

The Pennsylvania State University

The Graduate School

College of Health and Human Development

TOMBOYS AND SISSIES?

THE EFFECTS OF GENDER STIGMAS IN SPORT ON

CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION CHOICES

A Thesis in

Leisure Studies

by

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements  
for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

August 2004

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between gender schema, stigma consciousness, and sport participation among boys and girls in grades 3 through 5. Although relationships between gender schema and sport participation have been examined previously, this study took the unique approach of also investigating consciousness of gender stigmas. A mixed method approach was employed in which quantitative data were obtained from self-administered questionnaires and qualitative data were collected from one-on-one interviews.

Despite efforts to encourage gender equality across many social domains, perceptions of gender and “appropriate” behavior and participation according to sex persist. Among the most notable are social prescriptions in sport, where masculine characteristics such as competition and aggression are definitive. Arguably, children as young as those explored in this study have yet to develop a gender identity, and should therefore be immune to social influences pertaining to gender. At the outset, this population was chosen so as to provide a foundation on which to build a longitudinal study in which the same population would be investigated as their gender identities became more salient throughout adolescence.

However, results from the quantitative and qualitative data indicated that children of this age group are aware of gender typed sports, and curb their participation accordingly. This was found to be particularly true for boys, who are socially expected to demonstrate masculine qualities. Behavior to the contrary results in a stigma of being too feminine or “girlie,” a detail that became clear in the qualitative component of the study.

Girls on the other hand, although aware that boys' sports exist, did not experience the same limitation in their participation.

For the most part, research investigating gender and sports to date has concentrated on the constraints and limitations afforded girls and women. Yet, the findings of this study suggest that boys and men may in fact experience greater restriction in their participation options than girls and women. Suggestions for future research include investigating these relationships among an older population, such as the longitudinal study discussed previously using the same sample, and to put some research effort into exploring the social pressures and limitations to which boys and men are exposed in regard to their sport participation.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

“One {a counselor} has been assigned to you in case you want her help or advice, but she has problems of her own. She’ll be around to say “good night” and to be friendly, but it isn’t up to her to do your thinking or your work for you. If you wait for her to tell you to put on your raincoat, or dry your hair, you’ll most likely get fearfully wet.”

Excerpt from *The Philosophy of Brown Ledge*  
Written by Harry E. Brown

Although throughout my tenure as a Ph.D. candidate I received my share of teasing because of my frequent references to camp, I would venture that few people realized just how close the Brown Ledge and Ph.D. philosophies are. My advisor, Dr. Deborah Kerstetter is an excellent case in point. Dr. Kerstetter was first and foremost my friend throughout the program, but provided me with invaluable advice, guidance, and support when I needed it. She gave me the freedom and independence to develop and pursue my own research interests that have given me the tools to be successful. I am honored and privileged to join the ranks of remarkable women whom Dr. Kerstetter has mentored. Her selfless dedication to being a successful advisor and teacher is an inspiration.

Thanks also go to Dr. Linda Caldwell, for providing advice on this project in its early stages, for giving the study careful consideration throughout, and for always pushing me the extra step; Dr. R. Scott Kretchmar for helping me put together my minor courses, all of which contributed to my better understanding sport and the psychology of participants; Dr. Elizabeth Pinel for her support and guidance on applying the stigma consciousness construct on a population of young children; to Dr. Frank Guadagnolo for stepping in and serving as a committee member when I most needed his help; and to Dr. Cheryl Baldwin for her input at the early stages.

Overall, the Ph.D. program was a very positive enjoyable experience for me, due in a large part to the support and friendship of the graduate students in Leisure Studies, particularly that of Gerard Kyle, Julie Lammel, Traci Zillifro, and Laurie Harmon. I benefited from their experiences, and I hope they from mine. Though we were not students at the same time, or were only briefly, I owe the same thanks to Kelly Bricker and Laura Payne. I also owe thanks to the faculty in the Leisure Studies program at Penn State. Through whatever means, they have fostered a unique environment in which work and play coexist, each taking precedence when need be.

This study would not have been possible without the assistance of Lenny Long, Mrs. Pamela Hosterman, Dr. Thomas Myers, and the funding support provided by the Penn State Children, Youth, and Families Consortium. Thanks also to Marie Welch, Deb Cassis, and Jaime Kessinger, for their cooperation and help throughout data collection.

My greatest thanks go to my family, who through their own knowledge and experiences provided a backboard off of which to bounce ideas and frustrations throughout the program. In particular, I thank my father, for his enduring and selfless support and friendship, and my mother, whose experiences served as the inspiration for this thesis. Her energy and spirit kept me going when I most needed it.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Sociologists contend that sport and physical activities are social phenomena through which idiosyncrasies of dominant cultural ideologies can be observed (Coakley, 2001). Among the cultural idiosyncrasies magnified through sport, differences between the sexes through socially constructed gender roles are most prevalent (Gill, 1992; Messner, 1992). For example, sport has long been equated with social prescriptions of masculinity, crystallizing gender roles that in other realms of society are blurred or glossed over. Such idiosyncrasies endure, despite efforts for equality in sport such as the Women's Movement and Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972.

Gender is most frequently defined in degrees of femininity and masculinity. Conventionally, women are thought to be feminine (e.g., gentle, nurturing, dependent) and men are thought to be masculine (e.g., ambitious, aggressive, competitive; Colley, Nash, O'Donnell, & Restorick, 1987; Kane, 1990; Koivula, 1995; Matteo, 1986; Shaw, 1994, 1999; Shaw & Kemeny, 1989). Individuals who are highly gender schematic (i.e., subscribe to the behaviors deemed appropriate by society to their sex based on gender) are limited in their behavior options and are unlikely to stray from appropriate behaviors as defined by the dominant culture. Individuals who are not gender schematic (i.e., gender aschematic) experience less restriction in their behavior. An additional dimension proposed by Bem (1974) is that of androgyny, suggesting that some individuals possess a balance of both feminine and masculine personality traits. Having an androgynous orientation allows for a broad range of acceptable behaviors and therefore greater

freedom in opportunities and activities that may be experienced (Bem, 1974, 1981).

Concern regarding conforming behavior becomes particularly salient in arenas where gender is emphasized, such as sport (Deaux, 1985).

The pervasive acceptance of femininity, masculinity, and corresponding behaviors implies social boundaries of what is and is not acceptable for people of each sex.

Conforming behavior, or that which fits the social mores of what is acceptable for a particular sex, can also be considered socially “appropriate” behavior. Accordingly, non-conforming behavior, or that which challenges the social norm, can be considered socially “inappropriate” behavior. (Note: while there are limitations inherent in using the terms “appropriate” and “inappropriate,” they will be used throughout this paper as a reference to social expectations of behavior for the sake of simplicity.)

Researchers have investigated perceptions of gender and conforming behavior in sport participation. Early research indicated that there was a correlation between gender schema and type of sport participation (Colker & Widom, 1980; DelRey & Sheppard, 1981; Harris & Jennings, 1977; Helmreich & Spence, 1977; Metheny, 1965; Snyder, Kivlin, & Spreitzer, 1979; Wrisberg). More recently, Wiley, Shaw, and Havitz (2000) documented that highly gender schematic individuals do not necessarily limit themselves to appropriate activities. The discrepancies in the findings may be due to the methods used.

Early on, measures meant to assess the degree to which a person adopts gender behaviors for him or herself were alleged to only accurately assess gender attitudes, or the recognition that gender stereotypes exist (Liben & Bigler, 2002). In addition, early gender measures tended to shed a negative light on feminine activities (e.g., sewing,

ironing, washing dishes) where masculine activities were treated more positively (e.g., playing baseball, playing with cars). A criticism of the early assessments was that participants naturally rated themselves more highly on the masculine items as a means of self-verification. In response, Liben and Bigler (2002) attempted to overcome the shortcomings of previous scales by designing a suite of scales to measure attitudes and perceptions of gender in self and others across several domains (i.e., occupations, activities, and personality traits).

A further dimension in gender research is to investigate the stigmas associated with individuals whose behaviors do not conform to gender stereotypes. A primary finding is that individuals who choose to disregard social rules of gender are vulnerable to gender stigmas, the most pronounced of which have to do with sexual orientation (Deaux, 1984, 1985; Messner, 1990, 1992). Stigmas are commonly assigned to anyone who behaves or appears in a way contrary to what is expected by society. Common stigmas often have to do with social class, race, religion, physical disabilities, or gender. In the case of gender stigmas, individuals who possess or associate themselves with characteristics opposite to those considered appropriate for their sex are at risk of being stigmatized (Bem, 1981; Crocker & Major, 1989; Crocker, Voelkl, Testa, & Major, 1991; Frable, Platt, & Hoey, 1998; Gurin & Townsend, 1986; Pinel, 1999, 2002; Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995). Theorists suggest that individuals only become concerned with stigmas when the characteristic that is subject to stigma is central to their identity (Schlenker & Weigold, 1989). For example, stigmas associated with gender in sport would be more salient to a person who participates in and identifies closely with sports than for an individual who does not participate or identify with sports. In the case of a

person identifying closely with a characteristic vulnerable to stigma, two paths of behavior have been identified: the individual continues to participate and develops coping mechanisms for the stigma, or the individual chooses not to participate and therefore avoids association and stigma (Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995). The latter phenomenon has been referred to as disidentification (Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995) or disengagement (Major & Crocker, 1993; Major, Spencer, Schmader, Wolfe, & Crocker, 1998).

To date, no research has been built on theories of stigma or stereotype in an investigation of gender schema and sport participation. However, it can be inferred from research in which gender schema and sport participation has been investigated that there might be a relationship between gender schematic individuals and disidentification. If this is true, then gender schematic individuals will not be sensitive to stigmas in sport because the activity will not be central to their identity (Schlenker & Weigold, 1989).

Research has indicated that men are under more pressure to conform to social ideals of gender than women (Colley et al., 1987; Deaux, 1984, 1985; Deaux & Lewis, 1984; Fagot, 1981; Harris & Jennings, 1977; MacCoby & Jacklin, 1974; Messner, 1990, 1992), especially in sports, where they are expected to prove their masculinity (Koivula, 1995; Messner, 1990, 1992). The broader latitude in behavior allotted women may yield less restriction in sport participation. Matteo (1988) and Koivula (1995) contended that men were more likely to participate only in masculine sport and were more apt than women to stereotype individuals who participated in sport contrary to their culturally designated gender roles. Because sport is so widely accepted as being masculine, it stands to reason that boys and men may also be more sensitive to stigmas associated with



their participation choices than girls and women. Though not completely unexplored, few researchers have investigated the experiences of men in regard to gender and sport.

To date there has been an assumption in sport and gender research that gender schematic individuals disidentify from certain activities because they are cognizant of the stigmas to which they might be exposed. For example, Matteo (1986) found that gender schematic women were less likely to commit to masculine sports than masculine women. She implied that the lack of commitment to masculine sports among feminine women was a consequence of being sensitive to the stereotypes and stigmas to which they might be subject. However, her study included no measure of stigma consciousness, in part because the construct had as yet not been devised, and therefore her implication is questionable. According to experts in the area of stereotypes, the fact that feminine women fail to commit to masculine sports might be an indication of disidentification rather than sensitivity to stigmas.

Pinel (1999, 2002) posited that individuals differ in the extent to which they are conscious of stigmas and that their behavior in certain circumstances is reflective of their levels of stigma consciousness. She has addressed the notion with many populations in different circumstances, although sport and children are two domains she has not investigated. Research conducted in the 80s indicated that children are aware of and conform to cultural norms prevalent in society, particularly those regarding gender (Bem, 1985; Huston, 1985; Spence, 1985). Furthermore, children often think of sports and leisure activities as gendered contexts and adapt their behavior and activity choices according to perceptions of gender. According to Pinel (personal communication, 2003),

an investigation of sport stigmas among children is an interesting direction to further investigate the stigma consciousness construct.

Notions of gender and appropriate behavior for members of each sex have been found in children as young as two and one-half (Huston, 1985; Spence, 1985). At early ages, children begin to categorize their surroundings as a means of making sense of the world around them. While efforts are made regularly to downplay apparent differences between races or religions, differences in gender play an active role in early childhood. For example, previous research has indicated that children as young as two group clothing, colors, toys, occupations, and activities into categories of gender (Huston, 1985; Liben, Bigler, & Krogh, 2001).

In an effort to identify their own roles as boys and girls, children often emulate models of appropriate behavior and activities to which they have been exposed and become accustomed (Huston, 1985). Children are consequently aware of cultural stereotypes of gender and what behaviors are deemed appropriate as they explore their self and gender identities (Spence, 1985). However, narrow definitions of appropriate feminine and masculine behavior, which are prevalent in sport, have been criticized for limiting children in exploring identity options (Kane, 1990; Kleiber & Kirshnit, 1991).

Researchers who investigate the manner in which the gendered nature of sports affects experiences and participation choices are prolific. However, to date, most studies have concentrated on women's experiences in sport and given little attention to the experiences of men (Gill, 1992; Shaw, 1994, 1999). Additionally, studies of sport participation have been conducted with young adults and elite, competitive athletes. Finally, much of the research on children and gender is about 20 years old. Thus, the

intent of this study is to investigate the sport participation of children who are just beginning to be introduced to and explore sport in the current social environment.

Though sport may serve as a means through which children develop positive traits later in life, stigmas and consciousness regarding stigmas in some sports may limit them in the alternative activities they perceive to be open to them (see Figure 1).

Liben and Bigler (2002) contend that cultural stereotyping of gender and behaviors that are considered more appropriate for individuals of one sex or another limits a person in a number of ways, including expression of attitudes and interests. As noted earlier, children are limited to participating in sports deemed socially appropriate based on their sex, despite what interest they might have in a sport considered unsuitable by society. It becomes important to investigate how children understand and perceive the limitations of gender stereotyping, and to what degree they conform to and internalize gender stereotypes in behavior and activities. Furthermore, it is important to establish a better understanding of how children perceive and internalize gender stereotypes so that effective programs educating them to the contrary can be implemented (Liben & Bigler, 2002).

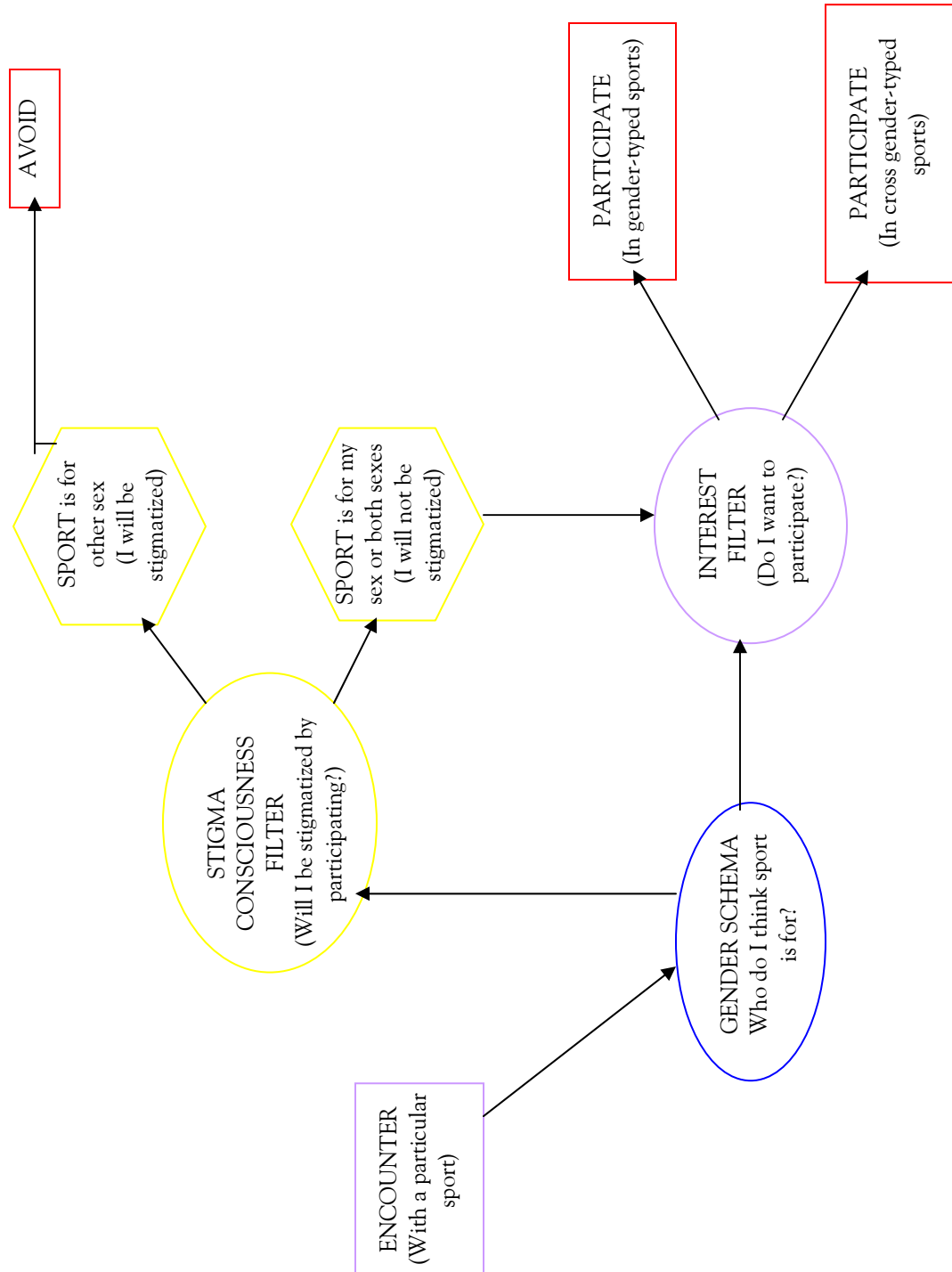
The model guiding the study (Figure 1) was adapted from an Other-to-Self Pathway Model proposed by Liben and Bigler (2002). The model suggests the subconscious steps individuals take when introduced to a new activity and how, by considering perceptions and observations gleaned from the environment and the behavior of others, make decisions for their participation (i.e., self).

### *Statement of the Problem*

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between gender schema, stigma consciousness, and sport participation among boys and girls in grades 3 through 5.

Documenting the gender schemas of children and whether they are related to stigma consciousness as well as sport participation is important for a number of reasons. First, the results of research on gender schema and sport participation are inconclusive. Second, no research has addressed the influence of stigma or stereotypes on the relationship between gender schema and sport participation. And third, recognizing which external influences such as social stigmas may affect children's sport participation behavior is critical to the development of programs and interventions that will positively shape children in their formative years.

Figure 1: Gender Orientation and Stigma Consciousness on Sport Participation of Children in Grades 3 through 5: An Adapted Pathway Model (Liben & Bigler, 2002)



### *Research Questions*

- 1) What is the gender schema of children in grades 3 through 5?
- 2) What is the relationship between gender schema and stigma consciousness of children in grades 3 through 5?
- 3) What is the sport participation of children in grades 3 through 5?
  - a. Are boys or girls, regardless of their gender schema, more likely to participate in gender-typed sports than cross gender-typed sports?
- 4) What is the relationship between stigma consciousness and sport participation of children in grades 3 through 5?
- 5) While controlling for stigma consciousness, what is the relationship between gender schema and sport participation among children in grades 3 through 5?
  - a. While controlling for stigma consciousness, what is the relationship between gender schema and sport participation among females in grades 3 through 5?
  - b. While controlling for stigma consciousness, what is the relationship between gender schema and sport participation among males in grades 3 through 5?

### *Definitions*

*Androgynous:* a gender schema characterized by a balance of both femininity and masculinity.

*Cultural stereotype:* a standardized mental picture that is held in common by members of a particular culture and that represents an oversimplified opinion or attitude.

*Disidentification:* the act of disassociating from a characteristic or activity.

*Gender:* the behavioral, cultural, or psychological traits typically associated with one sex.

*Gender aschematic:* individuals who do not adopt cultural prescriptions of appropriate behavior and attitude based on gender.

*Gender schema:* an individuals' cognitive perception and response to stimuli of gender in the environment

*Gender schematic:* individuals who adopt cultural prescriptions of appropriate behavior and attitude based on gender.

*Gender stereotype:* a standardized mental picture that is held in common by members of a particular culture and that represents an oversimplified opinion or attitude regarding gender.

*Identification:* when a characteristic or activity is central to personal identity.

*Sex:* the biological differences between men and women; a dichotomous variable such as female and male.

*Socially appropriate:* predominant perceptions about behaviors such as sports and activities that are socially deemed to be acceptable for a person according to sex.

*Socially inappropriate:* predominant perceptions about behaviors such as sports and activities that are socially deemed not to be acceptable for a person according to sex.

*Stigma:* a mark assigned to an individual by society because of a characteristic or behavior deemed to be different.

*Stigma consciousness:* the degree to which individuals perceive and expect to be stereotyped or stigmatized.

### ***Delimitations***

This study was delimited to boys and girls in grades 3 through 5 in one of four schools in a school district located in central Pennsylvania. The sample was further delimited to students whose parents and guardians signed a consent form within a given time frame.

### *Limitations*

1. This study was limited by its cross-sectional nature, as long-term effects of environmental factors such as family, friends, social pressure, and community cannot be adequately measured in one-time self-report assessments such as those used in this study.
2. The COAT scales, Pinel's (1999) stigma consciousness questionnaire, and the researcher's activity checklist have not been tested on children in grades 3 through 5. Nor have they been used in a similar context. Thus, further research is warranted to provide substantiated evidence of validity and reliability.
3. All of the questionnaires included in the study are self-report in nature. Thus, responses to items on the questionnaire are subjective, and interpretations of the values along the continuums may differ from person to person.
4. The culture of the area in which the participants are raised may contribute to the degree to which they gender type sports, or understand sports to be gender typed.
5. The degree to which children can accurately recall the sports in which they have participated in the last year may affect the results. Also, because the data were collected in the fall, the sports that participants recall may be those that are top of mind and consistent with the season (e.g., football, cheerleading).
6. Social stereotypes other than gender, such as social class, race, physical disabilities, and religion may also contribute to sport participation choices.
7. The age of the sample population is a limitation in that they are still exploring their identities and have not yet developed an understanding of their roles as females and males. In addition, although they may recognize that straying from



the socially accepted norm of feminine and masculine behavior results in stigma, they lack the words and depth of understanding to express or explain why.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between gender schema, stigma consciousness, and sport participation among boys and girls in grades 3 through 5. Following is a review of relevant literature in the areas of gender differentiation/schema, stigma consciousness, sport participation, as well as children, gender schemas and sport. The literature review provides insight into the manner in which gender schema and stigma consciousness may affect the sport participation choices that children make. It should be noted, however, that much of the literature is based on research that was conducted in the 1980s and 90s, a time during which greater attention was being given to the role gender schema played in individual sport participation choice.

#### *Gender Differentiation/Schema*

In the Victorian United States, women were considered frail, delicate and in need of constant rest and care. Because of the aggressive and athletic nature of sports and physical activities, women were not encouraged to participate, nor was their participation socially acceptable. Consequently, society came to perceive sports and physical activities as an arena predominantly reserved for boys and men. The few women who did participate were typically viewed as harlots (Guttmann, 1991; Hargreaves, 1994; McCrone, 1988). However, in the beginning of the feminist movement during the late-nineteenth century, women began to use sports and physical activities as a symbolic means of emancipation (Hargreaves, 1994; Mangan & Park, 1987; McCrone, 1988). Through participation in masculine activities like sports, women were able to

communicate symbolically to society that they could do the same things men could (McCrone, 1988). Field hockey and cricket were two of the sports in which women participated. To avoid the risk of being compared to women, men stopped playing field hockey altogether, but were unwilling to eliminate cricket from their sport repertoire and insisted that women stop playing cricket. McCrone (1988) contended that because men changed their behavior, field hockey in this country is played primarily by women, and is now perceived to be a “girls’ sport.”

The implementation of Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972 greatly increased girls and women’s participation in sports, yet sports and physical activities remain an arena of highly gendered behavior and perceptions (Gill, 1992). Further, Title IX and related efforts succeeded in improving awareness of women’s sports and participation rates among women. However, society is just now reaping the benefits of the first Title IX generation. That is, women who were children when Title IX was passed are now participating in professional leagues and receiving national attention for their athletic prowess. Considering the changes that have taken place in the United States and the lack of current research, the role of gender in sport is worthy of further investigation.

Before embarking on a review of gender research, it is important to first clarify the difference between sex and gender. Sex refers to biological differences between men and women and is consequently a dichotomous variable (e.g., female, male). Gender, however, is measured on a continuum of degrees of femininity and masculinity. Characteristics of femininity include dependence, gentleness, timidity, nurturance, non-competitiveness, and a lack of aggression (Colley, Nash, O'Donnell, & Restorick, 1987;

Kane, 1990; Koivula, 1995; Matteo, 1986; Shaw, 1994, 1999; Shaw & Kemeny, 1989). Masculinity, on the other hand, includes qualities such as independence, aggressiveness, competitiveness, ambition, and motivation (Colley et al., 1987; Kane, 1990; Koivula, 1995; Matteo, 1986; Shaw, 1994, 1999; Shaw & Kemeny, 1989). Sports, by definition, fit the masculine, aggressive, competitive behavioral ideal.

Previous gender research has been conducted from the perspectives of three primary approaches: gender essentialism, gender environmentalism, and gender constructivism (Liben & Bigler, 2002). Gender essentialism builds on the notion that gender is constructed from the biological and physiological qualities of individuals such as sex-linked genes and prenatal hormones. Its frameworks include evolutionary psychology (e.g., the study of the survival value of traits possessed by males and females) and developmental neuro-psychology (e.g., how exposure to different amounts of testosterone and estrogen during the prenatal period is accountable for sex-differentiated behavior later in life; Liben & Bigler, 2002).

Gender environmentalism, on the other hand, examines the role of cultural and social traditions in generating and maintaining gender differentiation (Liben & Bigler, 2002). Theories that fall under this umbrella include those which contend that reinforcement and punishment shape sex-role behaviors, that children acquire gender roles by imitating the behaviors they observe in same sex adults, and that organizational strategies and language used by authority figures and other socializers such as the media contribute to high gender stereotyping among children.

The third approach, gender constructivism, is the one on which this paper, and the literature contributing to this paper, is based. It takes into account the biological and

environmental factors that individuals experience and considers how the two work together to form gender schema (Kohlberg, 1966; Liben & Bigler, 2002). A very early example of the gender constructivism approach was proposed by Metheny (1965), who investigated the tendency for society to stereotype different sports as feminine or masculine, and consequently socially more appropriate for women or men. She determined that though the majority of sports were stereotyped as masculine, a select few were stereotyped as feminine (e.g., figure skating, archery, and bowling). She argued that the social stereotyping of sports was related to gender role expectations prevalent in society. Martin and Halvorson (1981), Bussey and Bandura (1999), and Bem (1981) have contributed three primary theories regarding gender constructivism.

Martin and Halvorson (1981) contended that children develop a dichotomous perception of gender: “ingroup” and “outgroup.” Ingroup refers to the behaviors deemed appropriate for their sex, and outgroup refers to the behaviors deemed appropriate for the other sex. The authors also argued that children: (a) develop an “own-sex” schema as a result of hearing parents, peers, and media, for example, label what is for boys and what is for girls; (b) categorize information according to gender; (c) internalize stereotypes of femininity and masculinity, and (d) participate or pursue activities that fit their “own sex” schema, while staying away from activities that do not fit their schema.

According to Bussey and Bandura (1999), children notice sex differences in their environment and internalize them as rules for their own behavior. This notion is based on principles of social and observational learning, including appropriate and inappropriate behavior as they have been taught in their environment. Further, children develop a

perception that they are better at activities deemed socially appropriate for their sex than activities deemed socially inappropriate for their sex.

Bem (1981) argued that adults use gender to organize society into salient categories of feminine and masculine. Children, on the other hand, acquire gender orientation through direct (teaching) and indirect (modeling) avenues, and therefore become gender schematic, seeing much of the world as sex-typed (e.g., female behavior and male behavior). In her Gender Schema Theory, Bem argued that gender orientation has the potential to limit individuals in their behavior. For example, women who are highly feminine or men who are highly masculine are unlikely to feel comfortable straying away from behaviors deemed “appropriate” to their sex. To be androgynous (i.e., both feminine and masculine) suggests that people with a balance of gender behavior traits from both genders experience a broader range of behavior options than those who are limited to the traits represented by one gender or the other. Gender Schema Theory is built on the notion that individuals who subscribe to gender appropriate behavior (i.e., sex-typed) are gender schematic, and individuals who do not subscribe to gender appropriate behavior (i.e., non-sex-typed) are gender aschematic (Bem, 1981). Putting her theory to the test, Bem used her previously established Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI; 1974) and applied the schematic/aschematic approach.

For several years, the BSRI was the primary scale used to measure gender orientation. A consistent finding reported by researchers who have used the BSRI to assess gender in a sport context is that female athletes tend to be highly masculine or androgynous (Colker & Widom, 1980; DelRay & Sheppard, 1981; Harris & Jennings, 1977; Helmreich & Spence, 1977). Additionally, gender schema appeared to be related

to participation in a particular type of sport (Metheny, 1965; Snyder, Kivlin, & Spreitzer, 1979; Wrisberg, Draper, & Everett, 1988).

For example, in a study focused on elite college athletes at NCAA institutions, Wrisberg et al. (1988) determined that both men and women who participate in team sports (e.g., basketball and soccer) had high masculine and androgynous gender role schemas. Female individual sport athletes, however, had high feminine schemas, and male individual sport athletes were distributed across all gender orientations. The results of their study indicated that gender schema may be associated with the appropriateness of the sport in which people participate.

Other researchers have documented that sports stereotyped as feminine or masculine possess characteristics reflective of the gender for which they are considered appropriate (Colley et al., 1987; Csizma, Wittig, & Schurr, 1988; Koivula, 1995; Matteo, 1986). Common characteristics of sports considered appropriate for women are grace, elegance, and aesthetics, all of which are consistent with the social ideal of femininity. Similarly, sports considered appropriate for men share characteristics such as aggression, face-to-face competition, and bodily contact (Colley et al., 1987; Csizma et al., 1988; Koivula, 1995; Matteo, 1986; Shaw, 1999). Moreover, the stereotyping of sports and physical activities affects participation choices of individuals; most women participate in stereotypically feminine activities, and most men participate in stereotypically masculine activities (Holland & Andre, 1994; Kane, 1990; Matteo, 1986).

Matteo (1986), following Metheny's (1965) lead, investigated the gender-typing of sports as they may have developed or changed over time. Matteo identified three different categories of gender typed sports: masculine sports (e.g., baseball, basketball,

boxing, ice hockey, soccer, rock climbing, and football); feminine sports (e.g., aerobics, gymnastics, ballet, figure skating, and cheerleading); and gender neutral sports (e.g., archery, diving, golf, horseback riding, sailing, skiing, swimming, and tennis). She also examined the relationship between the gender schema of the individual (e.g., schematic vs. aschematic), sport choice, and commitment to the sport. The results of Matteo's study indicated that gender schematic individuals were more likely to stereotype activities and to make their participation choices according to gender appropriate and inappropriate behavior.

In another study, Matteo (1988) examined gender schema and its relationship to stereotyping other individuals. Consistent with Bem's (1981) theory, Matteo found that gender schematic individuals were more likely to use gender traits as reasons for or against participation in certain sports. She also found that gender schematic individuals were more likely to gender stereotype participants of certain sports and the sports themselves than gender aschematic individuals. The results of this research hint at potential relationships between stigma consciousness and sports, and the degree to which gender schema plays a part – a topic that will be discussed at greater length in a later section of this chapter.

The tendency to stereotype sports as being gender appropriate and inappropriate and to participate in gender appropriate sports appears to be particularly consistent among gender schematic men. Several researchers have concluded that gender schematic men are more likely to sex-type sports and to avoid participation in or associate with gender inappropriate sports than gender schematic women and gender aschematic men and women (Matteo, 1986; Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp, 1975; Wiley, Shaw, & Havitz,



2000). Koivula (1995) and Messner (1992, 1998, 2002) suggested that gender schematic men perceive sports to be a means of proving masculinity. Further, Colley et al. (1987) contended that men are generally more likely to be gender schematic than women, perhaps because society is less accepting of a man straying from the masculine gender behavior norm. For example, it is generally socially acceptable for women to adopt masculine personality traits (e.g., tomboy), while men are more subject to stigma if they adopt feminine behaviors (e.g., sissy). This may be due to the fact that culturally, masculine activities and behaviors are more highly valued than feminine activities and behaviors (Liben & Bigler, 2002; Matteo, 1988). Therefore, it is easier for individuals to forgo the less valued feminine characteristics and behaviors in lieu of the more valued masculine characteristics and behaviors regardless of sex.

Despite changing participation and behavior patterns in sport and physical activity, research in the area of gender in sport remains somewhat limited (Gill, 1992; Henderson, 1990; Shaw, 1999). Study results to date demonstrate that gender affects how individuals participate in sport, why individuals choose specific sports, and their patterns of participation. And, much of the current gender in sport research concentrates on women's participation. Yet, it seems equally clear that men are also subject to stereotypes that affect their choices associated with and participation in sport (Shaw, 1994, 1999; Shaw & Henderson, 2003).

#### Gender Schema Measure

In the mid-1990s, gender research went into a decline. Researchers recognized limitations to the scales used to measure gender and consequently took an alternative path to examine related constructs. In an effort to improve scales measuring gender, Liben

and Bigler (2002) developed a series of scales designed to assess sex-typed attitudes towards others (i.e., attitude measures: AM) and sex-typing of the self (i.e., personal measures: PM) across three domains: occupations, activities, and traits (OAT). The scales were developed to measure sex-typing of the self and others among adults (OAT-AM; OAT-PM) and among children (COAT-AM; COAT-PM). Because this study is designed to investigate gender in children, only the COAT scales are discussed.

A common criticism of the scales designed to measure gender is that they measure gender attitudes (or recognition that cultural stereotypes exist) rather than the degree to which individuals internalize and adopt gender stereotypes as part of their personality. To address this, Liben and Bigler (2002) created two dimensions for each scale in the COAT suite (e.g., the attitude measure-AM and the personality measure-PM). Each was specifically designed to overcome limitations in previous gender measures by wording the response items differently. Liben and Bigler contended that items that ask “who usually” does a given activity or occupation targets knowledge of stereotypes rather than personal endorsement of stereotypes whereas “who should” do a given activity or occupation gets more to the point. Therefore, the AM items are directed toward assessing the degree to which a person understands gender stereotypes (e.g., “who should be this way”), while the PM items are directed toward assessing the degree to which gender stereotypes have been internalized as part of the personality (e.g., “I am like this”).

A further criticism of earlier gender measures was that items provided to assess femininity were chore-like (e.g., sewing, ironing, washing dishes) where masculine items were more desirable (e.g., playing baseball, hammering, playing with cars) and participants naturally reacted more positively to the masculine items than the feminine

items. The COAT scales were therefore compiled specifically with the desirability of items in mind so as to not further confound the measure with cultural stereotypes of desirability (Liben & Bigler, 2002).

As discussed, social stereotypes of sport and gender are prolific. Deaux (1985) contended that because of social stereotyping, personality characteristics associated with an activity are assigned to participants of that activity regardless of their sex. For example, women who participate in stereotypically masculine, aggressive sports are ascribed masculine characteristics. Consequently, individuals of one sex who deviate and participate in sports contrary to those thought to be appropriate for their sex are subject to stereotypes about their personality (Deaux, 1985; Fagot, 1984; Matteo, 1988). Prolific social stereotypes of sport, gender, and the degree to which individuals perceive stigmas associated with participation, particularly in gender inappropriate sports, may reveal yet another dimension to an already complex field of research.

The degree to which individuals perceive or experience stereotypes and stigmas may have an affect on the sport participation choices they make. In the following section, how and why social stereotypes exist, the experiences and coping mechanisms instituted by stigmatized individuals, and the manner in which stigmas may affect an individual's sport choice and participation are discussed.

### *Stigma Consciousness*

For centuries sociologists have been examining the human phenomenon of social order (i.e., the means by which humans establish a shared reality with others in a group, community or culture; Jones, Farina, Hastorf, Miller, & Scott, 1984). Berger and

Luckmann (1966) contended that social order provides people with a reference and some stability in relationships with each other and the natural environment. Consequently, people in society who deviate from the social order, either through appearance or behavior, are stigmatized for their differences.

Race, ethnicity, religion, physical disability, physical appearance, sexual orientation and gender all serve as categories subject to pervasive stereotyping (Swim & Hyers, 2001). Stereotypes are often widely known and understood by those who endorse the stereotype, by those who do not, and by those to whom a stereotype is directed (Major, Spencer, Schmader, Wolfe, & Crocker, 1998). However, the degree to which an individual stigmatizes others or feels the sting of being stigmatized depends on the identity or self-concept of the individual (Jones et al., 1984; Schlenker & Weigold, 1989). While society has a social order, individuals have a personal order, which social psychologists refer to as “identity” (Jones et al., 1984; Kleiber & Kirshnit, 1991; Schlenker & Weigold, 1989).

Schlenker and Weigold (1989) contended that an identity allows people to establish an understanding of where and how they fit into the social order. Through symbols of behavior and appearance, others are able to assess another’s identity and categorize and evaluate how to interact with the identified other. Without personal identities, social interactions are confusing and tentative. Therefore, people receive, and expect to receive, social interactions consistent with their identities. This conclusion is consistent with that of other researchers who have indicated that people who possess an attribute subject to stigma expect and anticipate others to stigmatize them (Deaux, 1985;

Jones et al., 1984; Pinel, 1999; Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995; Swim & Hyers, 2001).

Identities are unique, and though two people may possess the same attribute, one person's identity may make the attribute more salient than another and therefore more sensitive to stigma (Jones et al., 1984; Schlenker & Weigold, 1989). For example, take the case of two people with a weight problem. For one of these individuals, physical appearance and weight may be a fundamental part of his identity, and therefore the stigmas associated with being overweight may be of particular concern. The other individual however may not define her identity so fully on physical appearance and is therefore less sensitive to the stigmas associated with weight. Because of the uniqueness and individuality of identities, Schlenker and Weigold (1989) proposed that identities are contextual and reflected in specific situations. If a social rule or particular element of the social order is highly valued by an individual, then that part of the identity is more susceptible to stigma than others (Jones et al., 1984; Schlenker & Weigold, 1989).

Although research on stigmas and stereotypes appeared sporadically in psychology research throughout the mid-twentieth century, Goffman (1963) was the first to incorporate stereotype research into one theoretical review. In the 1980s, researchers turned their focus toward examining how and why stigmas occur and the implications of stigma on the social order and social interactions (Jones et al., 1984). More recent research has focused on the coping methods used by stigmatized groups and individuals (Bem, 1981; Crocker & Major, 1989; Crocker, Voelkl, Testa, & Major, 1991; Frable, Platt, & Hoey, 1998; Gurin & Townsend, 1986; Pinel, 1999, 2002; Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995).

A common theme among most theories on stigma is that members of stigmatized groups have low levels of self-esteem. Crocker and Major (1989) examined the relationship between self-esteem and being a member of a stigmatized group. Despite the theorized relationship between low self-esteem and stigma, their study found there to be no relationship. In fact, members of stigmatized groups reported high levels of self-esteem, particularly in situations where others who were subject to stigma for the same reasons (i.e., similar others) surrounded them (Crocker & Major, 1989).

Crocker et al. (1991) investigated the coping mechanisms implemented by members of stigmatized groups that may contribute to high self-esteem. They posited that stigmatized people protect their self-esteem by attributing the presence of the stereotype and related negative feedback to prejudice, ignorance and discrimination. Results of their study indicated that when members of a stigmatized group (e.g., women and Blacks) received negative feedback from a prejudiced other, they reported higher self-esteem and a more positive affect than people who received negative feedback from a non-prejudiced other. Further investigation indicated that self-esteem was maintained by attributing the negative feedback to prejudice (Crocker et al., 1991). It can be inferred from these findings that, in effect, the stereotype is reversed; people who inflict stigma onto others are stigmatized as prejudiced.

Prior to studies such as those conducted by Crocker and Major (1989) and Crocker et al. (1991), researchers assumed that low self-esteem was an indication of the awareness of stigma. However, Crocker and her colleagues documented that there is no relationship between stigma and self-esteem. They argued that self-esteem and sensitivity to stigmas are not the same thing and each must be measured independently.

### Measuring Stigma Consciousness

In order to assess the degree to which individuals perceive and expect to be stereotyped or stigmatized, Pinel (1999, 2002) proposed “stigma consciousness,” a construct representing the degree to which targets of stereotypes expect to be stereotyped by others. Stigma consciousness may have implications for how individuals experience or cope with being stereotyped. In a series of studies Pinel developed and validated a stigma consciousness questionnaire (SCQ) for use with a number of stigmatized groups including women, gay men, lesbians, and members of ethnic minorities. Test-retest results of the 10-item SCQ had a reliability of .72.

Research examining stigmas and individuals’ sensitivity to stigmas has suggested not only that some individuals of stigmatized groups are more sensitive to stigmas than others, but also that people who are highly aware of stigmas are unlikely to participate in activities or areas in which their group is stereotyped. This phenomenon has been referred to as disidentification (Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995) and disengagement (Major & Crocker, 1993; Major, Spencer, Schmader, Wolfe, 1998). By not participating or being active in a particular domain (e.g., disidentifying or disengaging from an activity or domain) the domain is no longer central to the identity and targets of stereotypes are able to avoid any association with the activity and are therefore able to avoid being stereotyped altogether (Major & Crocker, 1993; Major et al., 1998; Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995).

### Consciousness of Gender Stigmas

Gender has been researched extensively as a characteristic that is subject to stigma. People adopt or internalize social stereotypes and ideals of gender and adapt their behavior accordingly depending on the degree of their gender schema. To a gender schematic person, gender is an important, central dimension of his or her identity and, per Schlenker and Weigold (1989), should therefore be vulnerable to stigma. Gender schemas are particularly noticeable in areas where gender roles are pronounced, such as occupations, physical appearance, and sport (Deaux, 1985; Liben, Bigler, & Krogh, 2001; Matteo, 1988).

Liben, Bigler, and Krogh (2001) investigated cultural gender stereotypes of occupations and the perceptions children in early childhood (i.e., ages 6-8) and middle childhood (i.e., ages 11-13) have of the gendered nature of jobs. They found that children, even those as young as six, recognize jobs as being feminine or masculine. Despite a growing balance of men and women in occupations of all kinds, research has repeatedly indicated that stereotypes of jobs as being feminine or masculine persist (Liben, Bigler, & Krogh, 2001; Signorella, 1999). The arena of sport and physical activity is in a similar situation, in that there continues to be a growing balance of participation, yet cultural stereotypes endure.

The question of stigma consciousness as a social psychological construct has as yet not been investigated in conjunction with gender in the sport context. In addition, much of the research in which gender schema and its relationship to sport participation has been examined has neglected to consider the stigma consciousness of stereotypes specific to sport and individual sensitivity to those stereotypes. Rather, the stigma



consciousness about sports specifically has been assumed simply because of an individuals' gender schema. The stigma consciousness construct provides a foundation on which to examine pervasive gender stereotypes in sport specifically, and how an individuals' consciousness of stereotypes in sport in relation to their gender schema may affect their activity participation choices.

For example, Matteo (1986) found no difference between gender schematic and gender aschematic women in their participation in appropriate and inappropriate activities, but did find a difference between the two in their commitment to sports; gender schematic women were less likely to report commitment to a gender inappropriate sport than their gender aschematic peers. Per Bem's (1981) theory on gender schema, Matteo suggested that this may be because gender schematic women are more sensitive to stigmas associated with sport than gender aschematic women, however nothing in the study addressed this idea specifically. Matteo's findings suggested simply that gender schematic women disidentify from sport, and masculine typed activities in particular.

As discussed previously, people are only sensitive to stigmas when the trait vulnerable to stigma is central to their identity. Disidentification from a domain indicates that the domain, in this case sport, is not central to the identity, and is therefore not vulnerable to stigma (Steele 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995). Though some individuals may be gender schematic and highly value appropriate gender roles, sport participation may not be central to their identity and they may therefore not be sensitive to gender stereotypes in sport. Theory suggests that contrary to Matteo's (1986) conclusion that gender schematic women are highly conscious of gender stigmas in sport, gender

aschematic women, to whom sport is more central to the identity, may in fact be more conscious of gender stigmas in the sport arena.

Another assumption prevalent in sport and gender literature is that self-esteem is an accurate measure of an individual's sensitivity to stereotypes (Colker & Widom, 1980; Hall, Durborow, & Progen, 1986; Harris & Jennings, 1977). As discussed previously, research in the area of social stigma and the coping mechanisms implemented by subjects of stigma has indicated no relationship between these two variables (Crocker & Major, 1988; Crocker et al., 1991).

Colker and Widom (1980) conducted an investigation examining gender schema, sport participation, commitment, self-esteem, and attitudes toward women among collegiate female athletes. Among their findings, Colker and Widom concluded that because committed female athletes did not report low self-esteem, women make a commitment to athletics without an "evaluative component" (e.g., being evaluated socially and therefore subject to a stigma). Yet, the study did not address the question of stigma consciousness or the degree to which committed female athletes may feel "evaluated" by others. All that can be concluded from the results of this study is that committed female athletes do not have low self-esteem.

In a similar study, Hall, Durborow, and Progen (1986) investigated the relationship between self-esteem of female athletes and non-athletes to gender orientation and sport type among college students. In their literature review, Hall et al. contended that because participation in sport was traditionally in conflict with social ideals of femininity and feminine image, participation would result in negative stereotypes and stigma consciousness that would manifest in low self-esteem. As with previous research,

Hall et al. reported that there was no relationship between gender schema, sport participation, and self-esteem. Yet, they concluded that the lack of a significant relationship between participation and self-esteem indicated that that female athletes were not as subject to stigma as they may once have been and that society was becoming more accepting of female participation in sport. The conclusions discussed were incongruent with the measures used in the study; stigma consciousness was not assessed, yet the authors indicated that female athletes are not affected by social stigmas.

Much of the research conducted to date is older, and it is unclear whether these results would hold today. Furthermore, research has evaluated elite athletes in a college setting, and has concentrated on girls and women's participation. Little has been done to examine how gender schema and stigma consciousness may affect boys and men's participation choices. Men, as the sex that is expected to participate in sport because of its innate masculine characteristics, present a very different problem from that faced by women. Several researchers have suggested that men are more sensitive to gender stereotypes than women, regardless of their gender schema (Colley et al., 1987; Koivula, 1995; Liben, Bigler, & Krogh, 2001; Matteo, 1986, 1988; MacCoby & Jacklin, 1974; Ruble & Martin, 1998). This has been attributed to the idea that masculine characteristics and activities are more highly valued in society (Koivula, 1995; Liben & Bigler, 2002; Liben, Bigler, & Krogh, 2001; Matteo, 1988) and men therefore have a narrower range of behaviors that are acceptable (Deaux, 1985).

Sensitivity to gender stigmas in sport may be particularly salient among men because sport is driven and defined by masculinity. Colley et al. (1987) and Koivula (1995) contended that men were more likely to stereotype sports as feminine or

masculine than women. In that vein, Matteo (1986) indicated that both gender schematic and gender aschematic men were far more likely to participate and report commitment only in activities appropriate to their gender. When compared to women, these data suggest that in sport, men may be more conscious of stigmas. Independent of women, theory suggests that gender schematic men should report higher levels of stigma consciousness in sport than gender aschematic men.

In summary, in addition to gender orientation, consciousness of gender stigmas in sport may be more complicated than research has to date implied. Helmreich, Spence, and Holahan (1979) contended that gender roles as personality traits are fragile in their construction, and not as robust as Bem's (1974) theory originally implied. This is not meant to imply that gender is not an important element in participation choices, but to suggest that gender is riddled with subtleties that can be highlighted by other factors, such as stigma consciousness. An investigation of gender orientation and stigma consciousness may shed light on some as yet unidentified variables in regard to idiosyncrasies in sport participation choices. For an individual high in stigma consciousness, stigmas assigned to people based on their sport participation choices may play a fundamental role in the decision whether or not to participate in a particular activity. If stigma consciousness is examined specifically, it may reveal the opposite finding of that which has been assumed in previous research; gender aschematic people are more sensitive to stigmas than gender schematic people. Similarly, results may disclose that men are more sensitive to gender stigmas in sport than women overall. In the following sections, the relationship between consciousness of stigmas in sport and gender orientation to sport participation will be outlined and discussed.

### *Sport Participation*

According to gender schema and stigma consciousness research, it seems reasonable to hypothesize individuals who are highly gendered and stigma conscious would be susceptible to social stereotypes and stigmas associated with sport.

Bem (1981) suggested that individuals who are gender schematic have internalized social constructions of appropriate behavior for their gender and limited their behavior accordingly. In sport (a social domain in which gender roles are salient), gender stigmas may be particularly prominent (Deaux, 1984, 1985; Messner, 1990, 1992, 1998). Consequently, according to theories of gender schema, gender schematic individuals will limit their participation choices within socially appropriate boundaries.

Considering the gendered nature of sport, the fact that it is socially considered a masculine domain, and using gender schema as a guide, it can be inferred that women and men will behave differently in their sport participation. Theoretically, gender schematic women (e.g., women who have internalized social ideals of femininity) will choose to participate only in feminine sports such as ballet or cheerleading, or will not participate in sport at all. On the other hand, gender aschematic women (e.g., women who have not internalized social ideals of femininity) will participate in a sport of their choice regardless of gender stereotypes. The same hypotheses should hold true for men; gender schematic men (e.g., men who have internalized social ideals of masculinity) will choose to participate only in masculine sports such as football or boxing while gender aschematic men (e.g., men who have not internalized social ideals of masculinity) will choose to participate in a sport of their choice, regardless of gender stereotypes.

However, several researchers have found that this simple guide does not hold true. Matteo (1986) and Wiley, Shaw, and Havitz (2000) found that gender schematic and aschematic girls and women participate in sports of all kinds, while gender schematic and aschematic boys and men participate only in masculine typed sports. In the post-Title IX environment, it seems logical that women may feel more at liberty to participate in traditionally masculine sports. However, it is incongruent that boys and men should remain limited in their sport participation choices.

Studies that report findings contrary to traditional gender theory indicate that perhaps gender is but one small piece of the participation puzzle. Though there are many variables that may feed decision processes and participation choices, the problem of social stigmas associated with sport is as yet relatively uninvestigated. As discussed previously, stigma theory suggests people are only sensitive to stigmas when the activity or behavior that is stigmatized is central to their core identity (Schlenker & Weigold, 1989; Swim & Hyers, 2001). However, people who disidentify (Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995) from an activity or behavior have by definition eliminated it from their core identity.

Matteo (1986) reported that though gender schematic and gender aschematic women participate in masculine sports, there appears to be a difference in their commitment to masculine sports; gender aschematic women are more likely to report commitment to masculine sports than gender schematic women. She concluded that lack of commitment to masculine sports among gender schematic women was due to their sensitivity to gender stigmas, as Bem's (1974) gender schema theory suggested, but she did not examine participant's consciousness of sport stigmas. Further, analysis into why

gender schematic women do not commit to masculine sports as readily as gender aschematic women requires a specific analysis of stigma consciousness in sport. Without proper investigation, acceptance of a sweeping generalization that lack of commitment is due to gender schema is difficult.

### Sport Stigmas

Investigation into sport stigmas also requires a review of the types of stigmas that exist in sport. Among some stigmas prevalent in sport are those associated with race and social class (Floyd, Shinew, McGuire, & Noe, 1994; Guttman, 1991; Messner, 1992). Some sports, and in some cases particular positions in certain sports, are thought to be played better by members of one race than others. For example, in a series of interviews with former male athletes, Messner (1992) determined that basketball, because it is so highly dominated by Blacks has been stereotyped as being a sport for Blacks. Regardless of any number of circumstances that may contribute to the high number of professional Black basketball players (e.g., social class and availability of opportunities), a stereotype that Blacks are better than other races at basketball exists and persists (Messner, 1992). In such cases, a widely held belief or stereotype influences people's perceptions of the appropriateness of their participation in a particular sport.

Another common stereotype in sport is that of gender, for which the most widely accepted are stigmas associated with sexual orientation (Deaux & Lewis, 1984; Heywood & Dworkin, 2003; Messner, 1990, 1992, 1998, 2002). Specifically, female athletes who play masculine sports and those who are aggressive players in feminine and gender neutral sports are stigmatized as being lesbians, and male athletes who play feminine

sports or are not aggressive players are stigmatized as being gay (Deaux & Lewis, 1984; Messner, 1990, 1992, 1998, 2002).

Matteo (1988) investigated the relationship between the gender schema of sport participants and the degree to which they stereotype others in sport. Consistent with Bem's (1981) theory, Matteo found that gender schematic individuals were more likely to use gender traits as reasons for or against participation in certain sports. She also found that gender schematic individuals were more likely to gender stereotype participants of certain sports and the sports themselves than gender aschematic individuals (Matteo, 1988).

In a study geared toward examining gender stereotypes, Deaux and Lewis (1984) assessed the degree to which people infer information about a person's personality from limited information. Data indicated that when a person's gender role behavior is inconsistent with their sex (e.g., masculine behavior among women and feminine behavior among men) then there is an increase in expectation of that person being homosexual. Though both men and women were subject to inferences of sexuality based on gender role characteristics, findings indicated that men were particularly susceptible to being stereotyped as homosexual if their behavior strayed from typical masculine traits (Deaux & Lewis, 1984).

As Messner (1990, 1992, 1998, 2002) and Deaux (1984, 1985) have stressed, gender roles are pronounced in sport and involvement in sport is often used as a vehicle through which children, particularly boys, learn and practice gender role behavior. Research has indicated that heterosexuality is a defining characteristic of both femininity and masculinity and any behavior alternative to expected gender role puts a person's



perceived heterosexuality in question. Furthermore, homosexuality is a personality trait subject to stigma (Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998; Pinel, 1999; Swim & Hyers, 2001). It stands to reason that the concern associated with being thought homosexual may contribute to an individual's stigma consciousness and sport participation choices.

Though homosexuality is significantly related to gender schema and stigma, it may be but one stigma that affects sport participation choices. Stigmas such as race, class, and gender may all contribute to individual stigma consciousness and sport participation choices regardless of gender schema. Therefore, because of the number of potential stigmas that may complicate the interpretation of stigma consciousness, a qualitative approach may be the best way to identify the stigmas about which highly stigma conscious sport participants are concerned. Confounding stigmas and consciousness of stigmas may be of particular concern among children, who in the early stages of development, are highly sensitive to social norms and stereotypes. The following section will address the manner in which gender orientation and stigma consciousness may affect sport participation in children.

### ***Children, Gender Schemas, and Sport***

Researchers who have investigated gender role awareness in children have indicated that by age two and a half, children classify objects and symbols into gender categories (Huston, 1985). By age three, children are aware of activities, interests, and occupations in which men and women participate, and the cultural definitions of appropriate behavior based on sex (Boldizar, 1991; Huston, 1985; Liben, Bigler, & Krogh, 2001; Signorella, Bigler, & Liben, 1993). Psychologists have come to accept that

children's early categorization of the world around them into female and male is an effort to understand and become comfortable with their surroundings (Bem, 1985). Although children organize their world into categories other than sex as they get older, the early tendency to organize based on sex and gender may be due to the frequent exposure to gender messages they receive from their families, communities, the media, and cultural stereotypes (Liben & Bigler, 2002; Huston, 1985).

According to the gender constructivism approach, children construct their beliefs of gender on what is present in their immediate environment (Liben & Bigler, 2002). Bussey and Bandura (1999) suggested that children's cognitions about others lead to cognitions about themselves. Parents and adults have a strong influence on children's play behaviors as they develop. Their influences include the provision of resources and opportunities (Howard & Madrigal, 1990) and role modeling and socialization (Barnett & Chick, 1986). In a study investigating play and activity choices of three and nine year-old children, Holmes (1994) identified four elements in children's play: authentic engagement, emotion, possibility, and contextual influences. While three year-olds appeared to be influenced by authentic engagement, emotion and possibility, nine-year olds were influenced by contextual factors, defined by Holmes as the perceptions of others and role modeling of other children's and adults' behavior.

The tendency to categorize the world into female and male categories appears to be particularly common among young children (Fagot, 1984; Huston, 1985). Huston (1985) contended that as children get older, though they understand and have a clearer understanding about gender stereotypes and assign activities according to gender more stringently if asked, they also begin to recognize that there are some instances where the

rules are more flexible. For example, if given the option, children will indicate an activity, interest, or occupation as acceptable for members of either sex, despite stereotypes of gender (Liben & Bigler, 2002). This more flexible pattern exists in middle-childhood, and reverts back to rigid categorization during late-childhood and adolescence (Huston, 1985; Liben, Bigler, & Krogh, 2001).

Psychologists have contended that the need to organize the world into female and male categories is an effort on the part of children to understand their self and gender identities (Spence, 1985). Identity consists of the development of the self, independent from others (e.g., individuation), as well as the development of the self in relation to others (e.g., social relatedness; Dimanche & Samdahl, 1994; Kleiber, 1999; Kleiber & Kirshnit; Mannell & Kleiber, 1997; Shaw, Kleiber, & Caldwell, 1995). Marcia et al. (1993) contended that in order for an identity to be achieved, several identity alternatives must be fully explored. Without proper exploration of alternatives, identity development may be diffused, stuck in moratorium, or foreclosed. However, by limiting themselves and their activities to those prescribed in social ideas of gender, children may be limited in their exploration of identity options (Kane, 1990; Kleiber & Kane, 1984; Kleiber & Kelly, 1980; Kleiber & Kirshnit, 1991). According to Marcia et al. (1993), failure to explore identity options and alternatives may result in identity foreclosure, where personality and identity traits are decided upon prematurely. The activities and interests to which a child is limited in childhood will reflect on the participation choices and options available to them later in life (Kane & Larkin, 1997).

Larson (2000) argued that participation in physical activities contributes to the development of positive traits such as initiative, leadership and altruism. Physical

activities act as a vehicle for positive development because children are challenged, committed, and intrinsically motivated to participate in them. Additionally, sports provide a social group and network that serves as a foundation on which children can build and explore their personal identities (Kane, 1988; Kane & Larkin, 1997; Shaw, Kleiber, & Caldwell, 1995; Wearing, 1992).

Exposure to and participation in activities and flexibility in choices in childhood may encourage broader identity exploration during later years of development. Because of the masculine nature of sports and the social construction of appropriate and inappropriate gendered behavior, sport has good and bad connotations for children of both sexes (Kleiber & Kane, 1984; Kleiber & Kelly, 1980; Kleiber & Kirshnit, 1991). For girls, sport participation provides an avenue through which to explore identity options, while for boys, sport may foreclose identity alternatives. Similarly, Shaw (1994, 1999) indicated that sport provides an avenue through which people conform to or resist social gender stereotypes.

Sport and leisure activities have been identified as symbols of identities, in that they communicate a part of the identity valued by the individual to others (Dimanche & Samdahl, 1994; Haggard & Williams, 1992; Mannell & Kleiber, 1997). In an extensive review of the leisure and consumer behavior literature, Dimanche and Samdahl (1994) determined that leisure activities and products reflect images of the self to others. Similarly, by examining perceptions of leisure and sport activities, Haggard and Williams (1992) were able to identify different personality traits assigned to individuals who participate in particular activities. For example, a person who kayaks is perceived by

others to be “adventurous” and “outdoorsy,” while someone who plays chess is perceived to be “cerebral” and “logical.”

Symbolic communication of identity traits holds true with respect to gender. Participation in particular sports or activities typed as feminine or masculine communicates gender traits to others (Colley et al., 1987; Koivula, 1995). Boys who participate in sports typed as feminine are subject to stigmas regarding masculinity, and girls who participate in sports typed as masculine may be subject to stigmas regarding femininity. Gender schematic individuals are likely to be conscious of communicating inappropriate gender traits to others and may therefore alter their participation choices accordingly (Holland & Andre, 1994; Kane, 1990; Matteo, 1986). Moreover, the type of sport (i.e., feminine vs. masculine) in which children participate effects the treatment they receive from teachers, parents, and peers (Eder & Parker, 1987; Fagot, 1984; Holland & Andre, 1994; Kane, 1988; Snyder & Spreitzer, 1983).

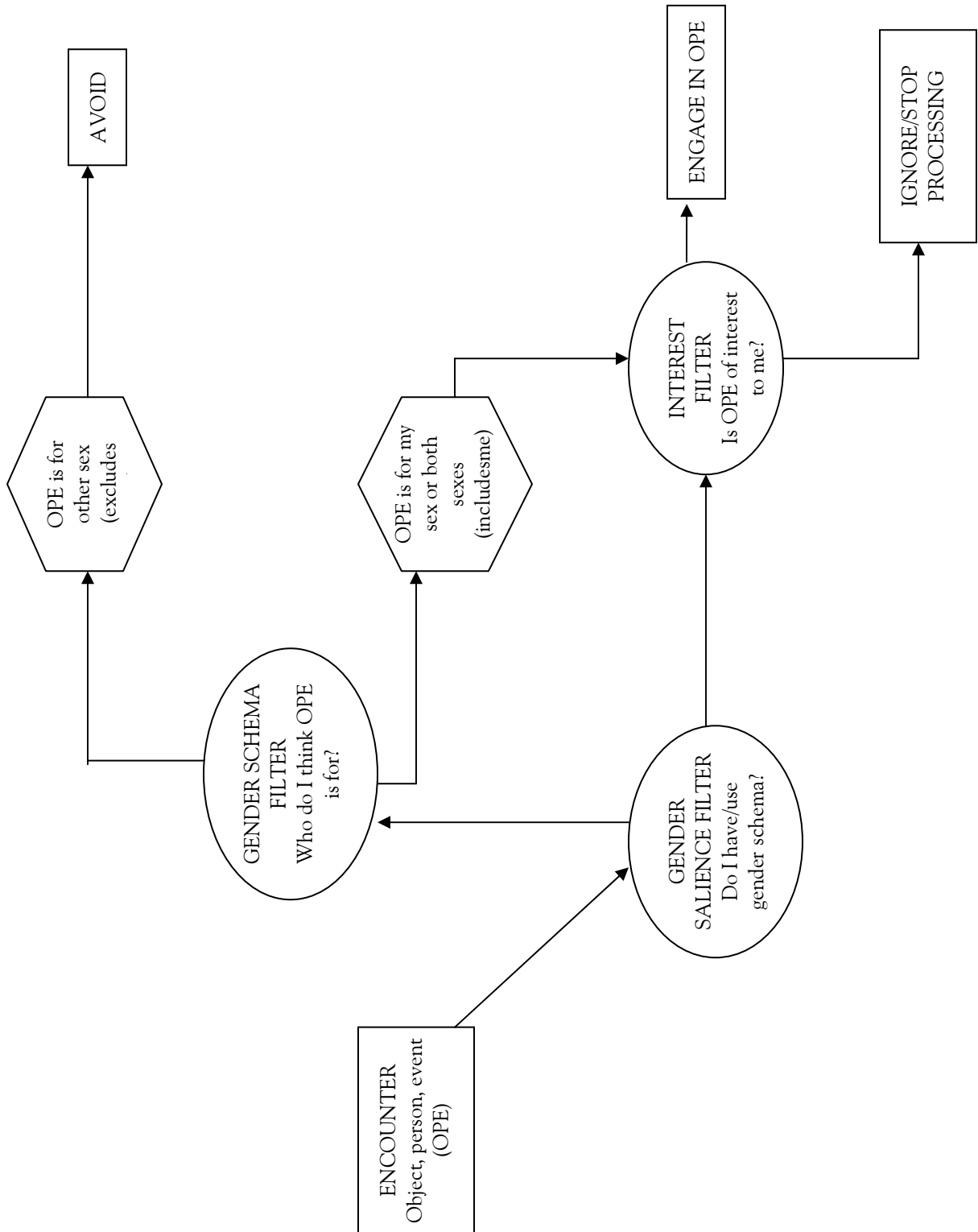
Henderson, Shaw, Bialeschki, and Freysinger (1999) contended that leisure choices are strongly influenced by several factors, including social structures and institutions, and by cultural norms, values, and beliefs. Gender is one of several subtle cultural and social processes that affect daily decisions and behaviors. In play, children learn impression management, and how to present themselves to others in a manner that is socially and culturally acceptable based on gender and their personal developing gender identities (Henderson et al., 1999). The constructivism model suggests an “other-to-self” pathway in which children’s interpretations of cultural norms received from parents, peers, media, social environment, etc., contribute to their understanding of an activity or behavior as being for girls or for boys (Liben & Bigler, 2002). Activities or

behaviors are then assimilated into the identity and are adopted or avoided accordingly (Figure 2; Liben & Bigler, 2002).

Because of children's use of social norms of gender as a guide for development, sports in which they choose to participate may be greatly influenced by social stereotypes of gender and sport. According to social norms, it seems natural for girls to seek participation in feminine activities and for boys to seek participation in masculine activities. By doing so, theory suggests that members of each sex would be conforming to social ideas of gender, learning appropriate behavior, and communicating to others that they have adopted activities and identities deemed appropriate for them based on their sex.

Further complicating the issue of gender is the pervasive cultural ideal that masculine activities, occupations, and behaviors are more valuable and desirable than feminine activities, occupations, and behaviors (Koivula, 1995; Liben & Bigler, 2002; Matteo, 1988). Moreover, Liben, Bigler, and Krogh (2001) found that children are aware of and conscious that masculine traits are socially more valuable and desirable as early as elementary school. Thus, in the course of identity development, masculine characteristics are sought, while feminine characteristics are avoided. A manifestation is that boys pursue the traits and identities they are expected to achieve, while girls are encouraged to explore alternatives.

Figure 2: Other-to-Self Pathway Model (Liben &amp; Bigler, 2002)



### Boys' Sport Participation

A number of researchers have contended that sport is the principal avenue through which boys learn the traits of masculinity and how to behave in a masculine manner (Connell, 1995; Harris & Jennings, 1977; Koivula, 1995; Messner, 1990, 1992).

Theoretically, a socially prescribed element of masculinity, in addition to personality traits such as independence, aggressiveness, and ambition, is heterosexuality and virility (Deaux & Lewis, 1984; Messner, 1990, 1992). Therefore, if a boy plays a sport perceived to be feminine, his masculinity, his virility, and his heterosexuality are called into question. Thus, there is a widely held stigma that boys who play feminine sports are gay. Because of their acute awareness of gender roles, children are conscious of negative impressions others develop if they do not participate in appropriate activities, even if they do not understand the root causes.

Several factors confound sport participation choices boys make. First, masculine traits are socially more highly valued than feminine traits, therefore boys are expected and apt to adopt masculine traits readily (Harris & Jennings, 1977; Koivula, 1995). As Connell (1995) and Messner (1990, 1992) contended, sport is an area in which masculinity is clearly portrayed, and most boys are expected to take up sports without question. Through interviews, Messner determined that oftentimes men get involved in sport in search of acceptance from and intimate relationships with others. Yet, the masculine ideal that is taught through sport teaches boys that to be accepted they must be aggressive and competitive. Therefore, Messner contended that though masculinity may suggest dominance and independence, its foundation (e.g., the reasons for getting involved in the first place) is unquestionably feminine (e.g., acceptance, belonging and



attachment to others). Messner's findings concur with Helmreich's, Spence's, and Holahan's (1979) suggestion that gender roles as personality characteristics are fragile, and not as robust as Bem's (1974) theory originally implied.

Secondly, once having entered and subscribed to the masculine fraternity, boys and men hide their feminine traits. Any display of femininity on the part of a sport participant, whether through participation choices or personality traits, risks threatening what Messner describes as the already fragile construction of masculinity. This theory to some degree explains Matteo's (1986) finding that men, regardless of gender schema, participate only in masculine sports.

### Girls' Sport Participation

The year 2002 marked the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972. Though originally written to make educational opportunities equal for members of both sexes, its effect on women's athletic programs across the country has been in the limelight. Participation in sports among girls has increased from a total of 817,073 participants in 1972-73 to 2,784,154 participants in 2000-01 (National Federation of State High School Associations, n.d.). Furthermore, introduction of Title IX has made it acceptable for girls and women to participate in more highly socially valued activities often associated with masculinity without threat to their femininity (Kane & Snyder, 1989; Koivula, 1995).

Socially, girls and women have a broader range of acceptable behaviors they can adopt without risking subjecting themselves to stigma (Deaux, 1984, 1985; Harris & Jennings, 1977; Matteo, 1986). Researchers have credited Title IX for starting an accelerating movement that has allotted girls and women greater latitude in a variety of

contexts (e.g., careers and activities) and for challenging the Victorian notion of femininity (Kleiber & Kane, 1984; Snyder, Kivlin, & Spreitzer, 1979).

Several researchers have concluded that men are under more social pressure to conform to social norms of gender than women in several arenas, including sport (Colley et al., 1987; Deaux, 1984, 1985; Deaux & Lewis, 1984; Fagot, 1981; Harris & Jennings, 1977; Heywood & Dworkin, 2003; MacCoby & Jacklin, 1974; Messner, 1990, 1992, 1998, 2002). The notion that girls and women have a broader range of acceptable behaviors than men speaks to the common finding among researchers that girls and women seem to participate in sports regardless of the type of sport or their own gender schema. Though boys and men may experience more social pressure, this does not imply that girls and women are completely without social pressure in their sport and activity participation choices. They too are subject to cultural prescriptions of gender, though perhaps more subtle than those to which boys and men are subject (Heywood & Dworkin, 2003; Messner, 2002).

The trend that girls are participating in sports traditionally considered masculine is evident in data provided by The National Federation of State High School Associations (n.d.). Research indicates that the activities in which adolescents participate is reflective of the activities in which they participated as children (Huston, 1985; Reynolds et al., 1990). In general, boys are inclined to play football, followed by basketball and outdoor track and field. Girls, on the other hand, are inclined to play basketball, and participate in outdoor track and field. For complete data on the sports in which boys and girls participate at the high school level, refer to Table 2.1.

Research has indicated that while active in childhood, there appears to be a severe decrease in participation in sport of all types among girls between the ages of 11 and 13, despite the benefits participation may yield (Goran, Gower, Nagy, & Johnson, 1998; Kane & Larkin, 1997; Sallis, Prochaska, & Taylor, 2000). Reasons for the decrease in participation among girls eludes researchers to some degree, though concerns stemming from childhood of being stereotyped or considered unfeminine may contribute.

Members of both sexes are subject to social pressures and expectations to behave in a way socially acceptable to their sex or risk being stigmatized. Sport, though credited with potentially providing positive developmental benefits to boys and girls (Kleiber & Kirshnit, 1991; Larson, 2000; Shaw et al., 1995), is riddled with stereotypes. Research in the area of consciousness of stigmas in sport, and gender stigmas in particular may reveal some interesting data regarding the concerns boys and girls face when deciding in which sports to participate.

Table 2.1: Top 10 High School Sports Programs Participated in by Boys and Girls

<b><u>Boys Programs</u></b>	<b><u>Participation</u></b>	<b><u>Girls Programs</u></b>	<b><u>Participation</u></b>
Football (11-player)	1,012,420	Basketball	452,728
Basketball	539,749	Track & Field (outdoor)	415,666
Track & Field (outdoor)	491,822	Volleyball	390,814
Baseball	450,513	Softball (fast-pitch)	350,197
Soccer	332,750	Soccer	292,086
Wrestling	244,984	Tennis	164,282
Cross-country	188,420	Cross-country	158,516
Golf	161,757	Swimming & Diving	139,601
Tennis	143,650	Competitive Spirit Squads	88,561
Swimming & Diving	88,811	Field Hockey	60,918

Source: National Federation of State High School Associations (n.d.)

### *Summary*

It is widely accepted that sport is an area in which gender plays an active and pronounced role. Traditionally, sport has been considered a male domain, a pillar of masculinity, in which boys learn and men display definitive male traits and characteristics. Yet, with the passing of Title IX, participation in sport among girls and women has increased exponentially. As society struggles to keep some element of clarity in its understanding of the differences between men and women, the widespread acceptance of feminine and masculine sports exacerbates the delineation between the sexes.

Out of social order, society stereotypes individuals and groups who stray from socially accepted norms. Among social norms are definitions of femininity and masculinity, and appropriate behaviors for men and women. People who deviate from the norm and behave in a manner inconsistent from that which is expected are subject to stigma. Among such groups are girls and women who participate in sports considered masculine, and boys and men who participate in sports considered feminine.

Though sport may no longer be reserved only for boys and men, masculine personality characteristics stereotypical of an athlete persist. Women who participate in sport, particularly masculine sports, are stigmatized by society, and because of their participation, they are assumed to have adopted masculine traits in lieu of more socially accepted feminine traits. As athletes in masculine sports are thought to possess masculine traits, athletes in feminine sports are thought to possess feminine traits. Consequently, men who participate in feminine sports are subject to stigma for the same reasons as women who participate in masculine sports. Participation choices may therefore be affected by the degree to which an individual is conscious of or concerned about the stigmas to which they may be exposed if they choose the “wrong” sport. Research, though extensive in the area of gender schema in sport and participation, has neglected to examine the role of stigma consciousness among men and women in their sport participation.

Gender constructivism was chosen as the approach for this study because it contends that children construct their own identity and gender schema. Everyone is exposed to different elements in the environment, and because of their unique biological characteristics everyone perceives and interprets their environment differently.

Accordingly, the combination of biology and environment contribute to an individuals' gender schema and their stigma consciousness.

Current data suggest that society is giving greater latitude to women in their sport participation, without risk to their perceived femininity, yet men have not been permitted the same clemency. A clear and defined set of role behaviors expected from "masculine" men has permeated the fabric of male society. As a result, though both sexes may be subject to and conscious of stigmas in sport participation, boys and men may be more so.

Children, because they are inclined to categorize their world into male and female, are particularly aware and conscious of appropriate and inappropriate behavior based on sex. They are therefore also aware of the stigmas to which they might be subjected if they do not conform to social stereotypes of behavior. A study investigating whether and how stigmas affect children in their participation choices will provide further understanding to why children make the choices they do.

To date, no research has been conducted in which the relationship between gender schema, stigma consciousness, and sport participation has been investigated.

Furthermore, most of the research conducted on gender schema and sport participation has focused on elite female athletes committed to sport at a collegiate level. Little to no research has focused on a younger population or more casual recreational sport participants. Sport has been credited as a vehicle for positive development, yet stigmas and consciousness of stigmas associated with participation may limit children in their participation options. Such limitation on availability and choices may also affect benefits derived from sport participation. Additionally, little research has been conducted in which the experience of boys and men in sport has been evaluated. Thus, the purpose of

this study is to investigate the relationship between gender schema, stigma consciousness, and sport participation among boys and girls in grades 3 through 5. The Other-to-Self Pathway Model proposed by Liben and Bigler (2002) was adapted to serve as a model for the purpose of this study (see Figure 1, page 8).

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODS

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between gender schema, stigma consciousness, and sport participation among boys and girls in grades 3 through 5. Following is an introduction to the study design and a discussion of the methods used to address the research questions guiding the study.

#### *Study Design*

This study was conducted using a mixed method design, including a quantitative component in which participants completed a self-administered questionnaire, and a qualitative component in which a select sample of participants were interviewed by the researcher.

#### *Selection of Participants and Study Location*

The sample population for this study consisted of a convenience sample of 444 children enrolled in grades 3 through 5 in a school district in central Pennsylvania. More specifically, the students were enrolled in one of four schools, two of which were rural, and two of which were more urban. The population was delimited to students who had their parents or guardians sign and return the consent form to the school by a designated date (see Appendix A).

The school district in central Pennsylvania was selected because of its location and the faculty's willingness to work with the researcher. With respect to location, the



school district is removed from the influences of a large university's athletic program. This is important because comparatively few children in the United States are continually exposed to and affected by a collegiate sports program. Children in the communities surrounding a university such as the one in question are unlikely representatives of the "average" child, hence children enrolled in a more traditional school district were selected to participate in the study.

This specific age group was selected specifically because children of this age have not yet developed mentally, emotionally, or physically into females and males. Rather, they are still finding out what it means to be female or male and exploring the identities and options available to them. Therefore, the data collected from this population is intended to explore how conscious of gender children of this age are and to serve as baseline data for a longitudinal study of the same population as they progress through adolescence. As they age, it is conceivable that these same children may become more conscious of gender schema and stigmas, and consequently adapt their sport participation accordingly.

### ***Quantitative Component: The Self-Administered Questionnaire***

The quantitative component of the study consisted of a brief background questionnaire (Appendix A) to be completed by the parent or guardian of the participant, and a participant questionnaire (Appendix B).

The background questionnaire consisted of demographic questions including ethnicity, social-economic status, sex and age of the child participant, parent or guardians relationship to the participating child, and gender attitudes towards sports.

The participant questionnaire was comprised of the trait dimension of the Children's Occupation, Activity and Trait – Personal Measure (COAT-PM; Liben & Bigler, 2002); the Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire (SCQ, Pinel, 1999); a sport participation measure, and an attitude measure to assess the degree to which participants perceive sports to be gender specific. For details of each variable, scale, and measure, refer to Table 3.1.

Gender schema was measured using the trait scale of the COAT-PM (hereon indicated as COAT-PM; see Section 3 in Appendix B) which is one dimension of a suite of scales designed to measure attitudes and perceptions of gender in self and others across several domains (i.e., occupations, activities, and traits; Liben & Bigler, 2002). The COAT-PM consists of 25 personality traits; 10 feminine (e.g., affectionate, helpful), 10 masculine (e.g., dominant, aggressive), and 5 gender neutral (e.g., appreciative, creative). Participants were asked to respond on a scale ranging from 1 “not at all like me” to 4 “very much like me.” The scale has been tested on children ranging in age from 11 through 13 and was pilot tested on 8 year olds for the purposes of this study. Previous research has shown that the 10 feminine items have a reliability of .82 and the 10 masculine items have a reliability of .67. The gender neutral items are included in the scale as means of drawing attention away from the feminine and masculine items in the scale.

Stigma consciousness was measured using the SCQ, which is designed to assess the degree to which individuals perceive and are affected by stigmas assigned to the group to which they belong (Pinel, 1999). The SCQ has been tested on several

populations, including women, members of ethnic minorities, gay men, and lesbians.

Test-retest results of the SCQ indicate a reliability of .72.

The SCQ is a 10-item scale including statements such as “stereotypes about (stigmatized population) have not affected me personally” and “ I never worry that my behaviors will be viewed as stereotypically (stigmatized population).” Participants are asked to respond on a 7-point scale where 1 is “strongly disagree,” 4 is “neither agree nor disagree,” and 7 is “strongly agree.”

Originally, the SCQ was meant for use with an adult population; however, the scale was modified for use with children for the purposes of this study. Modification consisted of rewording statements to be more understandable for a child population, and to make them appropriate for a sport context. Modifications were made and then reviewed and discussed with Pinel (personal communication, February 13, 2003; see Section 4 of Appendix B). Some of the items were re-worded in such a way as to specify the sex of the person completing the questionnaire. So as to reduce confusion on the part of participants, two different questionnaires were compiled with wording of the SCQ specifically designed for each sex. For example, where a female participant received a questionnaire with the statement: “people think I should act like a girl and do things girls do, just because I am a girl,” a male participant received a questionnaire with the statement “people think I should act like a boy and do things boys do, just because I am a boy.” Because children may not understand nuances between responses on a 7-point scale, responses on the SCQ were changed to a 5-point scale where 1 is “strongly disagree,” 3 is “neither disagree nor agree,” and 5 is “strongly agree” (Pinel, personal communication, February 13, 2003).

Sport participation was assessed using a measure developed specifically for the purposes of this study. A list of sports was compiled through two means: sports previously categorized by researchers as feminine, masculine, and gender neutral (Colley, Nash, O'Donnell, & Restorick, 1987; Koivula, 1995; Matteo, 1986; Metheny, 1967); and input from the three physical education teachers at the schools where data for this study were collected (two of the schools shared a physical education teacher). The list used for data collection consisted of 30 sports, 26 of which were evaluated in previous studies and 4 (skateboarding, kayaking, snowboarding, and hunting & fishing) as suggested by the physical education teachers. Of the 26 sports evaluated in previous research, 8 were considered feminine sports, 10 were considered masculine sports, and 8 were considered neutral sports (Colley et al., 1987; Koivula, 1995; Matteo, 1986; Metheny, 1967). The four sports that were added per the suggestions of the physical education teachers had not been subjected to previous research, and were therefore not gender typed *a priori*.

In addition to sport participation, participants' gender attitudes towards sports were assessed. Toward this end, a measure modeled after the activity dimension of the Children's Occupation, Activity and Trait – Attitude Measure (COAT-AM; Liben & Bigler, 2002) was developed. The COAT-AM scales were specifically designed to assess the degree to which children perceive gender stereotypes toward occupations, activities, and traits that are prevalent in society. In the COAT-AM scale, children are asked “who should do these activities?” They are also given a list of feminine (e.g., “do gymnastics”) and masculine (e.g., “play basketball”) activities and asked to indicate if the activity is for boys only, for girls only or for both boys and girls. In previous studies, the scale has yielded Cronbach's alphas of .83 for the feminine items and .87 for the masculine items.

The attitude measure provided an avenue through which an assessment could be made regarding the degree to which participants perceive sports to be gender specific and served as a tool to determine gender typed and cross gender typed sports.

### *Pilot Study*

Prior to data collection, a pilot study was conducted with three eight year olds and one six year old. The pilot study participants were not from the school district in which data were collected, yielding potentially different cultural, social, environmental and intellectual factors, and were therefore not included in data analysis. Yet, the pilot study served as a valuable practice opportunity for administering the questionnaire to this age group, and provided an avenue for testing the understandability of the questionnaire among the population. Changes made to the questionnaire included descriptions to help participants understand what some of the traits were on the COAT-PM and reworking some of the statements in the SCQ.

Table 3.1: Variable Table

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Scale</u>	<u>Measure</u>
Gender schema	Children's Occupation, Activity, & Trait – Personal Measure ➤ Feminine ➤ Masculine	Interval: 1. not at all like me 2. not much like me 3. somewhat like me 4. very much like me
Stigma consciousness	Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire (Pinel, 1999) modified for children	Interval: 1. strongly disagree 2. disagree 3. neither 4. agree 5. strongly disagree
Type of sport and activity participation	Sport participation measure  List of sports categorized as feminine (8), masculine (10), gender neutral (8), and uncategorized (4)	Nominal: 1. participate 2. don't participate  Nominal: 1. feminine sports 2. masculine sports 3. gender neutral
Perception of stereotypes of sports	Modified Children's Occupation, Activity, & Trait – Attitude Measure	Nominal: 1. appropriate for boys 2. appropriate for girls 3. both can participate

### ***Qualitative Component: One-on-One Interviews***

Participants who completed the quantitative component of the study were asked to participate in the qualitative component of the study. Interested individuals were invited to participate in a one-on-one interview with the researcher. The interview consisted of questions geared at better understanding how social stereotypes in sport affect children's

interpretation of what sports are appropriate for them and how their interpretation of gender roles affect their participation choices.

Prior to commencing the interview, the interview process was reviewed with participants, and their verbal assent was received. A series of questions were on hand to serve as a guide and be at the disposal of the interviewer. In order to allow for adequate probing, the questions were limited to those on the interview guide (Appendix C). Sample questions on the guide included: “What sports do you play?” “What sports would you like to play?” “What sports don’t interest you?” and “What about (sport named by interviewee) does not appeal to you?” Prior experience with children of this age suggested that the attention span of the sample population may limit the duration of the interviews to 10-15 minutes.

All interviews were audio taped and transcribed. Names of participants and their interview transcripts were kept strictly confidential and were not available to anyone other than the researcher. Interviewee names used in the write-up of the data are pseudonyms.

### Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness of the qualitative component was established by maintaining an organized audit trail of interview transcripts, notes of observations during quantitative and qualitative data collection, an interview journal, and conferring with participants’ teachers. Multiple data sources for triangulation included the interview transcripts, notes, and journal, as well as the data collected on the questionnaires completed by participants and the background questionnaires completed by parents.

### *Collection of Data*

Prior to the commencement of data collection, the introduction letter, consent forms and questionnaires were submitted to and approval received from the Penn State University Office for Research Protection. As the first step in data collection, the researcher introduced and briefly described the study to students in their homerooms. After introducing the study and answering all of the questions posed by students and teachers, the researcher left consent forms and background questionnaires with the homeroom teachers. The background questionnaire consisted primarily of demographic information such as ethnicity, parental education level, household income, age of child completing the study, and relationship of person completing the background questionnaire to the child. Supplemental to the demographic information was a checklist of sports on which guardians were asked to indicate the degree to which they felt each sport to be socially appropriate for the participation of boys, girls, or both.

A common practice at all of the schools is for homeroom teachers to compile a homework packet for students to take home at the end of the day. Thus, teachers included the consent form and background questionnaire for this study among the items in the homework packet. Students were asked to return their consent forms and background questionnaires within the week, which in some cases meant a turnaround of three days. As an incentive, all students who returned a consent form received a \$5.00 movie voucher. All students who returned a consent form also completed the questionnaire.



### Self-Administered Participant Questionnaire

Before commencing with the questionnaire, students were asked to provide their assent to participate. Each questionnaire had an assent form cover page, on which the procedures of the study and the questionnaire were described. The assent form was read aloud to participants and then they were asked if they had any questions or concerns regarding their involvement. According to the Office of Regulatory Compliance at Penn State University, assent for this population may consist of verbal agreement. Therefore, participating students were asked to please indicate that they understood the procedure, and agreed to participate by saying “yes.” The assent form also served as a means for participants to indicate interest in participating in the interview stage of the study. A box was provided on the assent form in which they could place a mark indicating their interest to the researcher. Participants were reminded that their participation in all elements of the study was voluntary and that they should feel no obligation to agree to do an interview. Although names of participants had to be provided on the parental consent forms by the parents for organizational purposes, parental consent forms and participant questionnaires were labeled with concurrent numbers, so as to ensure confidentiality of participants. Names appeared on no forms other than the parental consent forms at any time.

Questionnaires were administered during the times physical education (P.E.) classes were offered. P.E. classes consisted of the same student roster as the homerooms, in which the study was originally introduced. Time taken to complete the questionnaire varied by class size and age, but the majority of classes took the entire 45-minute class period.

Questionnaires were most frequently administered in the homeroom classrooms of the given class. Students in a class who did not return a consent form proceeded with P.E. class in the school gymnasium as scheduled. With very few exceptions, the researcher was the sole administrator of the questionnaire. Because of the nature of the data collection method, this meant that for any class period, the researcher was administering the questionnaire to as few as six or as many as twenty-three study participants.

#### One-on-One Interviews

Qualitative data were also collected to add depth and further understanding to the quantitative data. The qualitative element consisted of 22 one-on-one interviews. In order to participate in an interview, students had to: return a parental consent form, on which their parent or guardian had indicated consent to the interview; and had to indicate that they were interested and willing on the assent page of their questionnaire. The researcher collated all students meeting the criteria into categories by school and grade. Physical education teachers were asked to blindly draw one girl and one boy from each grade at their respective schools.

### *Treatment of Data*

#### Quantitative Data

The quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS v. 12 for windows. Cases with missing data were excluded from all statistical analyses. Initially, descriptive statistics were compiled for the demographic data and the responses to the various scales. Then, overall mean scores were calculated for the COAT-PM and the SCQ.

A factor analysis was conducted on the COAT-PM to test the *a priori* assumption that it consists of two dimensions - femininity and masculinity. Reliability analyses were conducted on the resulting dimensions of the COAT-PM and the SCQ. Bivariate regression was used to assess the relationship between gender schema and stigma consciousness in sports. Independent samples t-tests were used to test the relationship between gender schema and sport participation, and logistic regressions were used to determine the relationship between stigma consciousness and sport participation.

### Qualitative Data

A transcriptionist was hired to transcribe all of the interview data. Due to the small number of interviews conducted, data were analyzed using a traditional paper coding system rather than a computer program, as is the current trend. The first step in the analysis process was to organize files for the data, and become familiar with the raw data. A period of cleaning the data (e.g., correcting typos, making margin notes on interactions, side comments and expressions from notes and journals) ensued after reading through all of the transcriptions. Huberman and Miles (1994) liken qualitative data to an organism that lives and develops over time. Thus, collection and analysis methods change and continue throughout the process and must be revisited and re-evaluated until some level of understanding about the relevant topics in question is reached (Creswell, 1998; Patton, 1990). The qualitative data for this study were therefore reviewed and re-assessed by the researcher and debriefed with advisors and teachers so as to confirm that the emerging ideas are logical, consistent, and objective.

A categorical aggregation technique was used to categorize and interpret the data. Categorical aggregation is a process in which the researcher examines multiple examples

and instances within the data, looking for relevant topics and meanings (Creswell, 1998). Relevant topics to this study included gender schema, stigma consciousness, and sport participation.

The qualitative component of the study served as a secondary element to the quantitative component. The interviews provided a vehicle through which to speak to children about their sport participation choices, and to better understand some of the variables that go into their decision-making processes. Moreover, the qualitative data were used to prevent premature conclusions about the results associated with the quantitative data. Specifically, though an individual may be stigma conscious, there are any number of stigmas about which they might be concerned (e.g., gender, race, social class). Speaking to participants specifically about stigmas that concern them brought to light the stigmas that are most salient. Further, by incorporating a mixed method approach, the goal was to more accurately understand some of the variables that go into children's participation decisions, and how social stereotypes affect their decisions.

## CHAPTER 4

### SAMPLE PROFILE AND TREATMENT OF SCALES

#### *Preface*

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between gender schema, stigma consciousness, and sport participation among boys and girls in grades 3 through 5. This chapter includes the sample profile and the treatment of and results related to the scales used to measure each variable in the study. The results are presented in Chapters 5 through 7, which have been divided according to the focus of the research questions guiding this study: (a) gender schema and stigma consciousness, (b) stigma consciousness and sport participation, and (c) gender schema and sport participation.

#### *Participant Profile*

Data were collected from a sample of 444 children enrolled in four (two urban, two rural) elementary schools during Fall 2003. A total of 294 children were given parental consent and indicated their assent to participate in the study, resulting in a net response rate of 60%. A participant profile of school type and participation rates by grade is provided in Table 4.1.

#### Sociodemographic Information

The sociodemographic information collected included sex, age, ethnicity, household income, highest level of education completed by both parents, and the relationship of the parent/guardian to the child. A summary of the results is presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.1: Participation Profile by School Type and Grade

	Rural School 1 n	Rural School 2 n	Urban School 1 n	Urban School 2 n	<b>Total</b>	<b>(%)</b>
Grade 3	14	26	18	37	<b>95</b>	<b>(32.3)</b>
Grade 4	10	38	23	31	<b>102</b>	<b>(34.7)</b>
Grade 5	8	26	35	28	<b>97</b>	<b>(33.0)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>(100.0)</b>

The majority (57%) of the sample was female. The mean age of the sample was 9.14 years and 98% of the sample was White/Caucasian. Roughly 87% of the sample came from homes with household incomes of \$20,000 or more, but the largest percentage (36%) was toward the lower end of the scale at \$20,000-\$39,999. The highest level of education completed by the largest percentage of participants' mothers (37%) and fathers (45%) was some high school or high school completion. It should be noted that all sociodemographic information was collected from a background questionnaire completed by parents or guardians of the study participants. Roughly 84% of the background questionnaires were completed by the mothers of the children.

Table 4.2: Sociodemographic Profile of Participants and Their Parents

<u>Sociodemographic Characteristics</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Sex (n=294)		
Female	166	56.5
Male	128	43.5
Age (n=294; mean 9.14)		
8	86	29.3
9	95	32.3
10	99	33.7
11	14	4.8
Ethnicity (n=285)*		
African American	2	.7
Asian/Asian American	2	.7
White Caucasian	278	97.5
Other	3	1.1
Economic Situation (n=284)*		
\$19,999 or less	34	12.7
\$20,000-\$39,999	96	36.0
\$40,000-\$59,999	68	25.5
\$60,000 or more	69	25.8
Fathers' Highest Level of Education (n=286)*		
High school or high school completion	128	44.8
Some college or post high school training	64	22.4
Completed college	52	18.2
Some graduate or continued education	15	5.2
Completed Masters' degree	9	3.1
Completed Ph.D., M.D., J.D., etc.	11	3.8
Don't know	7	2.4
Mothers' Highest Level of Education (n=286)*		
High school or high school completion	106	37.3
Some college or post high school training	68	23.9
Completed college	61	21.5
Some graduate or continued education	29	10.2
Completed Masters' degree	16	5.6
Completed Ph.D., M.D., J.D., etc.	1	.4
Don't know	3	1.1
Relationship to participant (n=285)*		
Father	37	13.0
Mother	239	83.9
Male guardian	2	.7
Female guardian	7	2.5

The total n for each question may vary because (a) not all respondents answered all of the questions, and (b) some parents/guardians did not complete the background questionnaire.

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

### *Interviewee Profile*

One female and one male student in each grade from all but one of the schools comprised a supplemental sample from which to gather qualitative data. Because one of the rural schools is small (i.e., Rural School 1), the fourth and fifth graders are combined into one classroom. Therefore, two students (one female and one male) were interviewed from the fourth/fifth grade class at the school. This reduced the total number of interviews to twenty-two. Twenty-one of the interviewees were White/Caucasian and one was African American.

Participants who completed the quantitative component of the study were asked to participate in the qualitative component of the study. Interested individuals were invited to participate in a one-on-one interview with the researcher. If they expressed interest, participants were put in piles categorized by age, grade, and school. The physical education teacher at each school drew a name randomly from each of the piles in order to get a distribution of one boy and one girl from each grade from each school. The interview consisted of questions geared at better understanding how social stereotypes in sport affect children's interpretation of what sports are appropriate for them and how their interpretation of gender roles affect their participation choices.

### *Treatment of Measurement Scales*

#### Analysis of Gender Schema Measure

Gender schema was measured using the Children's Occupation, Activity, and Trait – Personal Measure scale (COAT-PM; Liben & Bigler, 2002). The measure is technically a suite of scales designed to assess the degree to which children self-endorse



socially appropriate and inappropriate behavior across three domains: occupations, activities, and traits. Each domain has its own scale that can be used contiguously or independently. For the purpose of this study, the trait scale was used independently (COAT-PM). The trait scale is composed of 25 characteristics that are reflective of feminine (n=10), masculine (n=10), and gender neutral (n=5) personality traits as outlined *a priori* by Liben and Bigler (2002; see Table 4.3).

A total of 53 participants did not complete the COAT-PM in its entirety, and were therefore eliminated from analysis, leaving an n of 241. Therefore, all analyses assessing the COAT-PM included only the 241 cases with complete data. The COAT-PM is measured on a 4-point scale where (1) was “not at all like me” and (4) was “very much like me.” Among the feminine items, “helpful” (mean=3.57) and “excitable” (mean=3.50) had the highest mean responses whereas “dependent” (mean=2.48) and “emotional” (mean=2.41) had the lowest mean responses (Table 4.3). Among the masculine items, “enjoy gym” (mean=3.77) and “adventurous” (mean=3.45) had the highest mean responses whereas “enjoy geography” (mean=2.45) and “good at geography” (mean=2.29) had the lowest mean responses. Among the neutral items, “creative” (mean=3.58) had the highest mean response and “good at foreign languages” (mean=2.28) had the lowest mean response (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3: Summary of COAT-PM Scale Items (n=241)

<u>COAT-PM Scale Item**</u>	Response by Percentages				<u>Mean*</u>	<u>S.D.</u>
	<u>Not at all</u> (1)	<u>Not much</u> (2)	<u>Somewhat</u> (3)	<u>Very much</u> (4)		
<u>Feminine Items</u>						
Helpful	3.7	4.1	23.7	68.5	3.57	.75
Excitable	3.7	7.1	24.9	64.3	3.50	.79
Loving	10.0	8.7	21.2	60.2	3.32	.97
Affectionate	10.4	7.1	22.8	59.8	3.32	.99
Have good manners	10.0	7.5	28.2	54.4	3.27	.97
Charming	11.6	10.4	29.5	48.5	3.15	1.02
Gentle	13.3	9.5	29.5	47.7	3.12	1.05
Try to look good	14.1	11.6	24.9	49.4	3.10	1.08
Dependent	27.0	20.7	29.5	22.8	2.48	1.12
Emotional	27.4	23.2	30.3	19.1	2.41	1.09
<u>Masculine Items</u>						
Enjoy gym	4.6	1.7	6.2	87.6	3.77	.70
Adventurous	5.8	8.3	21.2	64.7	3.45	.88
Good at math	9.5	4.1	24.1	62.2	3.39	.95
Confident	7.1	6.6	27.4	58.9	3.38	.88
Ambitious	7.9	10.4	27.4	54.4	3.28	.94
Logical	9.5	9.5	34.4	46.5	3.18	.96
Aggressive	18.3	19.9	17.4	44.4	2.88	1.17
Dominant	18.7	20.3	29.0	32.0	2.74	1.10
Enjoy geography	32.8	18.3	20.3	28.6	2.45	1.22
Good at geography	37.3	19.1	20.3	23.2	2.29	1.19
<u>Neutral Items</u>						
Creative	4.1	5.0	19.5	71.4	3.58	.77
Appreciative	5.8	4.6	26.1	63.5	3.47	.83
Good at music	22.0	7.9	20.3	49.8	2.98	1.21
Good at social studies	20.3	19.1	31.1	29.5	2.70	1.10
Good at foreign languages	38.6	16.6	22.8	22.0	2.28	1.19

\*Means are calculated on a scale ranging from (1) “not at all like me” to (4) “very much like me.”

\*\*Items are ranked by mean in descending order, not in the order in which they appeared on the questionnaire.

A principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation was conducted to test the *a priori* assumption that the COAT-PM consists of two dimensions: Femininity and Masculinity (Liben & Bigler, 2002). The results of the loadings for each item are provided in Table 4.4. Prior to conducting the factor analysis procedure Bartlett's test of sphericity and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) statistics were examined to assess the appropriateness of using a factor analysis on the data. The Bartlett's test of sphericity produced a highly significant correlation matrix (.000), and the KMO was .843, indicating that a factor analysis can be used on the data.

The original COAT-PM scale consisted of 25 items; 10 feminine traits, 10 masculine traits, and 5 neutral traits. Because the *a priori* assumption was that the COAT-PM consisted of two dimensions (i.e., femininity and masculinity), the factor analysis was limited to two factors. However, the five neutral items were included in the analysis to allow for the possibility that some may fall onto one of the two factors in these data. Of the original 25 items, 19 had factor loadings of .4 or higher on two factors. The remaining six (i.e., emotional, excitable, dependent, enjoy gym, ambitious, and good at foreign languages) were eliminated from further analysis because they did not load onto either of the factors. The two factors had eigenvalues of 3.00 or higher and explained 33.6% of the variance.

The first factor consisted of eight items, six of which were among the items deemed *a priori* feminine characteristics and two of which were deemed neutral (Liben & Bigler, 2002). It seemed appropriate, therefore, to keep it as a measure of feminine schema. The second factor consisted of 11 items, 8 of which were considered *a priori* masculine characteristics, 2 of which were neutral, and 1 of which was feminine (Liben

& Bigler, 2002). Despite the latter item, it seemed appropriate to keep the second factor as a measure of masculine schema. Reliability statistics were calculated for each factor, and indicated that both had adequate levels of reliability and required no further treatment (Table 4.5).

Table 4.4: Factor Analysis Results of COAT-PM Scale (n=241)

<u>COAT-PM Items</u>	<u>Factor 1: Femininity</u>	<u>Factor 2: Masculinity</u>
<u>Femininity Items (Factor 1)</u>		
Loving	<b>.804</b>	.070
Have good manners	<b>.774</b>	.039
Gentle	<b>.766</b>	.032
Appreciative	<b>.715</b>	.179
Affectionate	<b>.693</b>	.106
Charming	<b>.645</b>	.270
Helpful	<b>.630</b>	.168
Good at music	<b>.438</b>	.317
<u>Masculinity Items (Factor 2)</u>		
Dominant	-.075	<b>.595</b>
Confident	.176	<b>.562</b>
Aggressive	-.132	<b>.557</b>
Logical	.290	<b>.550</b>
Good at social studies	.245	<b>.534</b>
Adventurous	.015	<b>.514</b>
Good at geography	.282	<b>.513</b>
Enjoy geography	.245	<b>.493</b>
Good at math	.234	<b>.456</b>
Creative	.178	<b>.432</b>
Try to look good	.316	<b>.428</b>
Eigenvalue	4.69	3.72
Percent of Variance	18.74	14.88
Cumulative Percent	18.74	33.62

Table 4.5: Reliability Statistics for Femininity and Masculinity Dimensions of COAT-PM Scale (n=241)

<u>COAT-PM Scale</u>	<u>M*</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Corrected Item- Total Correlations</u>	<u>Alpha if Item Deleted</u>	<u>Cronbach's Alpha</u>
<u>Femininity Items</u>					
Helpful	3.57	.75	.57	.84	
Appreciative	3.47	.83	.63	.83	
Loving	3.32	.97	.72	.82	
Affectionate	3.32	.99	.60	.83	
Have good manners	3.27	.97	.67	.83	
Charming	3.15	1.02	.58	.84	
Gentle	3.12	1.05	.63	.84	
Good at music	2.98	1.21	.42	.86	
<b>Overall Scale</b>	<b>3.27</b>	<b>.97</b>			<b>.86</b>
<u>Masculinity Items</u>					
Creative	3.58	.77	.35	.76	
Adventurous	3.45	.88	.36	.76	
Good at math	3.39	.95	.39	.75	
Confident	3.38	.89	.45	.75	
Logical	3.18	.96	.52	.74	
Try to look good	3.10	1.08	.39	.75	
Aggressive	2.88	1.17	.33	.76	
Dominant	2.74	1.10	.38	.75	
Good at social studies	2.70	1.10	.48	.74	
Enjoy geography	2.45	1.22	.46	.74	
Good at geography	2.29	1.19	.50	.74	
<b>Overall Scale</b>	<b>3.01</b>	<b>1.07</b>			<b>.77</b>

\*Means are calculated on a scale ranging from (1) "not at all like me" to (4) "very much like me."

### Analysis of Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire

Stigma consciousness was measured using the Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire (SCQ; Pinel, 1999). The SCQ is composed of 10 statements designed to assess the degree to which individuals are conscious of stigmas to which they may be subjected. The SCQ was modified to a 5-point response scale where (1) was “strongly disagree,” (3) was “neither disagree nor agree,” and (5) was “strongly agree.” After recoding the five items as dictated by Pinel (1999), means and standard deviations of participant responses to the scale were examined (Table 4.6). A total of 13 participants did not fully complete the SCQ and were therefore eliminated from further analysis resulting in an n of 281. Items with the highest mean response were “People have strong beliefs about boys (girls) who play girls (boys) sports, even if they don’t say so” (mean=3.14) and “When I play a girls (boys) sport, the other girls (boys) on the team treat me just like the other girls (boys)” (mean=3.04).

A Cronbach’s alpha test was used to assess the reliability of the scale. After several iterations, five of the original ten items remained, with an internal consistency that was acceptable ( $\alpha=.65$ ; see Appendix E for the results tied to each iteration). The five items that were eliminated from the scale were the reverse coded statements. Statistical tests in which stigma consciousness is assessed were conducted with the modified version of the SCQ (Table 4.7).

Table 4.6: Summary of Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire (n=281)

<u>SCQ Items**</u>	Response by Percentages					<u>M*</u>	<u>SD</u>
	<u>Strongly Disagree</u> (1)	<u>Disagree</u> (2)	<u>Neither</u> (3)	<u>Agree</u> (4)	<u>Strongly Agree</u> (5)		
People have strong beliefs about boys (girls) who play girls (boys) sports, even if they don't say so.	15.3	15.7	28.5	21.0	19.6	3.14	1.32
When I play a girls (boys) sport, the other girls (boys) on the team treat me just like the other girls (boys). <sup>R</sup>	21.8	17.5	21.1	13.9	25.7	3.04	1.49
I don't think people have strong opinions that some sports are for boys and some sports are for girls. <sup>R</sup>	25.1	24.0	20.8	13.3	16.8	2.73	1.41
I never think about the fact that I'm a boy (girl) when I play a girls (boys) sport. <sup>R</sup>	27.2	24.7	15.8	14.7	17.6	2.71	1.45
People think I should act like a boy (girl) and do things boys (girls) do, just because I am a boy (girl).	36.3	17.8	11.7	13.2	21.0	2.65	1.58
If I play a girls (boys) sport, people treat me differently.	30.2	22.8	18.1	13.2	15.7	2.61	1.43
When I play sports with girls (boys), I feel like they think I am too much like a boy (girl).	35.6	20.6	14.6	15.3	13.9	2.51	1.45
I worry that if I play a sport girls (boys) play, people will think I am like a girl (boy).	34.9	23.5	13.2	16.4	12.1	2.47	1.42
My being a boy (girl) does not change the sports people think I should play. <sup>R</sup>	36.3	24.5	12.9	11.5	14.7	2.44	1.45
Some people think there are some sports for girls and some sports for boys, but that doesn't bother me, I play whatever I like. <sup>R</sup>	37.7	31.3	11.0	10.0	10.0	2.23	1.32

<sup>R</sup>=Recoded items.

\*Means are calculated on a scale ranging from (1) "strongly disagree" to (5) "strongly agree."

\*\*Items are ranked by mean in descending order, not in the order in which they appeared on the questionnaire.

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Table 4.7: Reliability Statistics for the Modified Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire (n=281)

<u>SCQ Items</u>	M*	SD	Corrected Item-Total Correlations	Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha
People have strong beliefs about boys (girls) who play girls (boys) sports, even if they don't say so.	3.14	1.32	.27	.65	
People think I should act like a boy (girl) and do things boys (girls) do, just because I am a boy (girl).	2.65	1.58	.39	.61	
If I play a girls (boys) sport, people treat me differently.	2.61	1.43	.45	.57	
When I play sports with girls (boys), I feel like they think I am too much like a boy (girl).	2.51	1.45	.48	.56	
I worry that if I play a sport girls (boys) play, people will think I am like a girl (boy).	2.47	1.42	.42	.59	
<b>Overall Scale</b>	<b>2.68</b>	<b>2.08</b>			<b>.65</b>

\*Means are calculated on a scale ranging from (1) "strongly disagree" to (5) "strongly agree."

### Analysis of Sport Participation Measure

Participants were provided with a list of 30 sports and asked to indicate if they participated in the sport and if so, whether participation was with friends and family or on a team. All 294 participants completed the sport participation questionnaire in its entirety. The sports most participated in with friends and family were bicycling (77%), hunting/fishing (70%), swimming (70%), and snowboarding (43%). The sports most participated in at the team level were jogging/running (50%), soccer (32%), baseball (28%), and basketball (27%). A summary of sport participation is presented in Table 4.8.



Table 4.8: Summary of Sport Participation (n=294)

Sport	<b><u>Response by Percentages</u></b>								
	<b><u>Don't Play</u></b>			<b><u>Friends &amp; Family</u></b>			<b><u>Team</u></b>		
	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total
<b><u>Feminine Sports</u></b>									
Dance	57.8	93.8	73.5	21.7	5.5	14.6	20.5	0.8	11.9
Gymnastics	60.8	93.0	74.8	19.9	5.5	13.6	19.3	1.6	11.6
Softball	65.7	88.3	75.5	13.3	10.9	12.2	21.1	0.8	12.2
Cheerleading	62.0	99.2	78.2	11.4	0.0	6.5	26.5	0.8	15.3
Field Hockey	94.0	85.2	90.1	5.4	14.1	9.2	0.6	0.0	0.7
Aerobics	88.0	95.3	91.2	11.4	4.7	8.5	0.6	0.0	0.3
Ballet	86.7	99.2	92.2	5.4	0.8	3.4	7.8	0.0	4.4
Figure Skating	91.0	98.4	94.2	8.4	1.6	5.4	0.6	0.0	0.3
<b><u>Masculine Sports</u></b>									
Basketball	49.4	35.9	43.5	27.7	31.3	29.3	22.9	32.8	27.2
Soccer	49.4	43.8	46.9	21.1	20.3	20.7	29.5	35.9	32.3
Baseball	71.1	25.0	51.0	24.1	17.2	21.1	4.8	57.8	27.9
Football	76.5	43.0	61.9	22.3	42.2	31.0	1.2	14.8	7.1
Riflery	81.3	50.8	68.0	18.7	49.2	32.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Weightlifting	86.7	65.6	77.6	10.8	32.8	20.4	2.4	1.6	2.0
Wrestling	92.8	70.3	83.0	6.6	12.5	9.2	0.6	17.2	7.8
Karate	95.0	87.5	92.2	2.4	7.0	4.4	1.8	5.5	3.4
Ice Hockey	97.0	93.0	95.2	2.4	6.3	4.1	0.6	0.8	0.7
Lacrosse	97.0	96.1	96.6	3.0	3.1	3.1	0.0	0.8	0.3
<b><u>Neutral Sports</u></b>									
Bicycling	24.1	20.3	22.4	75.9	78.1	76.9	0.0	1.6	0.7
Swimming	21.1	28.9	24.5	72.3	68.0	70.4	6.6	3.1	5.1
Jogging/Running	40.4	50.8	44.9	50.6	48.4	49.7	0.9	0.8	5.4
Volleyball	66.3	60.9	63.9	28.9	38.3	33.0	4.8	0.8	3.1
Golf	64.5	63.3	63.9	34.9	35.9	35.4	0.6	0.8	0.7
Diving	71.7	66.4	69.4	25.3	31.3	27.9	3.0	2.3	2.7
Tennis	84.3	80.5	82.7	13.9	18.8	16.0	1.8	0.8	1.3
Snow skiing	91.0	89.8	90.5	8.4	10.2	9.2	0.6	0.0	0.3
<b><u>New Sports</u></b>									
Hunting/Fishing	38.6	15.6	28.6	60.8	82.8	70.4	0.6	1.6	1.0
Snowboarding	68.1	42.2	56.8	31.3	57.8	42.9	0.6	0.0	0.3
Skateboarding	77.7	53.9	67.3	22.3	45.3	32.3	0.0	0.8	0.3
Canoeing/Kayaking	84.3	75.0	80.3	15.7	25.0	19.7	0.0	0.0	0.0

Note: Females=166, Males=128

### Attitudes Towards Sports

Many of the sports listed on the questionnaire and highlighted in Table 4.8 have been evaluated for gender typing in previous research. Yet, western society has experienced social changes from the time these studies were conducted that may have affected people's perceptions of what sports are deemed appropriate for boys and girls. As a means of addressing possible changes in society and perception, participants' attitudes towards various sports were measured. Specifically, attitudes toward sports were measured by having participants indicate if a sport was "for boys only," "for girls only," "for both boys and girls," or "don't know" (Table 4.9).

The results indicated that participants considered most sports to be appropriate for both boys and girls, however seven sports were identified as being gender specific. Cheerleading (67%), ballet (65%), and dance (62%) were identified as being for girls only (i.e., feminine) by nearly two-thirds of respondents. Football (70%), and wrestling (63%) on the other hand were identified as being for boys only (i.e., masculine) by two two-thirds or more of the respondents. Lacrosse was the only sport that could not be categorized into feminine, masculine, or neutral categories, as the majority of participants (65%) did not know what it was.

Table 4.9: Summary of Attitudes Towards Sports

Sport	Response by Percentages											
	<u>Boys Only</u> (n=128)			<u>Girls Only</u> (n=166)			<u>Both Boys &amp; Girls</u> (n=294)			<u>Don't Know</u>		
	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total
<u>Feminine Sports*</u>												
Cheerleading	1.8	0.0	<b>1.0</b>	60.8	75.0	<b>67.0</b>	36.7	21.9	<b>30.3</b>	0.6	3.1	<b>1.7</b>
Ballet	0.0	0.8	<b>0.3</b>	66.9	63.3	<b>65.3</b>	25.9	20.3	<b>23.5</b>	7.2	15.6	<b>10.9</b>
Dance	4.2	4.0	<b>2.4</b>	63.3	60.2	<b>61.9</b>	30.7	34.3	<b>32.3</b>	1.8	5.5	<b>3.4</b>
<u>Masculine Sports*</u>												
Football	62.7	80.5	<b>70.4</b>	24.0	0.0	<b>1.4</b>	33.1	18.8	<b>26.9</b>	1.8	0.8	<b>1.4</b>
Wrestling	60.2	66.4	<b>62.9</b>	0.0	1.6	<b>0.7</b>	34.9	27.3	<b>31.6</b>	4.8	4.7	<b>4.8</b>
<u>Neutral Sports*</u>												
Swimming	0.0	2.3	<b>1.0</b>	0.6	0.8	<b>0.7</b>	97.6	95.3	<b>96.6</b>	1.8	1.6	<b>1.7</b>
Jogging/ Running	0.6	1.6	<b>1.0</b>	0.6	0.8	<b>0.7</b>	97.0	93.0	<b>95.2</b>	1.8	4.7	<b>3.1</b>
Soccer	1.2	4.7	<b>2.7</b>	1.8	0.8	<b>1.4</b>	95.2	92.2	<b>93.9</b>	1.8	2.3	<b>2.0</b>
Bicycling	1.2	12.5	<b>6.1</b>	2.4	1.6	<b>2.0</b>	95.8	82.8	<b>90.1</b>	0.6	3.1	<b>1.7</b>
Tennis	0.6	3.1	<b>1.7</b>	10.8	3.9	<b>7.8</b>	88.0	89.8	<b>88.8</b>	0.6	3.1	<b>1.7</b>
Canoeing/ Kayaking	9.0	11.7	<b>10.2</b>	1.8	0.0	<b>1.0</b>	76.5	76.6	<b>87.4</b>	12.7	11.7	<b>3.4</b>
Diving	0.6	4.7	<b>2.4</b>	4.8	9.4	<b>6.8</b>	92.8	80.5	<b>87.4</b>	1.8	5.5	<b>3.4</b>
Golf	10.2	7.8	<b>9.2</b>	1.8	2.3	<b>2.0</b>	84.9	85.2	<b>85.0</b>	3.0	4.7	<b>3.7</b>
Volleyball	0.6	0.8	<b>0.7</b>	13.3	10.9	<b>12.2</b>	83.7	85.2	<b>84.4</b>	2.4	3.1	<b>2.7</b>
Basketball	6.0	21.9	<b>12.9</b>	3.0	0.8	<b>2.0</b>	89.8	75.8	<b>83.7</b>	1.2	1.6	<b>1.4</b>
Snow skiing	4.2	10.9	<b>7.1</b>	1.8	7.8	<b>4.4</b>	85.5	73.4	<b>80.3</b>	8.4	7.8	<b>8.2</b>
Karate	12.7	21.1	<b>16.3</b>	0.6	0.8	<b>0.7</b>	78.3	73.4	<b>76.2</b>	8.4	4.7	<b>6.8</b>
Snowboarding	11.4	33.6	<b>21.1</b>	1.2	0.8	<b>1.0</b>	89.9	63.3	<b>75.5</b>	2.4	2.3	<b>2.4</b>
Hunting/ Fishing	19.3	47.7	<b>31.6</b>	0.0	0.8	<b>0.3</b>	79.5	48.4	<b>66.0</b>	1.2	3.1	<b>2.0</b>
Skateboarding	24.1	50.8	<b>35.7</b>	0.6	0.0	<b>0.3</b>	69.9	46.9	<b>59.9</b>	5.4	2.3	<b>4.1</b>
Baseball	33.7	46.1	<b>39.1</b>	0.0	0.8	<b>0.3</b>	64.5	50.8	<b>58.5</b>	1.8	2.3	<b>2.0</b>
Field Hockey	30.7	28.9	<b>29.9</b>	3.0	4.7	<b>3.7</b>	57.8	57.0	<b>57.5</b>	8.4	9.4	<b>8.8</b>
Aerobics	1.2	0.8	<b>1.0</b>	22.3	21.1	<b>21.8</b>	53.0	47.7	<b>50.7</b>	23.5	30.5	<b>26.5</b>
Figure Skating	3.0	2.3	<b>2.7</b>	30.7	43.8	<b>36.4</b>	56.0	43.0	<b>50.3</b>	10.2	10.9	<b>10.5</b>
Softball	3.0	3.1	<b>3.1</b>	43.4	46.9	<b>44.9</b>	51.8	47.7	<b>50.0</b>	1.8	2.3	<b>2.0</b>
Gymnastics	0.0	1.6	<b>0.7</b>	52.4	43.0	<b>48.3</b>	44.6	51.6	<b>47.6</b>	3.0	3.9	<b>3.4</b>
Ice Hockey	39.8	60.9	<b>49.0</b>	0.6	0.8	<b>0.7</b>	56.0	35.2	<b>46.9</b>	3.6	3.1	<b>3.4</b>
Weightlifting	38.6	53.1	<b>44.9</b>	3.0	1.6	<b>2.4</b>	52.4	39.8	<b>46.9</b>	6.0	5.5	<b>5.8</b>
Riflery	27.7	49.2	<b>37.1</b>	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>	48.2	41.4	<b>45.2</b>	24.1	9.4	<b>17.7</b>
<u>Don't Know*</u>												
Lacrosse	4.8	2.3	<b>3.7</b>	2.4	2.3	<b>2.4</b>	27.7	31.3	<b>29.3</b>	65.1	64.1	<b>64.6</b>

\*Headings were assigned by the investigator in an effort to showcase differences in attitudes towards sports

### Analysis of Interviews

The qualitative data consisted of 22 one-on-one interviews. Interviewees were children who had completed the quantitative questionnaire, and had indicated interest in doing an interview with the researcher. A complete profile of the interview participants is provided earlier in this chapter.

The themes that surfaced were gender typing of sports and cross-sport participation. Because the qualitative data were intended to provide depth and greater understanding to the quantitative data more detail is presented in Chapters 5 through 7.

## CHAPTER 5

## GENDER SCHEMA AND STIGMA CONSCIOUSNESS

This chapter focuses on gender schema and stigma consciousness, the first two variables in the study model (see Figure 3). The treatment of the scales used to measure gender schema and stigma consciousness is presented in Chapter 4. In this chapter, the results of statistical tests used to answer the first two research questions and the implications of the findings are presented.

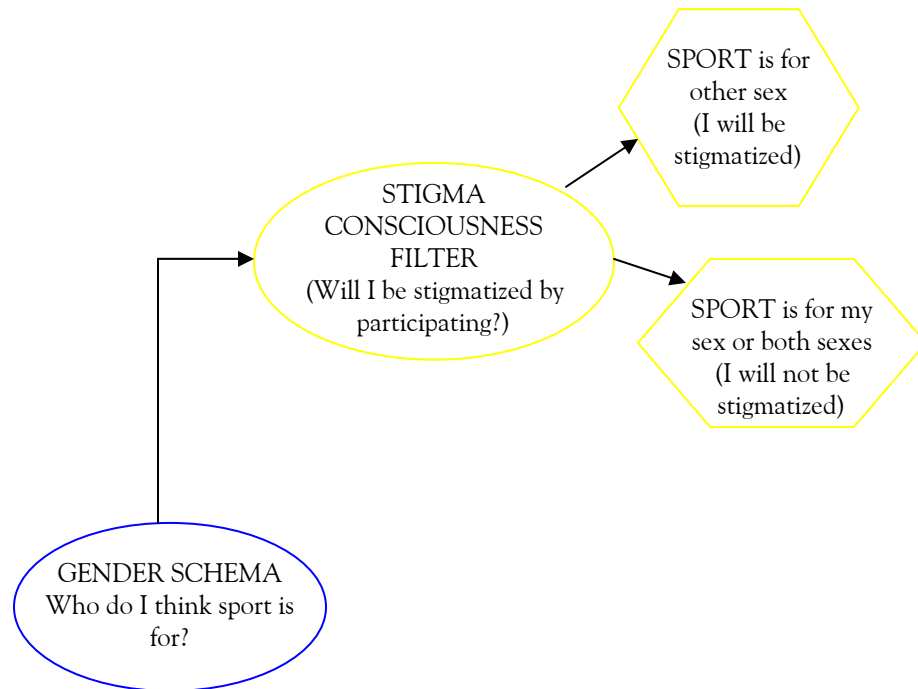


Figure 3: Gender Schema and Stigma Consciousness

### *Test of Research Questions*

#### Research Question #1

What is the gender schema of children in grades 3 through 5?

In order to assess the gender schema of participants, individual scores for femininity and masculinity were calculated per Liben and Bigler's (2002) suggestion. Toward that end, an overall mean score for the feminine and masculine dimensions of the COAT-PM scale was calculated for each participant. A total of 53 participants did not complete the COAT-PM in its entirety, and were therefore eliminated from analysis, leaving an n of 241. Therefore, all analyses assessing the COAT-PM included only the 241 cases with complete data. The overall mean for the femininity scale was 3.27, with a standard deviation of .97. The overall mean for the masculinity scale was 3.01 with a standard deviation of 1.07. As with any distribution on a continuum, a few participants scored high on one scale, but low on the other (n=70). Among these, the majority of those who scored high on the masculine scale but low on the feminine scale were boys (n=24) and the majority of those who scored high on the feminine scale but low on the masculine scale were girls (n=34). It is important to note however, some boys scored high on the feminine scale but low on the masculine scale (n=9), and some girls scored high on the masculine scale but low on the feminine scale (n=8). This fact will come up and be discussed as needed in other analyses throughout this study.

## Research Question #2

What is the relationship between gender schema and stigma consciousness of children in grades 3 through 5?

A bivariate correlation was used to assess the relationship between gender schema and stigma consciousness. Not all respondents completed the gender schema and stigma consciousness scales in their entirety. Therefore, the overall n for this analysis was 233. The results indicated that there was a negative relationship between feminine schema and stigma consciousness ( $r=-.198$ ,  $p=.002$ ). There was no relationship between masculine schema and stigma consciousness (Table 5.1). More simply, as feminine schema goes up, stigma consciousness goes down. (Note: the same results occurred when controlling for the other gender schema). Bivariate correlations were also run to assess how gender schema related to stigma consciousness for each sex (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1: Bivariate Correlation of Stigma Consciousness on Gender Schema (n=233)

<u>Gender Schema</u>	<u>Stigma Consciousness</u>		
	<u>Both</u> r	<u>Girls</u> r	<u>Boys</u> r
Feminine Schema	-.198***	.078	-.265**
Masculine Schema	-.004	.077	-.006

\*\*sig. @ .01, \*\*\*sig. @.001

Note: The total n is reduced because not all participants responded to all of the questions on the SCQ and the COAT-PM.

Although there was no relationship between either gender schema and stigma consciousness for girls or between masculine gender schema and stigma consciousness for boys, there was a significant negative relationship between feminine schema and stigma consciousness for boys. This result suggests that among boys, as feminine schema goes up, their stigma consciousness goes down.

### *Supporting Qualitative Data*

Interviews were conducted to illustrate what kind of stigmas children experience in the sport domain. A common theme in the interviews was the nature of boys' and girls' activities, and what activities boys and girls could do without being subject to stigma. For boys, a frequent concern was being considered "girlie" if they participate in a sport or activity that is usually for girls. For example, Eric, a nine year old, suggested that he would not participate in dance, baton, or cheerleading because he would "...feel kind of girlie." He would feel this way "...because [these sports require you to] raise your arms and kick your legs." It is worth noting that no boys in the sample indicated that they participated in girls' sports, or had seen other boys participate in girls' sports. However, most of the girls said that they played boys sports.

Most participants concurred that boys would get teased or bullied if they participated in girls sports, but that it was okay for girls to play boys' sports. Tyler, a nine year old boy, said he would not play a "girls' sport" because he "[didn't want anyone laughing at him]." Reed, a ten year old boy, concurred by saying that his friends "would make fun of him" if he played a "girls' sport."



Shelly (S), age 10, and Gina (G), age 9, on the other hand, recognized the greater latitude girls experience in sport:

Interviewer (I): What about a boy coming to school saying he wants to do something...you haven't really said that any sports are boys' sports, but I know a lot of people have told me that they think of football as being kind of a boy sport. Would you maybe agree with that?

S: No, because I know two twins that play football.

I: How about wrestling?

S: Girls can do that.

I: So I guess we could kind of get from this that girls can do a lot of things. Girls can do whatever they want?

S: Yep.

I: If a boy were to come to school and say he wanted to do ballet, would his friends be okay with that do you think?

S: I don't think so.

I: What would happen?

S: They would make fun of him.

G: Boys probably think that boys should not play..take dance, but they should and they probably think that they should not do gymnastics, but they can. They probably don't think that they should get into like piano or something because it's too...you know. I don't know how to say it.

I: What do you think? What do you think they (other boys) would think about boys who did play piano or who did get into dance?

G: They would probably, maybe tease him about it or...yea.

Two girls explained that they preferred boys' sports to girls' sports, and in some informal conversations, girls went so far as to call themselves "tomboys." In these cases, the implication was that being a tomboy was a significant part of their identity, of which they were proud. Kendra, age 8, indicated that: "She (mom) wants me to be a girlie girl because I like dressing up in like skorts and stuff, but I still play my kickball and basketball. I'm a sport kind of girl" (nodding & smiling).

Peers sometimes called each other tomboys, too. When the questionnaires were being administered in classrooms, there were a few girls whom peers called tomboys, but

it was clear that this was not meant, nor was it taken, as an offense. On the other hand, boys would sometimes tease each other as being “dancers” or that they participated in ballet or cheerleading. Though the word “sissy” was never used per say, the association of a boy and a girls’ sport was delivered in a jibing, teasing manner, and was usually meant as a personal affront. Of interest, is that Kate (K), age 10, one of the girls who was proud of her tomboy identity and had expressed interest in playing football when she got older, perceived more defined boundaries for boys’ participation.

I: Do you think you could put into words why it’s weird to see them (boys) skating and cheerleading and doing ballet?

K: Well for the cheerleading I see on TV, it’s mostly girls and then they have a couple boys and they’re like doing flips and stuff. It’s really weird to see them because guys are supposed to do manly stuff like wrestling and stuff.

### *Discussion of Results*

The data indicate that the largest percentage of participants possessed a schema that was high on both the feminine and masculine scales, followed by those who possessed schemas that were low on both the feminine and masculine scales. Having a small number of participants fall into the feminine and masculine gender schema categories was expected. Previous research has indicated that as children explore their gender identities they tend toward a combination of schemas, as was found among the population in this study (Boldizar, 1991; Huston, 1985; Liben & Bigler, 2002; Spence, 1985).

Researchers have contended that while children as young as two categorize the world around them into behaviors and activities for boys and girls respectively, as they grow to middle childhood, they tend to recognize that the boundaries can be crossed

(Huston, 1985; Liben & Bigler, 2002). In the process of acknowledging flexible boundaries in behavior, children begin to explore and change their own behaviors (Bem, 1981; Boldizar, 1991; Huston, 1985; Liben & Bigler, 2002; Spence, 1985). The fact that the sample in this study for the most part possessed a combination of schemas supports previous research that children of this age self-endorse and adopt gender behaviors of all kinds, regardless of sex and socially appropriate behavior (Liben & Bigler, 2002).

A bivariate correlation was used to determine what, if any, relationship existed between gender schema and stigma consciousness. When the sexes were analyzed together, the results indicated that there was a negative relationship between feminine gender schema and stigma consciousness, but that there was no relationship between masculine schema and stigma consciousness. When the sexes were analyzed independent of each other, the results were particularly interesting. There was no relationship between gender schema and stigma consciousness among girls, nor was there a relationship between masculine schema and stigma consciousness among boys. However, there was a significant negative relationship between feminine schema and stigma consciousness among boys. Put simply, for boys, as feminine schema goes up, stigma consciousness goes down. These findings are curious, yet tap an interesting phenomenon regarding gender schemas and sport.

As stereotype and stigma research suggests, people are only sensitive to stigmas if the activity or trait is central to the core identity (Crocker & Major, 1989; Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998; Crocker, Voelkl, Testa, & Major, 1991; Schlenker & Weigold, 1989; Steele & Aronson, 1995). Theoretically, people who are subject to stigmas react in two ways: through coping or disidentification. Either of these two mechanisms may be in

play here. For example, if a person possesses a feminine schema, which has been posited to be less desirable and valued in society, then that person may have learned to cope with the stigmas to which he or she (in this case, he) is subject in a variety of domains and has overcome them (Crocker et al., 1991). By overcoming, or learning to cope with the stigmas to which he or she may be exposed, the person in question may perceive a liberation to do whatever moves him or her, and not be concerned with what others might think. Disidentification on the other hand, suggests that an individual who possesses a feminine schema would simply not pursue activities in which he or she might be exposed to stigma, such as sport (Major & Crocker, 1993; Major et al., 1998; & Crocker, 1998; Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995). Therefore, because he or she does not participate in sport, he or she is not party to the gender stigmas prevalent in sport, and is naturally not conscious of the stigmas in that domain. Because the girls in this study participated in sport, it is more likely that coping is in evidence here.

The lack of a relationship between masculine schema and stigma consciousness for both boys and girls, might be a case of possessing the “right” schema in the “right” place, therefore the risk of being stigmatized is reduced. For example, the children in this study who possess masculine schemas may be confident in their masculinity to such a degree that they do not fear being perceived as anything else. However, for boys with a feminine schema, according to the literature, either coping or disidentification is in effect. The age of the sample population must also be considered. Because the participants are so young, it is conceivable that boys with a feminine schema are not as yet savvy to the stigmas to which they may be subjected and are behaving naturally. Future studies examining older children would provide an interesting basis on which to further

investigate how a cross-gender schema relates to stigma consciousness during adolescence.

Contrary to the results of the quantitative data, the qualitative data suggest that boys, who tend more toward a masculine schema than girls, should in fact show high levels of stigma consciousness, particularly in the sport domain. However, the quantitative data is complicated by the fact that some girls had a masculine schema. For boys, the contradiction between the two data sets may be due to the fact that boys with masculine schema have disidentified from the activities in which they may be stigmatized and have therefore reduced and even eliminated their risk of being stigmatized. Girls with a masculine schema may have been more likely to have learned to cope with the stigmas to which they might be subjected and are therefore not concerned with them. The question of disidentification and coping may provide greater insight to understanding stigmas and how they exist for children, and would do well as frameworks for future research.

On the other hand, according to the qualitative data, girls do not experience the same risk of stigma. What is more, girls went so far as to imply that they were proud of their masculine characteristics. This finding concurs with those of previous studies that girls experience latitude in their behavior, and to participate or adopt either masculine or feminine characteristics is socially acceptable (Henderson & Shaw, 2003; Heywood & Dworkin, 2003; Messner, 1990, 1992, 1998, 2002).

### *Summary*

Consciousness of stigmas in sport has been overlooked in previous research. Yet, arguments presented by a number of researchers suggest that stigmas and stereotypes are very much alive in the sport arena (Henderson & Shaw, 2003; Messner, 1990, 1992, 1998, 2002; Renold, 1997; Whannel, 1999). Investing the time to develop a scale to measure stigma consciousness among the population in this study appears to be worthwhile. However, the scale used for these data was originally developed for use with an adult population. Thus, the development of a scale designed to measure stigma consciousness in a child population specifically may yield higher internal consistency and validity.

Further, future research should include an investigation of an older population such as teens and pre-teens. As children approach puberty and begin to develop male and female physical characteristics, they become more aware of gender and hence may limit their involvement to sports they consider appropriate for themselves and others (Bem, 1981; Boldizar, 1991; Huston, 1985; Liben & Bigler, 2002; Spence, 1985).

## CHAPTER 6

## STIGMA CONSCIOUSNESS AND SPORT PARTICIPATION

This chapter focuses on stigma consciousness and sport participation, the latter two variables in the study model (see Figure 4). The treatment of the scales used to measure stigma consciousness and sport participation is presented in Chapter 4. In this chapter, the results of statistical tests used to answer the third and fourth research questions, both of which are related to stigma consciousness and sport participation are discussed.

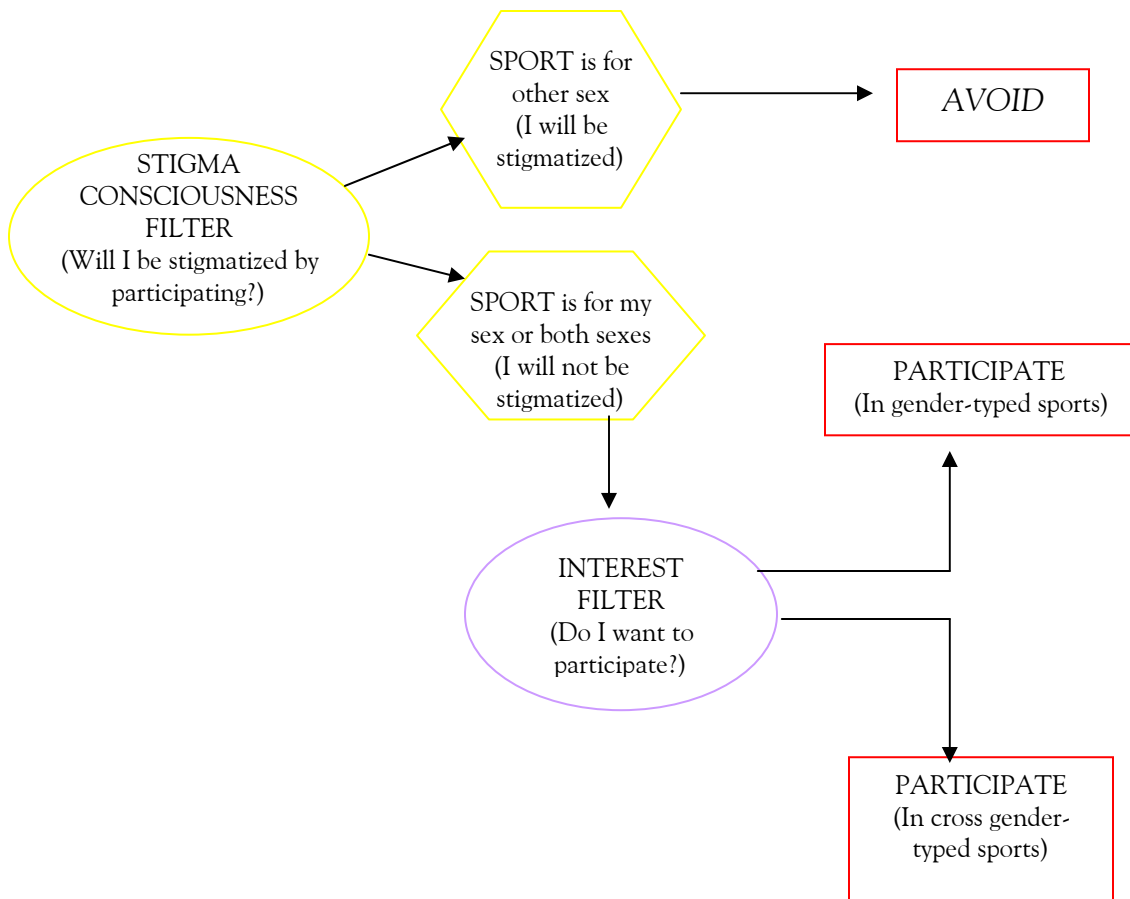


Figure 4: Stigma Consciousness and Sport Participation

### *Test of Research Questions*

#### Research Question #3

What is the sport participation of children in grades 3 through 5?

Descriptive statistics were used to determine the sport participation of children in the study. Overall, the most participated in sports were biking, swimming, hunting/fishing, basketball, jogging/running, and soccer (Table 6.1).

#### Research Question #3a:

Are boys or girls, regardless of their gender schema, more likely to participate in gender-typed sports than cross gender-typed sports?

A breakdown of participation in gender-typed and neutral sports by sex of respondent is provided in Table 6.1. Chi-square was used to test the significance of the differences in participation between boys and girls in gender typed sports (Table 6.2). Results of the chi-square indicated that in the case of feminine and masculine sports, boys and girls tend to participate in the sports deemed socially appropriate for their sex (i.e., gender-typed) rather than participating in cross gender typed sports.



Table 6.1: Summary of Boys' and Girls' Sport Participation

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<u>Sport</u>	<u>Boys</u> (n=128)	<u>Girls</u> (n=166)	<u>Total</u> (n=294)
<u>Feminine Sports</u>			
Dance	10	71	<b>81</b>
Cheerleading	2	65	<b>67</b>
Ballet	2	43	<b>45</b>
<u>Masculine Sports</u>			
Football	75	39	<b>114</b>
Wrestling	38	12	<b>50</b>
<u>Neutral Sports</u>			
Biking	103	127	<b>230</b>
Swimming	93	132	<b>225</b>
Hunting/fishing	108	103	<b>211</b>
Basketball	85	84	<b>169</b>
Jogging/running	68	99	<b>167</b>
Soccer	72	84	<b>156</b>
Baseball	97	48	<b>145</b>
Snowboarding	75	53	<b>128</b>
Volleyball	51	58	<b>109</b>
Golf	48	59	<b>107</b>
Skateboarding	60	39	<b>99</b>
Riflery	64	32	<b>96</b>
Diving	45	48	<b>93</b>
Gymnastics	10	68	<b>78</b>
Weightlifting	45	32	<b>77</b>
Softball	15	59	<b>74</b>
Canoeing/kayaking	32	27	<b>59</b>
Tennis	25	26	<b>51</b>
Field Hockey	20	12	<b>32</b>
Snow Skiing	15	16	<b>31</b>
Aerobics	8	20	<b>28</b>
Karate	16	7	<b>23</b>
Figure Skating	5	17	<b>22</b>
Ice Hockey	10	6	<b>16</b>
<u>Don't Know</u>			
Lacrosse	5	5	<b>10</b>

---

Table 6.2: Chi-Square Results for Participation Rates of Boys and Girls in Gender-Typed Sports

Sport	<u>Boys</u> (n=128)	<u>Girls</u> (n=166)	<u>X<sup>2</sup></u>
<u>Feminine Sports</u>			
Dance	10	71	44.25***
Cheerleading	2	65	58.05***
Ballet	2	43	33.03***
<u>Masculine Sports</u>			
Football	75	39	37.51***
Wrestling	38	12	25.83***

\*\*\* sig. @ .001

#### Research Question #4

What is the relationship between stigma consciousness and sport participation of children in grades 3 through 5?

Independent sample t-tests were used to assess the relationship between participation in each sport and stigma consciousness (Table 6.3). To simplify the tests, sports were categorized into feminine sports, masculine sports, and neutral sports based on the outcome of the attitude towards sport measure discussed in Chapter 4. The feminine sport category consists of cheerleading, dance, and ballet. The masculine sport category consists of wrestling and football. The neutral sport category consists of the remaining sports except lacrosse. Each category was treated as a two category variable, in which children either participated in at least one sport within the category or none of the sports within the category. Because not all participants completed the stigma consciousness questionnaire in full, the total n for the t-tests was 281.

The results of the t-tests suggest that for both boys and girls, stigma consciousness is negatively related to participation in feminine sports ( $t=-4.71$ ,  $p=.000$ ). There was no

relationship between stigma consciousness and participation in either masculine or neutral sports. After examining the relationship between sport participation and stigma consciousness for boys and girls together, each sex was selected out and examined independent of the other. Significant relationships were found between participation in feminine sports and stigma consciousness for girls ( $t=-2.04$ ,  $p=.043$ ) and for boys ( $t=-2.24$ ,  $p=.027$ ). In all cases, the stigma consciousness mean was higher for those who do not participate in feminine sports, suggesting that stigma consciousness is higher for children who do not participate in feminine sports than for children who do participate in feminine sports (Table 6.3).

In the course of analysis, the question arose as to how the relationships between stigma consciousness and sport participation may differ when controlling for gender schema, therefore a post-hoc test was conducted. Including gender schema in the analysis reduced the total  $n$  to 233, as not all participants fully completed both the gender schema and stigma consciousness questionnaires. Logistic regression was used to evaluate these relationships (Table 6.4). Results of logistic regressions differ from regression in that they are interpreted as log odds. For example, in the case of a significant positive relationship, when the independent variable goes up by one unit, the log odds of the dependent variable go up by  $\beta$ . In interpreting logistic regression, it is important to know that participation in feminine, masculine, and neutral sports were two category variables, where (1) is “participates” and (2) is “does not participate.”

The results indicated that when controlling for gender schema, there was a positive relationship between participation in feminine sports and stigma consciousness (odds=.597,  $p=.001$ ). Because of the way the variables were coded, this result suggests

that among children who do not participate in feminine sports, the log odds of stigma consciousness going up is .597.

Table 6.3: Results of Independent Samples t-Tests of Stigma Consciousness and Sport Participation (n=281)

Sport	Stigma Consciousness						t	sig.
	Do Participate			Don't Participate				
	N	M <sup>1</sup>	SD	N	M <sup>1</sup>	SD		
<u>Boys &amp; Girls</u>								
Feminine Sports	109	2.36	.84	172	2.88	.93	-4.71	.001**
Masculine Sports	123	2.73	.91	158	2.63	.95	.87	.385
Neutral Sports	277	2.68	.93	4	2.40	1.06	.878	.550
<u>Girls</u>								
Feminine Sports	99	2.36	.84	62	2.65	.90	-2.04	.043*
Masculine Sports	43	2.42	.92	118	2.49	.86	-.439	.661
Neutral Sports	158	2.47	.88	3	2.87	.61	.397	.432
<u>Boys</u>								
Feminine Sports	10	2.32	.90	110	3.01	.93	-2.24	.027*
Masculine Sports	80	2.90	.87	40	3.06	1.08	-.86	.391
Neutral Sports	119	2.96	.93	1	1.00	N/A	2.11	.037

\*sig. @ .05, \*\*sig. @ .001

<sup>1</sup>Means are calculated on a scale ranging from (1) “strongly disagree” to (5) “strongly agree.”

As with the t-tests, logistic regressions were run for each sex independently. The results to the logistic regressions examining girls only also revealed a positive relationship between not participating in feminine sports and stigma consciousness (odds=.440, p=.044). The results to the logistic regressions examining boys only also revealed a positive relationship between not participating in feminine sports and stigma consciousness (odds=.923, p=.041). There were no relationships between participation in masculine or neutral sports and stigma consciousness for boys or girls (Table 6.4).

Table 6.4: Logistic Regression Results of the Relationship Between Stigma Consciousness and Sport Participation While Controlling for Gender Schema (n=233)

<u>Sport</u>	<u>Participation</u>		<u>odds</u>	<u>p</u>
	<u>yes</u> (1)	<u>no</u> (2)		
<u>Boys &amp; Girls</u>				
Feminine Sports	89	144	.597	.001**
Masculine Sports	106	127	-.072	.630
Neutral Sports	231	2	.199	.789
<u>Girls</u>				
Feminine Sports	80	52	.440	.044*
Masculine Sports	35	97	.037	.875
Neutral Sports	130	2	.273	.725
<u>Boys</u>				
Feminine Sports	9	92	.923	.041*
Masculine Sports	71	30	.209	.381

\*sig. @ .05, \*\*sig. @ .001

### *Supporting Qualitative Data*

All 22 interviewees indicated that there are some sports that are for girls and some sports that are for boys. For the most part, examples of boys' sports were wrestling and football and examples of girls' sports were cheerleading and ballet, a finding that was also supported by the quantitative data. Oftentimes, however, interviewees were unable to put into words what characteristics constituted boys' and girls' sports. Liben and Bigler (2002) contended that children model their own thoughts and behavior after what they see others do. In the case of sport, this came out as the "way it is." For example, Tyler (age 10) suggested that ballet is a girls sport, and when asked why, said "...because...I don't know. It just is."

Another way in which interviewees explained why sports were for boys or girls was based on who they saw playing the sport, either on television, or in their immediate environment.

Kate, age 10 (K)

Interviewer (I): Do you know what makes them boys' sports?

K: Well, no.

I: Any thought at all?

K: Well, for baseball, usually like on TV all I see is guys on their team. I don't really see any professional...I see professional softball, but I don't see professional baseball with any girl on it.

Liam, age 8 (L)

I: ...What's a boys' sport?

L: Like football.

I: Football is a boys' sport? What makes it a boys' sport? Do you know?

L: Because mostly boys play it.

In other cases, characteristics used to distinguish boys' from girls' sports were behavior traits, or props common in different sports. Boys' sports were often identifiable because of masculine behavioral traits such as aggression and competitiveness in participation, while props were frequently used to characterize girls' sports.

Eric, age 9 (E)

I: What do you like about them (sports)?

E: Because in football sometimes you can tackle and in wrestling you can kind of hurt them, and in baseball you get to run a lot. You throw baseballs and you get to hit them. (aggression)

Trevor, age 10 (T)

(having established that he thinks soccer is a boys' sport)

I: Okay, did you like soccer?

T: Yes.

I: What did you like about it? Do you know?

T: I got...the ball came up and hit me in the face one time.

I: And that was fun?

T: No.

I: That was not fun?

T: (laughing) The fun part is when you win. (competition)

Johnny, age 8 (J)

I: What's an example of a boys' sport?

J: Football.

I: What's an example of a girls' sport?

J: Cheerleading.

I: Would you ever do cheerleading?

J: No.

I: Why wouldn't you ever do cheerleading?

J: Because it's for girls.

I: ...What makes it for girls?

J: Because boys don't use pompoms and all that. (gestured shaking pompoms in a feminine manner with his hands).

Kendra, age 8 (K)

I: Are there any sports that you really don't like to play?

K: Dance.

I: You don't like dance? Any particular kind of dance, or just any old dance?

K: Any old dance.

I: What don't you like about it?

K: I think it's very girlie girl and you have to wear pretty stuff.

In trying to describe what defined sports as being for boys' or girls', masculine and feminine stereotypes came into play for some children. In the following two examples, Johnny, age 8, and Peyton, age 9, refer to social generalizations of gender (e.g., what boys and girls like or do not like) to justify their notions of why a sport is a boys' sport.

Johnny (J)

I: Boys don't use pompoms, I like your little gestures with your hands. What about football makes it a boys' sport?

J: Because I don't think girls want to be knocked down and stuff.

Peyton (P)

I: What might be an example somebody else would think is a boys' sport?

P: Maybe baseball and softball.

I: Okay, why do you think they're boys' sports? Do you know why or what makes them boys' sports?

P: Because boys like to get dirty.

In both cases, the statements are general assumptions on traits of what boys and girls like to do or are “supposed” to be like.

### *Discussion of Results*

According to the data, children participate in biking, swimming, and hunting/fishing most frequently. All of the sports with high participation rates were perceived by the sample population to be gender neutral and participation was somewhat equally distributed between boys and girls. However, when examining participation rates among boys and girls in gender specific sports, a clear division is apparent. Participation in sports perceived as gender specific was noticeably different between the two sexes.

Metheny (1965) was perhaps the first to explore social stereotypes that some sports are for boys and some are for girls. Researchers in the 1980s and 90s pursued the same line of research and confirmed that despite changes in society and developments toward equality and liberation of women, stereotypes of gender persist (Colley, Nash, O'Donnell, & Restorick, 1987; Koivula, 1995; Liben, Bigler, & Krogh, 2001; Matteo, 1986; Signorella, 1999). While the results of this study suggest that children perceive fewer sports to be gender specific than previously indicated, the few sports that were perceived to be gender specific were consistent with previous findings (Koivula, 1995; Matteo, 1986; Metheny, 1965).

A higher number of girls indicated participating in masculine sports than the number of boys who indicated participating in feminine sports. Perhaps this is because of



the higher social value and status assigned to masculine activities (Liben, Bigler, & Krogh, 2001; Signorella, 1999). It has become more acceptable for a girl or woman to participate in masculine activities than for a boy or man to participate in feminine activities. Boys and men experience defined gender roles in sport, and through sport display their masculinity (Messner, 1990, 1992, 1998, 2002; Ruble & Martin, 1998). Accordingly, any indication of femininity, or straying from masculine norms would raise question as to their masculinity. On the other hand, participation in masculine activities by girls and women is more widely accepted (Messner, 1990, 1992, 1998, 2002; Henderson, Bialeschki, Shaw, & Freysinger, 1999; Heywood & Dworkin, 2003; Liben, Bigler, & Krogh, 2001; Nelson, 1994). In short, gender role boundaries are given more latitude for women than they are for men.

The data also indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship between participation in feminine sports and stigma consciousness. This was true when boys and girls were examined together, and when they were examined independent of each other. The fact that the results were the same for boys and girls independently is curious and warrants discussion. Researchers have contended that feminine sports and activities are assigned less value and lower social status in society than masculine sports and activities (Csizma, Wittig, & Schurr, 1988; Kane, 1988; Koivula, 1995; Liben, Bigler, & Krogh, 2001; Messner, 2002). Furthermore, theorists have posited that activities in which people participate symbolically communicate an identity of the self to others (Dimanche & Samdahl, 1994; Haggard & Williams, 1992; Mannell & Kleiber, 1997). It is conceivable that part of the issue at hand is that boys and girls who are highly

stigma conscious are less willing to subject themselves to the identity that may be assigned them if they participate in sports socially perceived as feminine.

Some of the stigmas directed toward feminine sport participants might include being thought of as effeminate and all of the characteristics that label entails: lacking aggression, uncompetitive, gentle, dependent, etc. (Bem, 1985; Colker & Widom, 1980; Colley, Nash, O'Donnell, & Restorick, 1987; Czisma, Wittig, & Schurr, 1988; Koivula, 1995, 1999; Matteo, 1986; 1988; Shaw, 1994, 1999; Shaw & Kemeny, 1989).

Additionally, it is possible that children with high stigma consciousness levels are acutely aware of and sensitive to the lower social status assigned feminine sports and activities, and may therefore want to avoid involvement and association with such activities (a.k.a., disidentification; Crocker & Major, 1989; Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998; Schlenker & Weigold, 1989; Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995; Swim & Hyers, 2001; Major, Spencer, Schmader, Wolfe, & Crocker, 1998).

It is interesting to compare the results presented in this chapter to those in Chapter 5. Specifically, the finding that children who do participate in feminine sports have lower stigma consciousness than those who do not participate concurs with the negative correlation between feminine schema and stigma consciousness in Chapter 5 (i.e., as feminine schema goes up, stigma consciousness goes down). Two possible explanations of why there was a negative relationship between feminine schema and stigma consciousness were presented in Chapter 5: coping and disidentification. Considering the results of the current analyses, it is clear that disidentification from sport has not taken place, as these children participate in feminine sports. Coping on the other hand, presents a viable alternative. That is, children with a feminine schema, or those who participate in

feminine sports, may have come to terms with and found ways to overcome the stigmas to which they might be exposed if they participate in sports. Additionally, it is interesting to note that for the most part, feminine sports participants in this study are female, therefore suggesting that they are not straying far from what is socially expected anyway. Yet the negative directionality of the relationships in both cases further beg the question of what schema do dance participants possess. (Note: The relationships between gender schema and sport participation are presented in Chapter 7 of this document.)

What is not discussed here is the possibility that although the children who participate in feminine sports participate in a sport, they may have disidentified from masculine sports. An effort should be made to develop a measure to assess disidentification, which could then be used in future studies of this ilk.

The qualitative data provide a more in-depth understanding of why children aged 8 through 10 perceive and understand sport to be socially appropriate for boys and girls respectively. The quantitative data do not capture the same detail that the qualitative do in that although the quantitative serve to identify what sports the sample population considers feminine and masculine, they do not provide explanations why. Of the sports specifically identified as being for girls or for boys, all concur with the quantitative data (i.e., cheerleading, ballet, dance, football, & wrestling), however, the qualitative data provide further detail as to what makes a sport girls' or boys' (e.g., use of props in the case of girls' sports, and the dangerous nature of boys' sports). The qualitative data also touch on the stigmas to which children would be subject if they participated in a sport deemed socially appropriate for the other sex. For example, several boys and girls also

indicated that boys would be thought “girlie” if they participated in cheerleading, dance, or ballet.

As hoped, the qualitative data provided depth and understanding to the quantitative data. Future research should incorporate the two methods, as talking with children served as a useful tool to draw out children’s opinions of sports and sport participants.

## CHAPTER 7

## GENDER SCHEMA AND SPORT PARTICIPATION

The results and discussions related to gender schema and sport participation (see Figure 5) are addressed in this chapter. The treatment of the scales used to measure gender schema and sport participation is presented in Chapter 4. In this chapter, the results of statistical tests used to answer the last research questions and the implications of the findings are discussed.

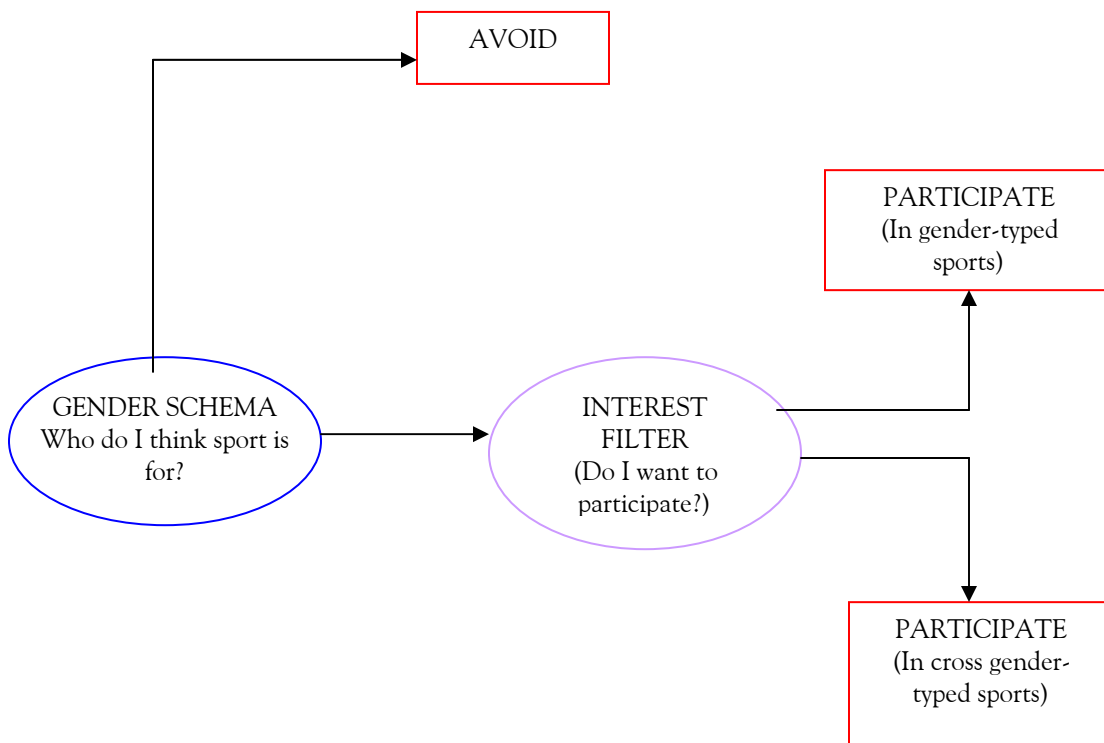


Figure 5: Gender Schema and Sport Participation

### *Test of Research Questions*

#### Research Question #5

While controlling for stigma consciousness, what is the relationship between gender schema and sport participation among children in grades 3 through 5?

Logistic regression was used to assess the relationship between gender schema and sport participation while controlling for stigma consciousness. To simplify the tests, sports were categorized into feminine sports, masculine sports, and neutral sports based on the outcome of the attitude towards sport measure discussed in Chapter 4. The feminine sport category consists of cheerleading, dance, and ballet. The masculine sport category consists of wrestling and football. The neutral sport category consists of the remaining sports except lacrosse. Each category was treated as a two category variable, in which children either participated in at least one sport within the category or none of the sports within the category. Because not all participants completed the gender schema or stigma consciousness questionnaires in full, the total n for the t-tests was 233.

Results of logistic regressions differ from regression in that they are interpreted as log odds. For example, in the case of a significant positive relationship, when the independent variable goes up by one unit, the log odds of the dependent variable go up by  $\beta$ . In interpreting logistic regression, it is important to know that participation in feminine, masculine, and neutral sports were two category variables, where (1) is “participates” and (2) is “does not participate.”

The results of the logistic regressions were not surprising (Table 7.1). Results indicated that there were statistically significant relationships between possessing feminine schema and participation in feminine sports ( $p=.001$ ) and between possessing a

masculine schema and not participating in feminine sports ( $p=.020$ ). Also, results indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship between possessing a feminine schema and not participating in masculine sports ( $p=.010$ ) and possessing a masculine schema and participating in masculine sports ( $p=.003$ ).

Table 7.1: Logistic Regression Results of Sport Participation on Gender Schema While Controlling for Stigma Consciousness (n=233)

Sport <sup>a</sup>	Participation		Gender Schema			
	yes	no	Feminine		Masculine	
	(1)	(2)	odds	p	odds	p
Feminine Sports	89	144	-1.344	.001** *	.754	.020*
Masculine Sports	106	127	.615	.010**	-.872	.003**
Neutral Sports	231	2	2.783	.350	.030	.986

\*sig. @ .05, \*\*sig. @ .01, \*\*\*sig. @ .001

<sup>a</sup>sports categorized as indicated by data

### Research Question #5a

While controlling for stigma consciousness, what is the relationship between gender schema and sport participation among females in grades 3 through 5?

To address this question, females only were selected. Females comprised both feminine and masculine schema; thus, to address the relationship between gender schema and sport participation, both types of schema were accounted for (see Chapter 5 for a distribution of females who scored high on the feminine and masculine scales, and a combination thereof). Logistic regression was used to test for the relationship between gender schema and sport participation while controlling for stigma consciousness among

females (Table 7.2). Because not all participants completed the gender schema and stigma consciousness questionnaires, the total n for these tests was 132. No relationships were found between gender schema and sport participation among females while controlling for stigma consciousness.

Table 7.2: Logistic Regression Results of Sport Participation on Gender Schema Among Females While Controlling for Stigma Consciousness (n=132)

<u>Sport<sup>a</sup></u>	<u>Participation</u>		<u>Gender Schema</u>			
	<u>yes</u>	<u>no</u>	<u>Feminine</u>		<u>Masculine</u>	
	(1)	(0)	<u>odds</u>	<u>p</u>	<u>odds</u>	<u>p</u>
Feminine Sports	80	52	-.790	.070	.409	.321
Masculine Sports	35	97	-.304	.571	-.737	.115
Neutral Sports	130	2	2.059	.510	.150	.929

<sup>a</sup>sports categorized as indicated by data

### Research Question #5b

While controlling for stigma consciousness, what is the relationship between gender schema and sport participation among males in grades 3 through 5?

To address this question, males only were selected. Males comprised both feminine and masculine schema; thus, to address the relationship between gender schema and sport participation, both types of schema were accounted for (see Chapter 5 for a distribution of males who scored high on the feminine and masculine scales, and a combination thereof). Logistic regression was used to test for the relationship between gender schema and sport participation while controlling for stigma consciousness among males (Table 7.3). Because not all participants completed the gender schema and stigma consciousness questionnaires, the total n for these tests was 101. A test examining the



relationship between gender schema and participation in neutral sports could not be run, as all boys indicated that they participated in at least one neutral sport, leaving the “no participation” cell empty and making a comparison impossible. No relationships were found between gender schema and sport participation among males while controlling for stigma consciousness.

Table 7.3: Logistic Regression Results of Sport Participation on Gender Schema Among Males While Controlling for Stigma Consciousness (n=101)

<u>Sport<sup>a</sup></u>	<u>Participation</u>		<u>Gender Schema</u>			
	<u>yes</u> (1)	<u>no</u> (0)	<u>odds</u>	<u>p</u>	<u>odds</u>	<u>p</u>
<u>Boys</u>						
Feminine Sports	9	92	-.420	.522	.706	.321
Masculine Sports	71	30	.097	.776	-.586	.168

<sup>a</sup>sports categorized as indicated by data

### *Supporting Qualitative Data*

For the most part, the results of the logistic regression indicated that children participate in sports deemed socially appropriate for their sex (i.e., gender-typed). The qualitative data supported this finding. In the interviews, cross gender-typed sport participation was frowned upon by both boys and girls, although girls appeared to experience more latitude in participating in boys’ sports than boys experienced in participating in girls’ sports. In the latter case, the concern was that their masculinity was at risk, and they were concerned that they would be thought of as “girlie.” For example, when asked what would happen if a guy came to school and said he wanted to do

cheerleading, Kate, age 10, indicated “[other people would] probably say he was like a girlie something.” Tammy (T), age 11, on the other hand, suggested:

(Having established that pompom squad, an introductory level cheerleading group, is a girls’ activity)

Interviewer (I): Okay, do you think boys would sign up for the pompom squad?

T: Not the ones at our school.

I: Why not?

T: Because they think they’re all hot.

I: What do you mean by...I think I know what you mean by “all hot,” but go ahead and try to explain it.

T: They’re all cool.

I: They’re really cool...and so why would signing up for the pompom squad not be cool?

T: Because they might not...they might think it’s too girlie.

In some cases, participation in a girls sport led to further, sometimes unrelated stereotyping that questioned masculinity. Messner (1990, 1992, 1998) contended that when boys fail to demonstrate masculinity in sport, they are at risk of being stereotyped as unmasculine in other domains as well. Renold (1997) also found that boys who did not participate in masculine sports were at greater risk of stereotype and stigma than girls. The examples that follow serve as good examples of sport being the primary means through which boys establish their masculine roles among their peers.

Cassie, age 8 (C)

I: What if a boy in your class were to take up cheerleading?...You’re laughing, why are you laughing?

C: Because I never seen a boy do cheerleading.

I: What do you think people might say about him?

C: He’s crazy!

Trevor, age 10 (T)

(having established that ballet and cheerleading are girls’ sports)

I: What makes them girls’ sports? Do you know?

T: Most of the boys I know do not like to dance and wear pink and red dresses...or anything pink, but I have to say (name of boy in school), he wears pink stuff. He likes Barbie’s.

I: He does?

T: Yea. He still can't ride his bike without training wheels...

Cross gender-typed sport participation among girls also received negative comment. However, in the case of girls playing boys' sports, the concerns were tied more to safety and getting hurt rather than risking their gender schema.

Colin, age 10 (C)

I: Do you think that there are sports that are boys and girls' sports?

C: Yea, I think there shouldn't be girls playing football because it's kind of...not that girls can't but it's like it's kind of a boys sport, and girls aren't built the same way that boys are. They might get hurt more often.

Cassie, age 8 (C)

C: Girls don't play wrestling.

I: Do you have any ideas as to why girls don't play wrestling?

C: Because they might get hurt.

Anna, age 8 (A)

I: Why don't you play football?

A: I can play football, but I'm just afraid I'm going to be tackled and knocked down.

Both boys and girls recognize that boys tend to stereotype girls who play boys sports. Girls on boys' teams were identified as an "easy out," or were thought not to play the game right, or well.

Tyler, age 10 (T):

I: Baseball is a boys' sport? Why is baseball a boys' sport?

T: Because girls are bad hitters.

I: Anything else that makes it a boys' sport?

T: Yea, girls might let go of the bat when they swing.

Gene, age 10 (G):

I: In gym class there are a lot of sports that you play with boys and girls obviously because you are a mixed class. Is your baseball team boy and girl, or is it just boy?

G: Where I'm at it's mostly just boys because girls are afraid of getting hit by the ball so that's why...

Andy, age 8 (A)

I: Are there any boys' sports that aren't okay for girls to do?

A: Football.

I: Why not have girls in football?

A: Because in football you tackle girls down.

I: Why do you tackle the girls down?

A: Because you don't want them on the team.

I: Why don't you want them on the team?

A: Because they're girls.

The following excerpt serves as an interesting example of a boy who did not want to express that he noticed a difference between boys and girls and the way girls played sports, but went ahead and pointed out that girls were less conscious of the game rules and courtesy than boys were.

Trevor, age 10 (T)

I: Do they (girls) play any differently?

T: No. Not to be rude or anything, yesterday in soccer this girl, (name), who is in my class in gym, she just stands there. She was just standing there.

I: Is there ever a guy who does that or is that sort of something you've only seen girls do?

T: That's sort of a girl thing.

I: Generally, do you mind playing sports with girls?

T: No.

I: You don't think it's any different really?

T: No. It's not different, it's just that they just stand there, and sometimes they just stand there and don't pass the ball to me. They just stand there and that's why the other team wins. And then they go off somewhere and pout. That's what this one girl, (name), does...

In addition, despite the pervasive notion that some sports were gender specific, several girls voiced that they had seen boys and girls participate in sports deemed socially appropriate for the other sex. In one case, images on television provided an example of cross gender-typed sport participation.

Reese, age 9 (R)

I: Do you think other people think that there are sports for girls and boys?

R: Probably other people, but I don't think there is just a boy sport or girl sport.

I: What would somebody else think was a boy sport?

R: Like wrestling, but I saw girls wrestle on TV.

I: What sports that other people might think are girls' sports?

R: Ballet, and I saw that boys did ballet, like one of my favorite singers.

### *Discussion of Results*

Results of the logistic regression analyses complemented previous findings in that some sports may appeal to people depending on their gender schema (Matteo, 1986, 1988). For example, significant relationships were found between possessing a feminine schema and participation in feminine sports and between possessing a masculine schema and participation in masculine sports. Significant relationships were also found between possessing a masculine schema and not participating in feminine sports and between possessing a feminine schema and not participating in masculine sports.

It stands to reason that possession of a feminine schema was related to participation in feminine sports, as possession of a masculine schema was related to participation in masculine sports. It also naturally followed that the reverse would be true. Specifically, it was not surprising that possession of a masculine schema was related to not participating in feminine sports, and that possession of a feminine schema was related to not participating in masculine sports. It makes sense that sports perceived to be feminine or masculine in nature would appeal to participants who possess feminine or masculine in personality traits and characteristics respectively (Colker & Widom, 1980; Matteo, 1986).

It also makes sense that possession of a feminine or masculine schema would be related to not participating in the sports noted for having the opposite characteristics. In the case of possession of a feminine schema and not participating in masculine sports, it is possible that children who possess a feminine schema perceive masculine sports to be rough, possibly dangerous, and played only by boys, as so often portrayed in popular media (Bishop 2003; Heywood & Dwokin, 2003; Messner, Duncan, & Cooky, 2003).

When the same tests were run for the boys and girls only, no results were found. It is possible that because so few boys participated in feminine sports and so few girls participated in masculine sports, that there was a reduced likelihood of significant relationships.

The low participation numbers of boys in girls' sports makes an interesting statement on the issue at hand. When boys were selected, participation in the girls' sports was noticeably low. Although the statistics yielded no indication that there were relationships between schema and participation in girls' sports, it is impossible to rule out the possibility of a relationship given the few participants. In Chapter 5, bivariate correlation results of gender schema on stigma consciousness yielded no relationship between a masculine schema and stigma consciousness. The notion that children with a masculine schema participate in the "right" activities and are therefore not subject to stigmas was presented as a possible explanation for this finding. The current results, (i.e., that so few boys participate in girls' sports) further support this theory. So as to eliminate the risk of being stigmatized as feminine, boys and children with a masculine schema do not participate in activities through which they would be subject to stigma. In effect, this

is a form of disidentification at work. Interview data supported the theory that boys were conscious of and perceived a risk to their masculinity if they participated in girls' sports.

The examples excerpted from the qualitative data speak to the analyses and results presented in this chapter. The significant relationships that were highlighted through the logistic regression analyses concur with theories of socially appropriate sport participation; specifically, that children with feminine schemas participate in dance and cheerleading (i.e., feminine sports) and children with masculine schemas participate in football and wrestling (i.e., masculine sports). Yet, as hoped, the qualitative data provided an added dimension and served to explain the stigmas and fears children experience when they stray from the socially expected norm.

Future research should involve a more extensive analysis of children's social agents, including parents, teachers, the media, local government, and culture to tap into the origin of children's fears and awareness of stigmas. It would also be interesting to compare this rather rural population with data from a more urban sample, to see the difference that residence plays on perceived stigmas in sport, contingent on the theory that urban, metropolitan areas are exposed to more culture, and potentially alternative opinions in sport as well. In addition, future studies should pursue an older population such as teens and pre-teens. Previous research has suggested that children of the ages examined in this study tend to be less restrictive in assigning genders to activities and behavioral characteristics. However, as children approach puberty and begin to develop male and female physical characteristics, they become more aware of gender and hence limited in considering what sports and other activities are appropriate for themselves and others (Bem, 1981; Boldizar, 1991; Huston, 1985; Liben & Bigler, 2002; Spence, 1985).

## CHAPTER 8

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between gender schema, stigma consciousness, and sport participation among boys and girls in grades 3 through 5. This summative chapter is designed to synthesize the preceding chapters into a coherent conclusion. The results of the research questions are re-visited, implications are presented, and directions for future research are discussed.

#### *Summary of Findings*

Although relationships between gender schema and sport participation have been examined previously, this study took the unique approach of also investigating consciousness of gender stigmas. A mixed method approach was employed to investigate the relationships between gender schema, stigma consciousness, and sport participation. Quantitative data obtained from self-administered questionnaires served to answer the research questions, however qualitative data from one-on-one interviews provided depth and richness to the quantitative results. Five principal research questions were defined at the outset of the project.

Research Question #1: What is the gender schema of children in grades 3 through 5?

Result: An overall mean score for the feminine and masculine dimensions of the COAT-PM scale was calculated for each participant. The overall mean for the femininity scale was 3.27, with a standard deviation of .97. The overall mean for the



masculinity scale was 3.01 with a standard deviation of 1.07. As with any distribution on a continuum, a few participants scored high on one scale, but low on the other (n=70).

Among these few, the majority of those who scored high on the masculine scale but low on the feminine scale were boys (n=24) and the majority of those who scored high on the feminine scale but low on the masculine scale were girls (n=34). It is important to note however, some boys scored high on the feminine scale but low on the masculine scale (n=9), and some girls scored high on the masculine scale but low on the feminine scale (n=8).

Research Question #2: What is the relationship between gender schema and stigma consciousness in children in grades 3 through 5?

Result: Bivariate correlation was used to test the relationship between gender schema and stigma consciousness. The results indicated that there was a negative relationship between feminine gender schema and stigma consciousness, and that there was no relationship between masculine schema and stigma consciousness.

Research Question #3: What is the sport participation of children in grades 3 through 5?

Result: Descriptive statistics on participation showed that bicycling, swimming, and hunting and fishing were the three most participated in sports.

Research Question 3a: Are boys and girls, regardless of their gender schema, more likely to participate in sports deemed socially appropriate for their own sex than cross gender typed sports?

Result: Yes. Chi-square analyses of the participation rates of boys and girls indicated that boys and girls are more likely to participate in the sports deemed socially

appropriate for their sex (i.e., gender-typed sports) than in sports deemed socially inappropriate for their sex (i.e., cross gender-typed sports.)

Research Question #4: What is the relationship between stigma consciousness and sport participation of children in grades 3 through 5?

Result: Independent samples t-tests were used to test for a relationship between stigma consciousness and sport participation. Results showed that there was a significant relationship between participation in feminine sports and stigma consciousness when boys and girls were examined together, and independently. Specifically, for all tests, children who did not participate in feminine sports had higher stigma consciousness than children who did participate.

Research Question #5: While controlling for stigma consciousness, what is the relationship between gender schema and sport participation among children in grades 3 through 5?

Result: Logistic regression was used to examine the relationship between gender schema and sport participation while controlling for stigma consciousness. Results indicated that a feminine schema was related to participating in feminine sports and to not participating in masculine sports. Similarly, possession of a masculine schema was related to participating in masculine sports and to not participating in feminine sports.

Research Question #5a: While controlling for stigma consciousness, what is the relationship between gender schema and sport participation among females in grades 3 through 5?

Research Question #5b: While controlling for stigma consciousness, what is the relationship between gender schema and sport participation among males in grades 3 through 5?

Results: Logistic regressions were used to assess the relationship between gender schema and sport participation while controlling for stigma consciousness when each sex was examined independent of the other. No statistically significant relationships were found.

### *Implications*

Although the research questions and their results are able to stand alone, as suggested by the individual chapters, it is important to consider them as a cohesive unit in order to see the “big picture.” The results associated with participation in feminine and masculine sports provide the best means of assessing this project from a big picture perspective.

### Children’s Participation in Feminine Sports

As presented in Chapter 5, although most children in the study had schemas that were high in both feminine and masculine traits, there was a difference in boys and girls and their gender schema. Not surprisingly, boys tended toward a masculine schema and girls tended toward a feminine schema. Gender schema was introduced again in Chapter 7, in which the relationship between gender schema and sport participation was assessed. Here, the data indicated that possessing a feminine schema was related to participation in feminine sports when controlling for stigma consciousness when boys and girls were examined in conjunction (Table 7.1). When these results are considered together, the

natural conclusion is that girls with feminine schemas participate in feminine sports.

However, it is important to consider the role of stigma consciousness.

In Chapter 6, a significant relationship was found between not participating in feminine sports and stigma consciousness (Table 6.3). Specifically, children who did not participate in feminine sports experienced higher stigma consciousness than children who did participate in feminine sports. This was true when the sexes were examined together, and for boys and girls independent of each other.

For girls, the implication of these findings is that by possessing a feminine schema and participating in sports that are deemed socially appropriate for their sex, girls have embraced the schema that is deemed appropriate for their sex, along with the corresponding traits and activities. Logically, by embracing femininity and not challenging the norms of social construction, girls meeting these criteria are not subjected to stigma and are therefore not stigma conscious. However, the results presented in Chapter 6 showed that not participating in feminine sports resulted in high stigma consciousness. It is possible that girls in this situation have not embraced or do not feel comfortable with femininity or the social expectations of being a girl. They may be exploring alternatives and considering going against the grain of society. However, even at such a young age, they may be aware and conscious of the stigmas to which they might be subjected if they challenge social norms.

The implications of the findings are quite different in the case of boys who possess a feminine schema. The result for boys was the same that it was for girls in that stigma consciousness was higher among those who did not participate in feminine sports. This instance may be a case of disidentification. Boys, for the most part, did not possess

feminine schemas, and did not participate in feminine sports. It is interesting to consider that boys, particularly those who have high stigma consciousness, may shape their sport participation around the norms outlined by society. It is possible that boys make the conscious decision not to participate in feminine sports because of they are aware of and sensitive to the stigmas to which they might be exposed if they do. This finding is in agreement with the idea that boys are limited in their sport participation choices because of the pressure to conform to social ideals of masculinity they experience (Messner, 1998, 2002).

#### Children's Participation in Masculine Sports

As presented in Chapter 5, although most children in the study had schemas that were high in both feminine and masculine traits, there was a difference in boys and girls and their gender schema. Not surprisingly, boys tended toward a masculine schema and girls tended toward a feminine schema. Gender schema was introduced again in Chapter 7, in which the relationship between gender schema and sport participation was assessed. Here, the data indicated that possessing a masculine schema was related to participation in masculine sports when controlling for stigma consciousness when boys and girls were examined in conjunction (Table 7.1). When these results are considered together, the natural conclusion is that boys with a masculine schema participate in masculine sports. The relationship between participation and stigma consciousness was assessed in Chapter 6. No statistically significant relationships were found, yet it is interesting to consider why there no relationships between participation in masculine sports and stigma consciousness were in evidence.

This finding is interesting as it suggests that participation in masculine sports, for either boys or girls, does not put the participant at risk for stigma. In effect, the finding agrees with the theory that girls and women are afforded more latitude in their sport participation than boys and men, and are free to more fully explore participation alternatives without the risk of being stigmatized.

Several researchers have contended that boys are expected to be masculine and to participate in masculine sports (Messner, 1990, 1992, 1998, 2002; Shaw & Henderson, 2003). If boys drift from the masculine norm, they are subject to gender stigmas that bring their masculinity and manliness into question (Messner, 1992, 2002). By participating in masculine sports and possessing masculine traits associated with the gender schema, it stands to reason that they would not be conscious of or sensitive to gender stigmas in sport.

#### Boys, Girls, Sports, and Stigmas

Although the data presented here suggest that sport participation can be simply presented as boys possess masculine schemas and participate in masculine sports while and that girls possess feminine schemas and participate in feminine sports, the inclusion of stigma consciousness poses an interesting dimension.

It is interesting to reflect on the notion that more latitude is afforded girls and women in their sport participation than that of boys and men (Heywood & Dworkin, 2003). However, girls may in fact be aware of and sensitive to stigmas to which they may be subject if they do challenge the social norm, thus resulting in reduced participation in masculine sports, possession of masculine schemas, and an increase in stigma consciousness among those who do not participate in feminine sports. This may

be a consequence of the age the sample, as children who are still exploring and becoming comfortable with their identities have not yet learned to cope with the stigmas to which they may be subject.

It is important to also consider the results and their implications from the constructionism perspective (i.e., recognizing that gender is a combination of biological traits and social influence; Bussey & Bandura, 1999; Liben & Bigler 2002). Children of the ages represented in this study (i.e., 8 through 11), because of their progressing identity exploration, may to some degree be coming to terms with their biological traits and social pressures of “appropriate” behavior. The data in this study suggest that the relationship between gender schema and stigma consciousness manifests differently for boys and girls. For boys, those who naturally possess masculine traits and those who do not are equally at risk of stigma if they do not comply with the social norm. Masculinity is the prevailing schema in society and boys are expected to demonstrate masculine qualities else they are stigmatized. Such is not the case for girls, where gender schema and stigma consciousness manifest differently depending on circumstances. Some girls may naturally possess masculine traits, and they may not be comfortable with the idea that their natural tendencies challenge the social norm, resulting in increased stigma consciousness. Girls who naturally possess feminine qualities, on the other hand, do not experience the same friction, and are therefore not sensitive to gender stigmas because they are not at risk.

The difference in sensitivity to gender schemas between boys and girls may lie in the notion that because masculinity is so valued by society, even those boys who naturally come by the characteristics are instilled with the awareness of what would

happen if they drift from the expected norm. It should be noted that the question of how biology contributes to the gender development in children was not addressed in this study. Rather, this study approached gender from a primarily social perspective, although it is important to consider that according to gender constructivism, biology also plays a part.

More general limitations to the study deal primarily with the question of the age of the sample. Some of the questions were difficult for the children to understand and made administration of the questionnaire difficult. In addition, the age of the sample complicated the qualitative data as well in that the children lacked the words to explain stereotypes in sports and why boys and girls tend not to participate in sports deemed socially appropriate for the other sex. Although it was clear that boys and girls were aware of the stereotypes through observations and mannerisms, they often lacked the eloquence to explain why.

### *Directions for Future Research*

Before venturing into proposals for future research, an examination of the scales and measures used in the current study should be addressed and discussed.

#### Sport Participation and Gender Attitude Measures

The sport participation and attitude measures were both developed specifically for the purposes of this study. Both scales consisted of a list of sports that had been used for earlier assessments of gender-typing of sports (Colley, Nash, O'Donnell, & Restorick,



1987; Matteo, 1986; Metheny, 1965; Koivula, 1995), with some additions as suggested by physical education teachers in response to current sport trends.

The results of the attitude measure indicated that the population considered three sports to be feminine and two sports to be masculine (see Chapter 4). The result that the population identified so few sports as being gender specific may have something to do with the age of the population. Specifically, research in child development has suggested that children in grades 3 through 5 are exploring their identities, and are less conscious of or aware of gender stereotypes (Liben & Bigler, 2002). Given that, it is somewhat unexpected that participants in this study perceived any sports to be strictly for “boys” or “girls,” although it does speak to the power of sport stereotypes in society. According to previous research, children in middle-childhood tend to not gender categorize activities and occupations, particularly when given the option of an activity or occupation being for “both” (Liben & Bigler, 2002). This finding suggests that children are conscious and aware of the stereotypes to which these sports are subject.

There are several issues surrounding the sport participation and attitude measures that became apparent when it was administered. Generally speaking, participants misunderstood some of the sports and therefore results for some of the sports may be unreliable. For example, in the instance of jogging/running being a commonly participated in team sport, it was not infrequent that students completing the questionnaire inquired as to what that meant. When the researcher explained, it became clear that students considered any running they did for their basketball, soccer or baseball teams as doing jogging or running for a team. Similarly, many participants did not know what field hockey was and when it was explained they made the observation that it was

ice hockey but on a field. Given the fact that the population identified ice hockey as a masculine sport (Table 6.2) it is conceivable that a generalization like this colored the outcome of attitudes toward field hockey.

Prior to beginning data collection, the physical education teachers indicated some sports on the list with which the children may not be familiar, including field hockey and lacrosse. In the future, it makes sense to either heed the advice of the physical education teachers and the results of this study, and eliminate the two sports from the list altogether. However, it would be interesting to use this same scale with an older population to see how opinions of field hockey and lacrosse - and the stereotypes associated with them - may change with age. In hindsight, another change might be to split hunting and fishing into separate categories, as the two sports consist of different participant profiles.

Another issue worthy of note is that despite efforts to curb the sharing of opinions while completing the questionnaire, participants had the tendency to shout out answers and tease one another. For example, when a sport such as ballet was read out loud, as were all of the sports, it was not uncommon for boys to jokingly accuse one of their classmates of participating, often in a jeering, snide tone of voice. It was quite clear from behaviors like this that study participants were well aware of the stigmas assigned to participants of certain sports, particularly in the case of boys playing what were perceived as “girls’ ” sports. In that vein, a common question from participants to the researcher was how to respond to the questionnaire if they thought boys or girls could do whatever sports they wanted. While this issue had already been covered in the instructions, posing the question out loud made social constructions and rules of political correctness salient to everyone in the room.

To a degree, this problem was confounded by the fact that the researcher was often the only adult in attendance when the questionnaire was being administered. Because the number of participants sometimes exceeded 20 for any one administration, fielding questions and preventing the contamination of the environment with biases such as those discussed above sometimes proved to be difficult. In the future, it may be wise to either have two researchers on hand to administer the questionnaire, or to have no more than 10 students per administration session. Additionally, asking the same questions of an older population may yield different results, as an older group may understand and be more willing to express their personal opinions. An older population may also have more experience with and familiarity with the stereotypes assigned different sports.

#### Gender Schema Measure

As discussed in Chapter 4, the COAT-PM was factor analyzed to test the assumption that it consisted of two dimensions: femininity and masculinity. The majority of items that loaded onto the feminine scale were considered feminine traits *a priori*, as was the case with the masculine scale. While both scales had some items that had been deemed gender neutral as a result of the factor analysis, one item that loaded onto the masculine scale had been considered a feminine trait *a priori* (i.e., try to look good), a result that warrants speculation. One possibility is that because children who possess a masculine schema are also confident and aggressive, as the other traits on the scale suggest, they are therefore in the social spotlight more often. Consequently, it stands to reason that children who are in the social spotlight may make the effort to look good.

Despite having been designed for and previously tested on older children (i.e., 11-13), the COAT-PM served its purpose satisfactorily in this project. Results indicated that the study population had gender schemas that were high in feminine and masculine traits, however this is not surprising for the age of the participants. It would be valuable to pursue using this scale on pre-teen and teen populations, to assess gender schema and how it changes over the developmental course of childhood and adolescence.

#### Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire

Consciousness of stigmas in sport has been overlooked in previous research. Yet, arguments presented by a number of researchers suggest that stigmas and stereotypes are very much alive in the sport arena (Henderson & Shaw, 2003; Messner, 1990, 1992, 1998, 2002; Renold, 1997; Whannel, 1999). Investing the time to develop a scale to measure stigma consciousness among the population in this study may be worthwhile. In order to achieve acceptable reliability, five of the original ten items had to be eliminated. The five that were eliminated were all reverse-worded, a fact that in hindsight is understandable. The statements, despite efforts to modify them for children, were complicated and required some advanced self-insight. Children may have found the reverse-wording of the statements particularly confusing and hard to understand. For example, some of the reverse-worded statements read “When I play a girls’ (boys) sport...,” which assumes not only that the reader believes there are sports deemed socially appropriate for boys and girls, but also that the reader has played sports for the other sex. In this case, the statement would be better worded “If I play a girls’ (boys) sport...” so as to eliminate any unfair assumptions and potential confusion.

Similar problems with the reverse coded items did not arise in previous research in which the SCQ was implemented; however previous studies have dealt primarily with adult populations (Pinel, 1999, 2002). Another modification made to the SCQ to meet the needs of the child population was to reduce the number of response options from seven to five. This modification was intended to address the possibility that children may not understand the nuances between responses on a seven point scale, although it is equally possible that they had difficulty understanding the nuances in a five point scale as well. The development of a scale designed to measure stigma consciousness in a child population specifically, taking into account the issues faced in this study, may yield higher internal consistency and validity.

Also worthy of consideration is the fact that although it may appear that the population had relatively low stigma consciousness scores (mean=2.74), this result is not far removed from that of adult populations in previous studies (Pinel, 1999, 2002). However, it is interesting to consider that the children in this study (i.e., aged eight to eleven) are at a stage of recognizing that they can do whatever they want regardless of their sex (Liben & Bigler, 2002). As they open their identities up to alternatives, they may be more immune to social stigmas that are assigned to gendered activities and behaviors in which case their stigma consciousness may increase.

### *Topics for Future Study*

Pursuing a similar line of questioning on an older population has been a recurrent suggestion for future research. However, a particularly interesting direction would be to continue to investigate gender schema, stigma consciousness, and sport participation in

the same children throughout their adolescent years. Previous research has indicated that children go through phases of gender development, suggesting that the children examined in the current study are somewhat latent in their gender identity (Liben & Bigler, 2002). A longitudinal study of the sample population would be valuable in better understanding how gender and gender stigmas change from childhood into adolescence.

This age group was selected for this study specifically because children of this age have not yet developed their own gender characteristics. They are still finding out what it means to be female or male and exploring the identities and options available to them. Therefore, the data collected for this study was intended to explore how conscious of gender children of this age are and to serve as baseline data for a longitudinal study of the same population as they progress through adolescence. As they age, it is conceivable that these same children may become more conscious of gender schema and stigmas and consequently adapt their sport participation accordingly.

Another angle to pursue would be the other stereotypes that feed pervasive social perceptions of sport. Coakley (2001) contended that sport is a vehicle through which ubiquitous social phenomena can be observed, most of which are concealed in other facets of society. In this case, gender stereotypes served as the guiding feature, however social class, race, education, age, and sexuality also provide fodder for the growth of stereotypes that are visible in sport, but masked in other arenas.

Moreover, stereotypes are often learned from the social environment, yet social agents such as family and friends were not addressed in this study. Future research would benefit from an investigation into the perspectives of immediate family members and friends, and how their perceptions and stereotypes may feed the opinions of children.

Informal interviews conducted with teachers in the current study hinted at the powerful role parents and siblings play in the perceptions of children, yet the topic was not fully investigated. For example, parents may have different expectations for their female and male children, but not realize it or how their children's development is effected. Another socializer that varied by children was participation in co-ed sports, or on co-ed teams. It may be interesting in the future to assess how participation in sports in a co-ed environment may affect participation choices and attitudes towards sports as being for boys or for girls.

The site for this study was purposively sought to be convenient to, but not immediately adjacent to, a large university at which sports play a prominent role. It would be interesting to collect data in areas that are further removed from such an influence, and in areas where the influence may be stronger. The data sets from the different communities would make an interesting comparison study of culture and exposure. Furthermore, the availability of sports and opportunities in the community may have an effect on how children perceive sports to be gender specific. That is, if some sports are not available in the community, then awareness and knowledge of sports are likely limited what the children glean from popular media. As indicated in the qualitative data, impressions of sports as being for boys or girls result from who the children see participating in the sport, which may or may not be an accurate depiction.

The qualitative component of the study may also be conducted differently in the future. For this study, all children who expressed interest in participating in an interview were given equal opportunity to be selected. In the future, another tack might be to use the results of the COAT-PM (i.e., in which gender was measured) to speak with children

who are highly masculine or feminine in order to get a more in-depth look at how they perceive stereotypes in sport and the participation of others.

An interesting finding in this study was that girls recognized that boys were subject to stigma if they participated in girls' sports, but they [girls] did not feel the same pressure. On the contrary, girls felt that it was acceptable for them to participate in boys' sports, and many of them did. To date, much of the research investigating gender in sport argues that girls and women are limited in their sport and physical activity participation because of persisting Victorian ideals of femininity. Yet, the data from this study suggests that this is not the case. It appears that boys in fact experience greater restriction in their participation, else they risk their masculinity. Shaw and Henderson (2003) suggested that boys and men have become the neglected sex in the realm of sport and gender research. Perhaps it is time to pay more attention to the limitations and constraints boys and men experience "playing their own game."



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**Appendix A**  
**Parental Consent**  
**and Background Questionnaire**

***Social Influences on Children's Sport and Activity Participation***  
**(IRB #16066)**

ORP USE ONLY:  
 The Pennsylvania State University  
 Office for Research Protections

Approval Date: 7/14/03 – J. Mathieu

Expiration Date: 7/13/04 – J. Mathieu

Social Science Institutional Review Board

Hello! I am a graduate student at Penn State University and am currently working on a research project at your child's school. I would like to invite your child to participate in a Penn State research study to assess how perceptions of gender roles in sport and society affect children's participation choices. The purpose of this study is to try to find out what sports and activities children participate in, and how different social influences might affect their decisions.

The study is being conducted in two parts: a questionnaire, and an interview.

- The questionnaire consists of four sections, in which your child will be asked to answer questions regarding gender orientation, sport and activity participation, and social influences such as parents, siblings, friends, and social stereotypes.
- The interview consists of a one-on-one conversation with the researcher in which your child will be asked a series of questions regarding the sports and activities that do and do not hold their interest and why. With the consent and full knowledge of interviewees, the interviews will be tape-recorded. However, the interviewee may ask that the tape-recorder be turned off at any time. Only the researcher will have access to the audiotapes. The tapes will be stored in her office, and will be destroyed no more than one year after completion of the study.
- The consent you provide for your child's participation is first and foremost for the questionnaire part of the study. The interview is optional, and not all participants are required to participate. Participants will be asked to communicate their interest in the interview stage of the study to me at the time of questionnaire distribution. In the event that your child is interested in doing an interview, I would appreciate your indicating your agreement on this form so as to avoid additional paperwork.

Participation in the study requires minimal time. The questionnaire will take one class period for your child to complete. Your child will receive a \$5 movie voucher as thanks for participating in the study when they have completed the questionnaire. The interview, if your child wants to participate, will take an additional class period. Interview participants will receive no additional compensation. The questionnaire will ask students to provide information on their personality traits, which may make them feel uncomfortable, however, no other risks are involved in this study. Your child's participation in the study will be beneficial in that it will help professionals understand how gender and social influences affect the participation choices children make.

Participation in the study is voluntary. Your child may skip any questions with which they are uncomfortable and your child (and you) may withdraw from the study at any time. The identity of all participants will be confidential. Identification numbers will be used instead of names on all forms, and for all purposes. Upon return of this consent form to the school, your child will receive a small token of appreciation for their interest in participating in the study.

**If you have any questions or concerns about the study, please feel free to contact me, the principal investigator, Dorothy Schmalz, by phone at (814) 865.1851, or by email at**



**PARENTS: PLEASE COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE**

**SOCIAL INFLUENCES ON CHILDREN'S SPORT AND ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION**

Please be sure to indicate that you consent for your child to participate, and that you consent to complete this questionnaire in the spaces provided on the previous page.

All questions are optional.

**1. Ethnic background:**

- |                         |                                |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. African American     | d. White/Caucasian             |
| b. Asian/Asian-American | e. Other (please specify)_____ |
| c. Hispanic             |                                |

**2. What is the highest level of education of the father of the participating child?**

- Some high school or high school completion
- Some college or post high school training
- Completed college
- Some graduate or continued education
- Completed Master's degree
- Completed Ph.D., M.D., J.D., etc.
- Don't know

**3. What is the highest level of education of the mother of the participating child?**

- Some high school or high school completion
- Some college or post high school training
- Completed college
- Some graduate or continued education
- Completed Master's degree
- Completed Ph.D., M.D., J.D., etc.
- Don't know

**4. How would you describe your family's economic situation?**

- |                      |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| a. \$60,000 or more  | c. \$20,000- \$39,999 |
| b. \$40,000-\$59,999 | d. \$19,999 or less   |

**5. What sex is the child to be completing the study?** a. female b. male

**6. What age is the child to be completing the study?** \_\_\_\_\_

**7. What is your relationship to the participating child?**

- |           |                    |
|-----------|--------------------|
| a. Father | d. male guardian   |
| b. Mother | e. female guardian |

**8. Here is a list of sports and activities. Please indicate the degree to which you think the activity should be done by boys, girls, or both boys and girls.**

	Boys	Girls	Both
Tennis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Karate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lacrosse	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wrestling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Golf	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ballet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jogging or running	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Aerobics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Swimming	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Snowboarding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Diving	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Canoeing/kayaking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Baseball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Softball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Football	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Weight lifting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cheerleading	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Soccer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Field Hockey	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skateboarding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gymnastics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volleyball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hunting/Fishing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ice Hockey	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Basketball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Figure skating	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bicycling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Snow skiing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Riflery	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Thank you for your participation!**

**Appendix B**  
**Participant Questionnaire**

**Section 1**

In this section, I would like to know what activities you do. Please read each activity, and circle No (N) or Yes (Y). If you do the activity, please tell me if you play on a Team (T) or with your friends & family (F/F).

*Do you do these activities? If yes, with a team or with friends & family?*

	No	Yes	Team	Friends/Family
1. Tennis	N	Y	T	F/F
2. Karate	N	Y	T	F/F
3. Lacrosse	N	Y	T	F/F
4. Wrestling	N	Y	T	F/F
5. Golf	N	Y	T	F/F
6. Ballet	N	Y	T	F/F
7. Jogging or running	N	Y	T	F/F
8. Aerobics	N	Y	T	F/F
9. Swimming	N	Y	T	F/F
10. Snowboarding	N	Y	T	F/F
11. Diving	N	Y	T	F/F
12. Canoeing/kayaking	N	Y	T	F/F
13. Baseball	N	Y	T	F/F
14. Softball	N	Y	T	F/F
15. Dance	N	Y	T	F/F
16. Football	N	Y	T	F/F
17. Weight lifting	N	Y	T	F/F
18. Cheerleading	N	Y	T	F/F
19. Soccer	N	Y	T	F/F
20. Field Hockey	N	Y	T	F/F
21. Skateboarding	N	Y	T	F/F
22. Gymnastics	N	Y	T	F/F
23. Volleyball	N	Y	T	F/F
24. Hunting/Fishing	N	Y	T	F/F
25. Ice Hockey	N	Y	T	F/F
26. Basketball	N	Y	T	F/F
27. Figure skating	N	Y	T	F/F
28. Bicycling	N	Y	T	F/F
29. Snow skiing	N	Y	T	F/F
30. Riflery	N	Y	T	F/F

## Section 2

In this section, I would like to know who you think should do these activities. Please read each activity, and circle whether you think only boys should do it (1), only girls should do it (2), or if both boys and girls can do it (3). If you don't know the activity, circle that you don't know (4).

### *Who should do these activities?*

	<i>Boys</i>			
	<i>Only boys</i>	<i>Only girls</i>	<i>and girls</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
1. Tennis	1	2	3	4
2. Karate	1	2	3	4
3. Lacrosse	1	2	3	4
4. Wrestling	1	2	3	4
5. Golf	1	2	3	4
6. Ballet	1	2	3	4
7. Jogging or running	1	2	3	4
8. Aerobics	1	2	3	4
9. Swimming	1	2	3	4
10. Snowboarding	1	2	3	4
11. Diving	1	2	3	4
12. Canoeing/kayaking	1	2	3	4
13. Baseball	1	2	3	4
14. Softball	1	2	3	4
15. Dance	1	2	3	4
16. Football	1	2	3	4
17. Weight lifting	1	2	3	4
18. Cheerleading	1	2	3	4
19. Soccer	1	2	3	4
20. Field Hockey	1	2	3	4
21. Skateboarding	1	2	3	4
22. Gymnastics	1	2	3	4
23. Volleyball	1	2	3	4
24. Hunting/Fishing	1	2	3	4
25. Ice Hockey	1	2	3	4
26. Basketball	1	2	3	4
27. Figure skating	1	2	3	4
28. Bicycling	1	2	3	4
29. Snow skiing	1	2	3	4
30. Riflery	1	2	3	4



1. Do you want or have plans to participate in sports or activities in which you currently do not participate?

Please circle 1 for yes, or 2 for no:                    1            Yes  
   2            No

1a. If yes, what sport(s) or activities would you like to do?

---

---

2. Are there any sports or activities in which you would not participate if given the opportunity?

Please circle 1 for yes, or 2 for no:                    1            Yes  
   2            No

2a. If yes, what sport(s) or activities would you not do?

---

---

### Section 3

I would like to know how you describe yourself. How well do these statements describe you? Please read each word, and circle whether it is not at all like you (1), not much like you (2), somewhat like you (3), or very much like you (4).

#### What am I like?

	Not at all like me	Not much like me	Somewhat like me	Very much like me
1. emotional (express feelings)	1	2	3	4
2. aggressive (forceful)	1	2	3	4
3. excitable (get excited about things)	1	2	3	4
4. dependent (rely on others)	1	2	3	4
5. ambitious (work hard to get ahead)	1	2	3	4
6. affectionate (kind, loving)	1	2	3	4
7. adventurous (brave, take risks)	1	2	3	4
8. enjoys geography	1	2	3	4
9. good at geography	1	2	3	4
10. confident (sure of yourself)	1	2	3	4
11. enjoys physical education (gym)	1	2	3	4
12. logical (have common sense)	1	2	3	4
13. good at math	1	2	3	4
14. dominant (take a leading role)	1	2	3	4
15. charming (pleasant)	1	2	3	4
16. good at foreign languages	1	2	3	4
17. has good manners	1	2	3	4
18. creative	1	2	3	4
19. tries to look good	1	2	3	4
20. appreciative (thankful)	1	2	3	4
21. gentle	1	2	3	4
22. good at social studies	1	2	3	4
23. loving	1	2	3	4
24. helpful	1	2	3	4
25. good at music	1	2	3	4

## Section 4

In this section, I would like to know how you feel about what other people think. Please read each statement, and circle whether you strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, or strongly agree.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Some people think there are sports only girls should play, but that does not bother me – I play whatever sports I like	1	2	3	4	5
I worry that if I play a sport girls play people will think that I am like a girl	1	2	3	4	5
When I play sports with girls, I feel like they think I'm too much like a boy	1	2	3	4	5
People think I should act like a boy and do things boys do just because I am a boy	1	2	3	4	5
My being a boy does not change the sports people think I should play	1	2	3	4	5
I never think about the fact that I'm a boy when I play a girls sport	1	2	3	4	5
If I play a girls sport, people treat me differently	1	2	3	4	5
People have strong beliefs about boys who play girls sports even if they don't say so	1	2	3	4	5
I don't think people have strong opinions that some sports are for boys and some sports are for girls	1	2	3	4	5
When I'm playing a girls sport, girls on the team treat me like the other girls	1	2	3	4	5

**THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY!!**

**Appendix C**  
**Interview Assent and Guide**

***SOCIAL INFLUENCES ON CHILDREN'S SPORT AND ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION***  
**(IRB #16066)**

**Thank you for volunteering to participate in an interview!**

The purpose of this study is to try to find out what sports and activities children participate in, and how different social influences might affect their decisions. I am a student at Penn State University, and this project is part of the requirements I have in order to graduate. By participating, you are helping me graduate with my degree!

I am going to ask you a few questions about how you feel about sports and physical activities. As you answer, please remember:

- You do not have to participate in this study, your participation is voluntary.
- There are no right or wrong answers – this is not a test.
- With your agreement, this interview will be tape-recorded. If you are uncomfortable with this, please let me know. You have the right to request that the tape recorder be turned off at any time during the interview.
- There are no risks associated with your participation in this study, however if you are uncomfortable with any question, you may refuse to answer, or withdraw from the interview at any time.
- Your answers to the questions are confidential. Your name will not be associated with this interview, or any of your answers when we are through.
- Your participation will help me, your teachers and your parents understand more about what influences your decisions to play different sports and activities.
- This interview will take between 30 and 45 minutes.
- You will receive a \$5 movie voucher as thanks for your participation.
- If you have a question, concern, or do not understand a question, please feel free to ask or express your concern at any time.

If you feel that you have been fully informed about and understand all parts of the study of social influences on children's sport and activity participation please say "yes."

Official Use Only:

<hr style="border: none; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> Investigator's signature	<hr style="border: none; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 5px;"/> Date
---	---

**Preliminary Interview Guide**  
(for researcher use only)

What sports do you play?

What sports would you like to play?

What sports don't interest you?

What about (sport named by interviewee) does not appeal to you?

Are members of your family active in sports?

Who?

What sports do they play?

Do you feel as though there are sports boys can play and girls can't? (vice versa for interviewee of opposite sex).

What is an example of a boys sport?

A girls sport?

What are some of the things that people say about girls who play boys sports, or boys who play girls sports?

**Appendix D**

**Categories of  
Gender Specific Sports  
As Defined by Previous Research**

### Gender Typed Sports

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<u><b>Feminine</b></u>	<u><b>Masculine</b></u>	<u><b>Neutral</b></u>
Ballet	Karate	Golf
Aerobics	Lacrosse	Jogging or running
Softball	Wrestling	Swimming
Cheerleading	Baseball	Diving
Field Hockey	Football	Volleyball
Gymnastics	Weight Lifting	Bicycling
Ice, figure skating	Soccer	Snow skiing
Dance	Ice Hockey	Tennis
	Basketball	
	Riflery	
<b>Total 8 sports</b>	<b>Total 10 sports</b>	<b>Total 8 sports</b>

---

(Colley, Nash, O'Donnell, & Restorick, 1987; Koivula, 1995; Metheny, 1965).



## **Appendix E**

### **Iterations of Cronbach's Alpha for the Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire**

Iterations of Chronbach's Alpha for the Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire

---

	<u>SCQ Item Deleted</u>	<u>Cronbach's Alpha After Item Deleted</u>
Iteration 1	I don't think people have strong opinions that some sports are for boys and some sports are for girls. <sup>R</sup>	.47
Iteration 2	When I play a girls (boys) sport, the other girls (boys) on the team treat me just like the other girls (boys). <sup>R</sup>	.49
Iteration 3	My being a boy (girl) does not change the sports people think I should play. <sup>R</sup>	.52
Iteration 4	I never think about the fact that I'm a boy (girl) when I play a girls (boys) sport. <sup>R</sup>	.58
Iteration 5	Some people think there are some sports for girls and some sports for boys, but that doesn't bother me, I play whatever I like. <sup>R</sup>	.65

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## VITA

Dorothy L. Schmalz completed a Bachelor of Arts in History at the College of Wooster in Wooster, Ohio in 1993. Upon graduation, she moved to Burlington, Vermont where she resided for four years. While there she worked in radio and television advertising, promotions, and marketing. This experience, combined with her enduring involvement with Brown Ledge Camp, a girls' residential summer camp outside of Burlington, served as the foundation of her research interests throughout her graduate career.

Dorothy entered the Master of Science program in Leisure Studies at Penn State University in 1997. Her coursework and thesis concentrated on marketing and adolescent development, investigating the relationship between internalization of social ideals portrayed in the media and psycho-social development among late-adolescent girls. Before fully completing the Master's degree, she began coursework toward a Ph.D. Dorothy graduated from the Master's program in December, 1999.

As a Ph.D. candidate, Dorothy minored in Kinesiology and Social Psychology. The combined effects of her experiences and expert support and guidance from the faculty in the Leisure Studies program at Penn State helped to shape her interest in stereotypes and stigmas in sports and physical activities. She completed this dissertation in the spring of 2004, and graduated in August of the same year.