode, if the sports community deems control of the community sports

community essential.

Conclusion

There is a growing gap in the values of the national level of curling and the

community level of curling. The community level of curling holds values of respect,

belonging, and giving back. While the values of belonging and giving back are eroding,

the causes of the erosion are pressures external to the recreational sporting environment.

Conversely, the national level of curling holds the values of professionalization and fiscal

responsibility.

Using institutional theory as a framework this research has shown that there is

limited connectedness between the national level of curling and the community level of

curling. Evidence confirms that due to this lack of connectedness community level

curling holds differing institutional logics than the national level of curling. These

differing institutional logics allow these organizations to remain heterogeneous while

existing loosely in the same institutional field.

Using institutional theory and the case of curling, this study confirms the research

that grassroots organizations function and make decisions independently.   While there

are loose connections to the national level of curling, it has been shown that the values of

professionalization have had little, to no, impact on the community level of curling.   As

such, community level curling has maintained an identity associated with community

development and community need.

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Appendix A

Letter of Invitation – **Board of Directors/General Manager**

Feb 26, 2011
Title of Study: A comparison study between grassroots and national level curling
Principal Investigator: DJ Brooks [Ma Candidate], Applied Health Sciences, Brock University
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Barnes, Associate Professor, Recreation and Leisure, Brock University

I, DJ Brooks, MA Candidate, from the Department of Applied Health Science, Brock University, invite your club to participate in a research project entitled Club Curling: A Study of Niagara Community Curling Clubs.

The purpose of this research project is to understand why local Niagara club level curlers participate in the sport and what their expectations are of the sport and their local club. Should you choose to participate, your members will be asked to participate in an interview session. Not all that are willing to be interviewed will be chosen. A purposeful sampling technique will be used and they will be contacted by phone by the interviewer to set up an appropriate time to conduct the interview.

The expected duration of the interview should last between 30 and 45 minutes. Ideally the interview will take place at the curling club as it will allow the interviewee to be in a place where they feel safe.

I ask for 5 minutes to speak before members go on the ice one night during the week in which I can introduce the project and provide a sign-up list for those willing to participate in the study. This introduction will be brief and should have no impact on the daily routines of the club.

This research should benefit the local clubs and the larger curling community to understand some of the expectations of their members as well as understanding why people become curlers.

This project is being done through Brock University with no others sponsors involved in this study.

If you have any pertinent questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Brock University Research Ethics Officer (905 688-5550 ext 3035, reb@brocku.ca)

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me (see below for contact information).

Thank you,

[Insert Principal Investigator's Signature]

DJ Brooks
MA Candidate
289-237-8740
Db07ii@brocku.ca

Dr. Barnes
Associate Professor
(905) 688-5550 ext. 5011
mbarnes@brocku.ca

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through Brock University's Research Ethics Board **[insert ethics file number].**

Appendix B

Sign-up Sheet – "XXX" Curling Club

Feb 26, 2011
Title of Study:A comparison study between grassroots and national level curling
Principal Investigator: DJ Brooks [Ma Candidate], Applied Health Sciences, Brock University
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Barnes, Associate Professor, Recreation and Leisure, Brock University

First Name	Phone Number	Years Curled	Have you been on the Board of Directors? (Y or N)

Filling out your information on this sheet does not commit you to participation in the

survey.Only4 members of your club will be chosen to participate in the survey and they

will be chosen randomly. If you are one of the chosen individuals you will be contacting

by phone to set up a time to have the 30-45 minute in-person interview that will take

place at your curling club.

Appendix C

Informed Consent

Date: Feb 26

Project Title: A comparison study between grassroots and national level curling
Principal Investigator (PI): DJ Brooks
Department of Applied Health Sciences
Brock University
Db07ii@brocku.ca

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Barnes, Associate Professor
Department of Recreation and Leisure
Brock University
 (905) 688-5550 Ext. 5011

INVITATION

You are invited to participate in a study that involves research. The purpose of this study is to understand why local Golden Horseshoe club level curlers participate in the sport and what their expectations are of the sport and their club.

WHAT'S INVOLVED

As a participant, you will be asked to answer questions in a one on one interview. Participation will take approximately 30-45 minutes of your time. The interview will be tape recorded for research accuracy.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND RISKS

There are no known or anticipated risks associated with participation in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The information you provide will be kept confidential. Your name will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study; however, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used. Shortly after the interview has been completed, I will send you a copy of the transcript to give you an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of our conversation and to add or clarify any points that you wish.

Data collected during this study will be stored on tape and then transcribed. The tape will be stored with Dr. Barnes, while the transcripts will be kept digitally on the Brock Graduate computer system as well as the researchers' personal home computer**.** Data will be kept for up to two years after which time the audio tape will be erased and the digital transcripts will be deleted.

Access to this data will be restricted to DJ Brooks, Dr. Barnes, and Dr. Stevens.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you wish, you may decline to answer any questions or participate in any component of the study. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time and may do so without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

Results of this study may be published in professional journals and presented at conferences. Feedback about this study will be available through DJ Brooks, who you may contact via email at db07ii@brocku.ca.

CONTACT INFORMATION AND ETHICS CLEARANCE

If you have any questions about this study or require further information, please contact DJ Brooks or Dr. Barnes using the contact information provided above. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board at Brock University **[insert file #]**. If you have any comments or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Ethics Office at (905) 688-5550 Ext. 3035, reb@brocku.ca.

Thank you for your assistance in this project. Please keep a copy of this form for your records.

CONSENT FORM

I agree to participate in this study described above. I have made this decision based on the information I have read in the Information-Consent Letter. I have had the opportunity to receive any additional details I wanted about the study and understand that I may ask questions in the future. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix D

Interview Guide

Part 1

1. How long have you curled for?

2. How were you introduced to the sport of curling?

3. If I walk into your curling club on a night that you curl, what will I see?

4. Why do you believe people curl here?

5. Why do you curl here?

6. What do you feel are the values that people portray while they are at the club?

7. Do you know of any unwritten rules with your club?

8. How do you feel this curling club treats their members?

9. How has this curling club changed since you became a member here, if at all?

10. What is your favourite and least favourite thing about this curling club?

11. Can you describe what you believe a stereotypical curler acts like?

Part 2

Script – Curling at the national and elite level has gone through a significant change. Elite

players are now paid significant amounts of money – almost to the point of being

professionals. The Brier, Scotties, and World Championships are boasting record crowds.

Elite curlers no longer participate in local curling club events, rather travelling the

country playing in high end 'slam' events. Traditionally curling has been seen as an

amateur, 'homey', social activity. This change at the national level counters some of

these ideals.

12. How do you feel this change has affected community level curling, if at all?

a. If yes

   i. Do you feel this change is positive or negative, and why?

   ii. How has this change been implemented at the curling club?

b. If no

   i. How has grassroots curling carried on through these events without changing?

   ii. Do you think that grassroots curling can continue on as it is while elite curling continues to become more corporate?

13. How would you describe the values of curling as a whole?