

Children, Young People and Sport

Children, Young People and Sport:

*Studies on Experience
and Meaning*

By

Richard L. Light

Cambridge
Scholars
Publishing



Children, Young People and Sport: Studies on Experience and Meaning

By Richard L. Light

This book first published 2016

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Copyright © 2016 by Richard L. Light

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN (10): 1-4438-9455-9

ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-9455-5

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	viii
Professor Johanna Wyn	
Acknowledgements	x
List of Abbreviations	xii
Introduction	1
Part I: Team Sports	
Chapter One.....	16
Children’s Reasons for Joining and Staying in a Football Club <i>With Christina Curry</i>	
Chapter Two	28
“Bonds Like Sisters”: Girl’s High Performance Basketball in Australia	
Chapter Three	41
The Influence of Cultural and Institutional Contexts on Participation and Learning for Adolescent Girls in a Japanese School Basketball Club <i>With Wataru Yasaki</i>	
Part II: Individual Sports	
Chapter Four.....	58
Happy Swimmers: Social Environment, Competition, and Children’s Positive Experiences of Being in a Swimming Club.	
Chapter Five	71
The Influence of Competition on French Children’s Reasons for Joining and Staying in a Swimming Club <i>With Yannick Lémonie</i>	

Chapter Six.....	84
The Place of a Swimming Club in the Lives of Competitive Adolescent Female Swimmers: Overlapping ‘Communities of Practice’	
<i>With Mark Wieland</i>	
Chapter Seven.....	98
Children, Community, Practice, and Learning, in Junior Surf Lifesaving	
Chapter Eight.....	110
Young People’s Experiences of Being in a Surf-Riders Club: Pleasure or Discipline?	
<i>With Rikki Fitzimons</i>	
Part III: Talent Development	
Chapter Nine.....	126
The Influence of the Father on the Development of Young Men’s Talent in Football	
<i>With Jarrad Denham</i>	
Chapter Ten.....	141
Learning at the Intersection of Sport and Schooling: Adolescent Basketball Players in an Australian Sports School	
<i>With Darren Thomas</i>	
Chapter Eleven.....	156
The Contribution of School Sport to the Identification and Development of Talent in Primary School Female Swimmers	
Part IV: Indigenous Sport	
Chapter Twelve.....	172
Elite Indigenous AFL Players’ Early Experiences of Sport, and the Role of Games in Learning	
<i>With John Evans</i>	
Chapter Thirteen.....	185
Dual Discourses of Sport and Education: An Effectual Blend for Māori Development	
<i>With Phillip Borrell and Angus H. MacFarlane</i>	

Reflections.....	200
Bibliography.....	209
Contributors.....	234
Index.....	236

FOREWORD

Sport is an integral part of Australian life. Between 2012 and 2013, it is estimated that 60% of all children, aged five to fourteen years, participated in at least one organized sport activity outside of school hours. This book explains the reasons why. Richard Light, and his colleagues, present a vivid collection of research that gives a voice to young people's experiences of sport. In a series of research reports, this book reveals how young people's participation in sport is supported by their peers, families, communities, and clubs. It provides insights into the way in which sport promotes cultures within which young people find meaning and gain a sense of purpose and accomplishment. The research also acknowledges that sport can be off-putting to some young people; because of the pressure of competition; because they come to feel excluded by the culture; or because they do not have room for sport in their lives at a particular time. However, taken as a whole, the studies in this book show how participation in sport is best understood as a form of practice within a community.

The analysis covers a range of sports (including basketball, swimming, football, surfing, and surf-lifesaving), and different settings (for example, team and individual sports in a range of countries, including Australia, France, Japan, and New Zealand). The collection also includes research on young Indigenous people's experiences of sport. In this way, the book presents a complex story of how participation in sport fosters a form of belonging, which connects young people to the past through their collective and individual achievements, engages them in the present, and gives them aspirations for the future. To put this another way, sport can be understood as a community of practice that encourages the creation of relationships over a period of time; a shared repertoire of ideas and memories, and access to shared resources. This both creates, and responds to, distinctive cultures. For example, in Japan, sport emphasizes the whole, rather than individual, talent. Engagement in sport emphasizes discipline through teamwork. In New Zealand, research shows that - while not all Māori young people will become elite sports people - Māori elite sportsmen and women represent qualities that all young Māori people can embrace, thereby integrating sports and educational aspirations.

Written in an accessible and engaging style, with an emphasis on evidence, this book has something for anyone interested in sport, be they parents, sports club members, young people, or academics. I commend this important book for its insights into young people's experiences of sport.

Professor Johanna Wyn
Director, Youth Research Centre
The University of Melbourne

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My aim with this book was to make it research-heavy by having every Chapter - but for the introduction and concluding thoughts - report on empirical research. While this produces a research-intensive book, it also presented a challenge for conducting an adequate number of studies. While I conducted all but four of the studies reported on in this book I needed to draw on studies done with my honours and PhD students for the others. These aforementioned students gave me permission to use their data in order to write the relevant Chapters. For the last Chapter - on Indigenous sport in New Zealand - I invited Professor Angus McFarlane and Phillip Borell, from the University of Canterbury, to contribute a guest Chapter. I felt that the extra insights this provided on Indigenous youth sport were very valuable, and that it complemented the study on Australian Indigenous sport I conducted with Professor John Evans. I take this opportunity to thank collaborating authors and recognize their contributions in detail below.

Dr *Christina Curry*, from the University of Western Sydney, worked as a research assistant on a study on children's experiences of football in Sydney and assisted me in writing Chapter 1. Chapter 3 reports on a collaborative study conducted on basketball for adolescent girls in Tokyo, with Professor Wataru Yasaki from the Tokyo University of Science. In section two, Chapter 5 reports on a study I conducted in France, for which I would like to acknowledge the assistance of staff at UFR-STAPS, University of Franche Comté, and IUFM, for their kindness - Professor Nathalie Wallian and Professor Jean Francis Gréhaigne, in particular. I also thank Orian Monet for her invaluable assistance with translation and interpretation.

Chapter 6 reports on a study conducted with a PhD student of mine, *Mark Weiland*. In the same section, the Chapter on surf riders' clubs (chapter 7) draws on an honours study conducted by *Rikki Fitzsimons*, who worked under my supervision at the University of Sydney. In section three, Chapter 9 draws on a study conducted by *Jarrad Denham*, who was an honours student at Ballarat University, Australia. Jarrad conducted the study and made the data available to me in order to write the Chapter. *Darren Thomas* conducted the study reported on in the following Chapter (Chapter 10). He was an honours student of mine at Ballarat University

(now Federation University of Australia) and agreed to allow me to use the data in order to write the Chapter.

In the next section on Indigenous sport, Chapter 12 focuses on elite-level Australian Indigenous AFL players' development of expertise during childhood. It draws on an ongoing study being conducted in collaboration with Professor John Evans (University of Technology Sydney); on how Indigenous Australian AFL (Australian Football League) and NRL (National Rugby League) players developed expertise as a process of learning shaped by socio-cultural context. I would also like to recognize the generosity of the Australian Research Council (ARC) in providing \$327,000.00 of funding, over a three-year period, for this project, through an Indigenous Discovery Grant. Phillip Borell and Professor Angus McFarlane, from the University of Canterbury, New Zealand, co-authored the last Chapter on Māori experiences of rugby league.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFL	Australian Football League
AIS	Australian Institute of Sport
CHSSA	Combined High Schools Sports Association
CNOSF	French National Council of Olympic Sports
DMSP	Development Model of Sport Participation
FFN	French Federation of Swimming
FFV	Football Federation Victoria
FINA	Fédération Internationale de Natation
GT	Grounded theory
HSC	Higher School Certificate
IM	Individual Medley
IUFM	Institut Universitaire de Formation des Maîtres [University Institute for Teachers Training]
KLA	Key Learning Area
LPP	Legitimate Peripheral Participation
LTAD	Long Term Athlete Development Model
NBA	National Basketball Association
NCT	National Training Centre
NRL	National Rugby League
NSW	New South Wales
PB	Personal best
PDHPE	Personal Development, Health, and Physical Education
PSSA	Primary School Sports Association
PSG	Pacific School Games
SBANSW	Surf Bathing Association of New South Wales
SRC	Surf Rescue Certificate
SSA	School Sport Australia
TGfU	Teaching Games for Understanding
UFR-STAPS	[Sciences and Techniques of Sports and Physical Activities]
VIS	Victorian Institute of Sports

INTRODUCTION

Research, and writing, on children's and young people's involvement in sport - and other physical activities - tends to be dominated by an instrumental approach typically focused on quantifiable aspects of sport, such as, rates of participation, levels of activity, motivations for participation, barriers to participation, effects on body weight and body density. By objectifying participation, this research overlooks the finer detail of participation in sport - how young people make sense of sport, and how it fits into what Wright and Macdonald (2010) refer to as their "everyday" lives. While this research makes an important contribution toward knowledge about young people's involvement in sport - and other movement activities - it can obfuscate, or paper over, diversity and individual differences in: experiences of sport, the influence of socio-cultural context, and the meaning that it has for children and young people. In reference to broader studies on youth, Wyn and White (1997) argue that, to understand the cultural worlds of young people, and account for the agency they have, research needs to be sensitive to the "lived reality" of their lives. This thinking has brought some attention to the lived experiences of young people and children in sport, and other physical activity, and the meaning they make of it (see, Light, 2008a; Wright & Macdonald, 2010).

Research on Youth Sport from an Instrumental Perspective

The bulk of the literature on participation in sport, and/or drop out from sport (see, Wall & Côté, 2007), is driven by an instrumental view of sport for young people within which it is seen by governments around the world as providing a means of meeting the economic and social challenges presented to them by lifestyle diseases, such as, cardio-vascular disease, diabetes, and obesity. The bulk of this research utilises large-scale quantitative methodology in order to identify general characteristics and patterns of participation in children's and youth sport (see, for example, Butcher, Lindner & Johns, 2003). Regular, long-term participation in sport can have a positive effect upon the wellbeing and health of children and

young people, but encouraging them to make sport, and other physical activity, an integral and meaningful part of their lives requires deeper understandings of its relevance and meaning for them. This is where studies focused on the meaning that sport and other physical activity holds for children, and the nature of their experiences of it, have much to offer (see, Lee, 2010; Light, 2008a; MacPhail, Gorely & Kirk, 2003; Park & Wright, 2000).

The Nature of Experience and the Meaning of Sport: A View from the Inside

Despite the significant literature on children's and youth sport, we still know too little about human experience and the ways in which it shapes children's and young people's attitudes toward sport, and other physical activity (MacPhail, Gorley & Kirk, 2003; Light, 2008a; Wright & Macdonald, 2010; Pope, 2005). Three decades ago, Watson, Blanksby, and Bloomfield (1986, p.3) noted this problem, arguing that research on children's sport had failed to consider the nature of their experiences of it from a child's perspective with, "adults being guilty of superimposing their own values and interests on the otherwise hidden values and interest of children." Similar concerns have been expressed with the need to hear, and listen to, "student voice" in research on physical education and youth sport (see, O'Sullivan & MacPhail, 2010).

The past decade has seen the stirring of interest in the meaning that sport, and other physical activity, holds for young people and in listening to their voices (see, Light, 2008a; O'Sullivan & McPhail, 2010; Wright & Macdonald, 2010). This is, however, an area of research that deserves more attention, with this book making a contribution toward it by trying to gain a "view from the inside" of their experiences of participating in sport (Light, 2008a, p. 5). It draws on a range of close-focus studies conducted on sport in Australia, New Zealand, France, and Japan that make it "research-heavy." Every Chapter reports on empirical research that I have conducted on my own, or in collaboration with other researchers and research students in Australia, over the past decade - with the exception of Chapter 13 on Indigenous sport in New Zealand.

The research presented in this volume covers a range of popular sports, of which some, such as, football (soccer), basketball, and swimming, are widely practiced in developed countries, but it also includes some sports, such as, Australian football, rugby league, surfing, and surf lifesaving, that have received far less attention in terms of research. This book reports on research conducted in different

institutional, social, cultural, and geographic, settings regarding both girls and boys across a wide range of age groups, from primary school aged children through to adolescents, and eighteen-year old participants in a talent development program.

The two Chapters on basketball, in Australia and Japan, and the Chapters on Indigenous sport in Australia and New Zealand, all draw on ongoing research projects with the study on Australian Indigenous sport funded by an Australian Research Council, Discovery Indigenous Grant. Every Chapter in this book also pays due attention to the influence of institutional, cultural, and social contexts on experience and learning in, and through, sport with studies undertaken in primary and secondary schools, in clubs, formal talent development programs, and in metropolitan and rural settings.

There is no attempt made with this book to present a comprehensive program of research on children, young people, and sport, or to generalize far beyond the contexts within which the studies were conducted. Instead, it presents a range of studies that provide different insights into the nature of children and young people's experiences of participation in sport; the meaning it holds for them, and the ways in which it shapes their learning and human development (Dewey, 1916/97)

The Social Nature of Team Sport

Team sports are very social activities characterised by meaningful social interaction, and can foster positive affective experiences and social, moral, and personal, learning - particularly when appropriate pedagogy is used (see, Kretchmar, 2005; De Martelaer, De Bouw & Stuyven, 2013; Light, 2013; Wright, Burroughs & Tollefson, 2013). Individual sports, such as, athletics, swimming, surfing, and competitive surf lifesaving, are also highly social activities when practised in club settings (see, Light, 2006, 2010a; MacPhail, Gorely & Kirk, 2003). In these settings, participation in sport influences the development of personal identity, feelings of belonging or relatedness (see Light, 2010a, 2006; Sarrazin, Vallerand, Guillet, Pelletier & Cury, 2002), social learning (Light, 2010a), and a sense of competency (MacPhail et al., 2003).

Research that locates learning in the specifics of communities within which sport is practised and within the larger socio-cultural settings that shape its practice and meanings, provides understanding of the complexity of participation in sport for young people and children. This is particularly evident in Chapter 6, which inquires into how membership in a surf club, involvement in the school sporting community, and membership in a

swimming club, interact to shape the meaning that being in the swimming club holds for adolescent girls in Sydney.

Interaction and relationships with coaches, friends, parents, and others within particular social environments, significantly influences young children's and young people's inclinations to continue with sport, or alternatively drop out of it (see, Fraser-Thomas, Côté & Deakin, 2008). Competition between sport and other interests for time and energy, a lack of fun, poor relationships with coaches, and a reduction in free-playing time, have been identified as common reasons for young people's withdrawal from sport (Craike, Symons, Eime, Payne & Harvey, 2011; Fraser-Thomas et al., 2008; Weiss & Williams, 2004; Wall & Côté, 2007). This is particularly marked in the early teenage years when young people move from a sampling phase (six to twelve years) in sport to a specialising phase from the age of thirteen, at a time when they also enter secondary school and are affected by changes associated with puberty (Côté & Hay, 2002; Olds, Dollman & Maher, 2009).

Given the wide range of benefits that can be derived from young people's participation in sport (see, Bailey, Armour, Kirk, Less, Pickup & Sandford, 2009; Eley & Kirk, 2002; Fraser-Thomas, Côté, & Deakin, 2005; Fraser-Thomas et al., 2008) there is good reason for wanting to keep them participating in it, regardless of the level at which they are playing. This is, however, not to blindly suggest that by just playing sport young people will automatically experience the wide range of positive learning that is possible (see, De Martelaer, De Bouw & Struyven, 2013). Indeed, we know full well the very negative physical, emotional, psychological, and social influences that sport can have on young people's development (Coakley, 2011), with Harvey, Kirk and O'Donovan (2013) reminding us that rather than these lessons being "caught" by playing sport, they need to be "taught."

Core Concepts and Methodologies

Many of the studies on club settings, presented in this book, draw on Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of 'communities of practice' briefly outlined here in the introduction, and in relation to their other concepts of 'situated learning' and 'legitimate peripheral participation.' Owing to the use of the Development Model of Sport Participation (DMSP) - developed by Jean Côté and colleagues - in a number of studies presented in this book, it is also briefly explained here in the introduction, after which I examine the grounded theory methodology due to it being used in many of the studies reported on in the book.

Communities of Practice

Often used in sport coaching literature, Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of 'communities of practice' - used in conjunction with 'situated learning' and 'legitimate peripheral participation' - offers an ideal means of understanding how, and what, children and young people learn over time through participation in sports clubs (see, Light, 2006), and features in several studies presented in this book. There is, however, a range of interpretations and versions of the concept of 'communities of practice' that make it necessary to outline the use of it, and of Lave and Wenger's (1991) other core concepts in this book.

Lave and Wenger's (1991) notion of 'situated learning' suggests that learning is fundamentally a social process acutely shaped by the socio-cultural context, rather than being something that occurs solely in the learner's head. Lave and Wenger see learning as situated activity that has, as its central defining characteristic, a process they refer to as 'legitimate peripheral participation' within 'communities of practice.' This refers to how members of the community first enter as peripheral participants, but become more deeply involved through increased participation in the practices of the community.

For Lave and Wenger, a community of practice is a set of relations among people, activity, and world, over time and in relation to other overlapping 'communities of practice' (p. 98). 'Legitimate peripheral participation' provides a way of speaking about crucial relations between newcomers and old timers, and about their activities, identities, artifacts, knowledge, and practice. The notion of 'communities of practice' includes social groups, such as midwives and tailors (Lave & Wenger, 1991), with participants learning through participation in the practices of the community. Athletics clubs (MacPhail & Kirk, 2003), surf clubs (Light, 2006), swimming clubs (Light, 2010a), and schools and classrooms (Linehan and McCarthy, 2001), can all be viewed as communities developed around particular sets of practices.

As Lave and Wenger (1991) suggest, 'communities of practice' are everywhere, with people involved in a number of them, whether at work, school, home, or as part of our civic and leisure interests. In some groups 'we' are core members, but, in others, 'we' might have participation that is more peripheral. The complexity of the ways in which membership in multiple 'communities of practice,' and the relationships between them, are formed is typically overlooked in the sport coaching and physical education literature. A study I conducted with Melanie Nash (Light & Nash, 2006) on young people's membership in a surf club, school, and other sports clubs, is one exception. Chapter 6 - with Mark Weiland -

follows on from this work to explore how adolescent girls' membership in a surf club, and the community of school sport, shapes their enjoyment of being in a swimming club and a desire to continue their involvement at an age when many drop out.

A community of practice involves much more than the technical knowledge, or skill, associated with undertaking a task. Members are involved in a set of relationships over time (Lave & Wenger 1991, p. 98), with communities developing around things that matter to them (Wenger, 1998). The fact that they organize around some particular area of knowledge and activity, gives members a sense of joint enterprise and identity. For a community of practice to function it needs to generate a shared repertoire of ideas, commitments, and memories (Wenger, 1998), implying that 'communities of practice' have histories and are developed over time. This suggests that a physical education class in school, or a single team in a sports club, could not be considered a community of practice. However, a sports club, or a surf lifesaving club, could typically be considered a community of practice. A community of practice also needs to develop various resources, such as tools, documents, routines, vocabulary, and symbols, which in some way carry the accumulated knowledge of the community. This involves practice, or ways of doing, and approaching things that are shared among members.

Rather than looking at 'learning' as the acquisition of objective knowledge, Lave and Wenger's (1991) socio-cultural perspective sees it as something that evolves from sets of social relationships and situations of co-participation. As Hanks suggests in his introduction to Lave and Wenger's book, "Rather than asking what kind of cognitive processes and conceptual structures are involved, they ask what kinds of social engagements provide the proper context for learning to take place" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 14). According to Lave and Wenger, it is not so much that learners acquire structures or models to understand the world, but more that their participation in practice occurs within frameworks. Learning thus involves participation in a community of practice with participation referring, "not just to local events of engagement in certain activities with certain people, but to a more encompassing process of being active participants in the *practices* of social communities and constructing *identities* in relation to these communities" (Wenger 1999, p. 4).

In 'communities of practice,' newcomers acquire mastery of knowledge and skill as they move toward full participation in the socio-cultural practices of a community:

Legitimate peripheral participation provides a way to speak about the relations between newcomers and old-timers, and about activities,

identities, artifacts, and communities of knowledge and practice. A person's intentions to learn are engaged and the meaning of learning is configured through the process of becoming a full participant in a socio-cultural practice. This social process, includes, indeed it subsumes, the learning of knowledgeable skills. (Lave & Wenger 1991, p. 29)

For Wenger (1998), the structure of a community of practice comprises the three interrelated dimensions of “mutual engagement,” “joint enterprise” and, “shared repertoire” (pp. 72–73). Through participation in the community, members establish norms and build collaborative relationships through a process of *mutual engagement*. These relationships are the ties that bind the members of the community together as a social entity. Through their interactions, members of communities create a shared understanding of what binds them as the *joint enterprise* that is negotiated by its members, and is sometimes referred to as the “domain” of the community. As part of its practice, the community produces a set of communal resources, which is termed their *shared repertoire*, that are used in the pursuit of their joint enterprise and can include both literal and symbolic meanings.

The Development Model for Sport Participation

Two main models have been proposed for structuring and enhancing participation and talent development in youth sport. These are: (1) The Long Term Athlete Development model (LTAD - see, Balyi & Hamilton, 1990, 2004); and, (2) the Development Model for Sport Participation (DMSP- see, Côté & Hay 2002). The LTAD model was initially developed for cross-country skiing, however, it was later adapted across a wide range of sports and has come to form the dominant model for the development of policy aimed at encouraging participation and developing talent around the world (Lang & Light, 2010). The development of the LTAD is based upon knowledge and research in physiology, and is reliant upon knowledge from physical training, physiology, and motor development, with much of the “research” claimed to support the LTAD based upon anecdotal evidence with a lack of empirical studies conducted on it apart from some recent critical inquiry (Black & Holt, 2009; Lang & Light, 2010).

The DMSP offers an alternative to the linear and prescriptive nature of the LTAD and its almost exclusive focus on the development of talent (MacPhail & Kirk, 2006). Developed on the basis of published research on athlete development and informed by socio-cultural knowledge, the DMSP offers a more useful framework for conducting research on youth sports

clubs than the LTAD (Holt, 2010; MacPhail & Kirk, 2006; MacPhail, Gorely & Kirk, 2003). The DMSP suggests that children and young people pass through three distinct phases in the process of socialization into any given sport. In the sampling phase (six to twelve years), they “sample” a range of different sports with an emphasis on fun and deliberate (structured) play. They can drop out of organized sport or shift into recreational sport or leisure activities during this phase, *or* move on into a specializing phase from the age of around thirteen to sixteen. During the specializing phase, children move from deliberate play to deliberate (structured) practice, aimed at improving performance. They reduce participation in other sports and take part in more serious practice that still maintains fun and enjoyment as a central element of their participation.

From the specializing phase, young people are then seen to move into an investment phase that involves an increasing focus on one sport with a commitment to intensive training and competitive success, from around the age of sixteen. In this phase, young people “invest” time and effort in a single sport. This progression seems to be relatively linear as long as young people stay involved in organized, competitive sport. However, during all three phases in the DMSP, children and young people can move sideways into recreational sport where participation is more fun and informal, or, by dropping out of sport completely. The girls in this study were all twelve years of age, which is the age at which young people would be transitioning from a sampling to a specializing phase, according to the DMSP.

Grounded-Theory Methodology

Many of the studies in this book adopted a grounded-theory approach that I outline and discuss here to avoid excessive repetition.

Grounded theory methodology involves the construction of theory through the analysis of data in what can be seen to be a reverse of research adopting a traditional approach. In the traditional approach to research, the researcher typically chooses an existing theoretical framework after which s/he generates data to show how the theory does or does not apply, while grounded theory develops theory from the data. GT combines data generation and analysis in an ongoing process, through which it identifies ideas, concepts, or elements, that are tagged with *codes* extracted from the data. These codes are grouped into concepts, and then into categories that become the basis for the development of theory based in the data.

Grounded-theory arose from frustrations with modernist views on, and their infiltration into, social science research (Hall, Griffiths and

McKenna, 2013), with its chief objective being, “to stimulate other theorists to codify and publish their *own* methods for generating theory” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p.8). This led to a range of epistemological adaptations with grounded-theorists claiming to be using an objectivist, symbolic interactionist, postmodernist, or constructionist epistemological lens, and aligning themselves with either Glaser, Strauss or Clarke and Charmaz (Charmaz, 2006; Clarke & Friese, 2010; Glaser, 1978; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This range of uses and adaptations of grounded-theory can create challenges in its use due to its complex and contested nature, such as with the delayed literature review, theoretical framework, and interview schedules that can unsettle traditional research practices (Urquhart, 2012).

Associated with Glaser (1978), classic grounded-theory is underpinned by objectivist ontology. Influenced by pragmatism and symbolic interactionism, Straussian grounded theory is linked to Strauss and his collaboration with Corbin (Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) and has a focus on meaning and how it is influenced by social interactions. Post-modernist grounded theory is associated with Clarke’s situational analysis (Clarke, 2005; Clarke & Friese, 2010). It is guided by his ideas on the importance of context, its enabling effects, and on how it emphasizes situated knowledge. Underpinned by a constructivist epistemology, constructivist grounded-theory methodology (see, Charmaz, 2006) situates the researcher within the research process to view theory as a construction.

The grounded-theory approach, taken in this book, used inductive logic to develop and interpret findings as reflections of the research site. The categories developed in each study, through the use of grounded-theory were inductively generated with formal theory and/or analytic concepts used to enhance the development of categories in the latter stages of each study. Unlike other qualitative methodology, grounded-theory does not begin with a theoretical framework. Instead, the researcher strives to be open to the identification of themes that emerge through analysis of the data and which are tested and compared in a process that identifies and develops themes to a point where they can be considered substantive. Of course, the knowledge and dispositions - brought to the study by the researcher and his/her inclination toward formal theories - shapes and influences his/her openness, but this is recognised and accounted for in constructivist grounded-theory.

In grounded-theory, the theories developed are grounded in the data but are typically linked to formal theory and concepts later in the study, with Kelle (2010) suggesting, that “the development of categories from empirical data is dependent of the availability of adequate theoretical concepts” (p. 206). The formal analytic concepts and theories used in the

latter stages of the grounded-theory process, used in this book, provide a theoretical explanation of the themes identified.

Constant Comparison

Grounded-theory is data driven, which results in a repetitive approach in which the analysis begins from the first generation of data instead of waiting until the end of the data generation process - as is common in other qualitative methodologies. The process of constantly comparing data against other data in this way maintains the principles of inductive logic, and continues until theoretical saturation occurs.

Memos

In grounded-theory, memos are used to facilitate shifting from the description of data (initial coding) toward thorough conceptual understanding, and the development, of a theory (Lempert, 2010). Memos are creative and unstructured notes made on emerging ideas, and are used as a type of coding summary that contributes toward the generation of theory. In memo writing, thoughts about data are captured and written as they are formed and in ways that are unrestricted by concerns with grammar and institutional conventions, while sensitizing the researcher to emerging categories and ensuing theory (Glaser, 1978).

Theoretical Sensitivity

Theoretical sensitivity is the ability to make abstractions from the data that it is grounded in. Glaser sees these abstractions as being discovered in the data but from a constructivist GT perspective, Charmaz (2006) argues that the researcher's experience, biography, and dispositions, influence this process. Later on in the grounded-theory process, theoretical integration links emerging theory developed from the substantive area to relevant literature, and typically to formal theory. In all the studies, conducted using grounded theory - in this book - it was at this point at which the literature was integrated, with the aim of showing discrepancies in current knowledge, to assist in understanding, and to provide depth to the emerging theory.

Theoretical Saturation

To promote theoretical saturation, the researcher needs to have theoretical sensitivity (Glaser, 1978). Strauss considers theory to be integrated at the axial coding stage, with verification becoming a component of theory development (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). However, Glaser feels that this undermines the inductive principles of GT, by forcing data rather than

allowing it to emerge. Charmaz' (2006) view is that theoretical saturation is a process of meaning-making, where sufficiency of theory is of greater concern. Morse (1995) suggests that it can be likened to a process of sense-making in which patterns and relationships are identified, and reflect the site of study. This is how it was achieved in the studies this book presents.

The Book

The book is divided into four parts: (1) Team Sports; (2) individual sports; (3) talent development; and, (4) indigenous youth sport.

The first Chapter in the Team Sport section, "Children's Reasons for Joining and Staying in a Football Club" is co-authored with Dr Christina Curry (University of Western Sydney). It reports on a study conducted in a suburban football club in Sydney that focused on the reasons why children aged nine to twelve years of age joined the club, and stayed in it. It highlights the importance of links between school, community, and the club, for the children involved, and for their desire to join and make their membership meaningful. The next two Chapters draw on studies that investigated the nature of the experience of girls, aged thirteen to sixteen, in basketball clubs in Australia (Melbourne) and Japan (Tokyo). Using the same research design facilitates the identification of the ways in which local cultural, social, and institutional, contexts shape experience and learning.

I conducted the Melbourne study with Professor Wataru Yasaki (Tokyo University of Science) conducting the study in Tokyo. Chapter 2 – "Australian Adolescent Girl's Engagement in High Performance Basketball," focuses on six girls - involved in a very high-level basketball team in Melbourne – in order to suggest how their deep engagement arises from the intensity of training and competing, and what being members of the team means to them. Chapter 3 – "The Influence of Cultural and Institutional Contexts on Participation and Learning for Japanese Girls in a School Basketball Club," draws on the study conducted in a school basketball club in Tokyo in order to highlight the influence of context on experience and learning, when compared to Western settings. In particular, it identifies the influence of the hidden, cultural curriculum of education in Japan.

Section two focuses on the individual sports of swimming, surf lifesaving, and surfboard-riding. Chapter 4 – "Happy Swimmers: Social Environment, Competition, and Children's Positive Experiences of Being

in a Sydney Swimming Club,” draws on positive psychology in order to focus on twenty children, aged nine to twelve years of age, and explore the reasons why they seem to be happy in the club. Chapter 5 offers another opportunity to highlight the importance of context in studies on children’s, and youth sport by drawing on a study I conducted in a French swimming club, entitled, “The Influence of Competition on French Children’s Reasons for Joining and Staying in a Swimming Club.”

This is followed by a study - co-authored with Mark Wieland - that inquired into how adolescent girls’ experiences of swimming in a competitive swimming club in Sydney are influenced by their membership in a surf club, and in school sport. “The Place of a Swimming Club in the Lives of Competitive Adolescent Female Swimmers: Overlapping ‘Communities of Practice’,” identifies a complementary relationship between membership in the surf club and the swimming club, while suggesting a lack of meaning for school sport.

“Community and Learning in the Nippers,” (Chapter 7) draws on a study conducted in a Victorian surf lifesaving club, and on my own experience of being a parent and “age-group manager” in a Sydney surf lifesaving club in order to add a personal perspective. It inquires into the learning that arises from long-term participation in the club for children, aged six to fourteen years of age, by drawing on the core concepts of Lave and Wenger (1991). Chapter 8 is entitled, “Young People’s Experiences of Being in a Surf-Riders Club: Pleasure or Discipline?” and is co-authored with Rikki Fitzsimons - a physical education teacher at Meriden School, Strathfield, Sydney. It focuses on two surfboard riders’ clubs and the experiences of participants aged ten to sixteen years of age. To my knowledge, it is the only study published on young people and *learning* in board riders’ clubs in Australasia.

Section three focuses on the development of talent among young people involved in football, basketball, and swimming. It examines the influence fathers have on their sons’ development of talent as they move forward into the investment phase (sixteen plus) within a structured talent development program. Chapter 9 is co-authored with Jarrad Denham. Chapter 10 - “The Interplay Between Schooling and Training for High Performance Basketball in a Specialist Sports School,” was co-authored with Darren Thomas. This Chapter looks into the interaction between schooling and training for high performance basketball, and its effect upon senior high school boys in a sports school. It is followed by a study conducted on the influence of the New South Wales (NSW) Public Schools Sport Association (PSSA) structure, on the development of talent in twelve-year old girls selected in the NSW team at the national School

Sports Australia swimming championships (Chapter 11). Despite the NSW PSSA being over a hundred years old, this is, surprisingly, the first study conducted on it - with data previously published in the *Asia Pacific Journal of Health, Sport, and Physical Education*.

Section four comprises two studies on Indigenous youth sport, including one conducted in Australia and the other in New Zealand. Chapter 12 reports on an ongoing Australian Research Council (ARC) funded study, on how elite level Indigenous Australian AFL (Australian football league) and NRL (national rugby league) players develop expertise, as a process of learning, over their lives. "Elite Indigenous AFL Players' Early Experiences of Sport and the Role of Games in Learning," focuses on the socio-cultural influences on the development of expertise during the sampling phase (six to twelve years) for eight AFL players, and the socio-cultural factors that facilitated the realization and development of talent. The study was conducted in collaboration with Professor John Evans (University of Technology Sydney).

Chapter 13 presents the final study reported on in this book, which was conducted in New Zealand by Phillip Borell and Professor Angus McFarlane, from the University of Canterbury. Entitled, "Dual Discourses of Sport and Education: An Effectual Blend for Māori Development," it draws on research conducted by McFarlane in order to identify key indicators of success by Māori young people in secondary schools (and beyond), to consider how health, wellbeing, and engagement, in sport can contribute to the overall "success" phenomenon. It then draws on a study by Borell to present narratives on the success of two Māori sporting icons - both footballers from different eras who were criticized for betraying their country by changing codes from rugby union in New Zealand to playing rugby league in the UK, and for playing rugby league for Australia against New Zealand. It suggests how their success arose from a strong cultural identity, taking ownership of their respective abilities as sportsmen, and discerningly seeking out best opportunities for themselves.

PART I:
TEAM SPORTS

CHAPTER ONE

CHILDREN'S REASONS FOR JOINING AND STAYING IN A FOOTBALL CLUB

WITH CHRISTINA CURRY

Although it is by no means an automatic outcome, participation in appropriate sports clubs can make an important and positive contribution to the wellbeing of children *and* make positive contributions toward their physical, emotional, social, and personal development. There is, thus, good reason for encouraging them to join sports clubs and in supporting them throughout the duration of their membership in order that they may remain in them, and for acquiring an understanding of how this might be achieved. Following on from some other studies that have taken a positive approach (see, Light, Harvey & Mermmert, 2013), this chapter reports on a study that inquired into the reasons why children, aged nine to twelve years of age, joined and stayed in a football (soccer) club. Conducted at a Sydney football club, it inquired into the socio-cultural factors that shaped the desire of such children to join their local football club and the main factors that encouraged them to stay in it, with a focus on the nature of experience.

Methodology

The study adopted a constructivist grounded-theory methodology (Charmaz, 2006) in order to gain an understanding of meanings, and how they were socially shaped. This involved the use of a questionnaire and three rounds of interviews used to identify emerging theories that were tested in subsequent rounds of data-generation through comparing and contrasting in order to arrive at a number of strong themes grounded in the data. In the later stages of the process we drew on Lave and Wenger's (1991) concepts of 'legitimate peripheral participation,' 'situated learning,' and 'communities of practice' to complete the analysis.

The Participants and the Site

This study focused on children from nine years to twelve years of age due to this being a significant period for the development of a positive association with sport over the final three to four years of primary school; one that precedes a significant decrease in junior sport participation from the age of thirteen (Côté & Hay, 2002). The club - referred to here as the Sydney Football Club (SFC) - was situated in a multicultural area in the south-east region of Sydney comprising one hundred and eighty members spread across fifteen teams with sixty aged between nine and twelve years of age, within which fifteen were female and forty-five were male.

Data Generation

Data was generated using a questionnaire distributed among all children in the club, aged nine to twelve years, which was analysed and used to inform the first round of interview questions in the grounded-theory process. The three semi-structured interviews that followed the questionnaire were conducted with twenty children, chosen at random from those whose parents agreed to their participation in the study. One single interview was also conducted with each of the three coaches and eight parents, to provide an outside perspective and some triangulation for the study.

The Questionnaire.

A twenty-five item Likert-scale questionnaire was divided into three sections that focused on: (1) The players' background in sport; (2) their reasons for joining the club; and, (3) their experiences of being in the club. Sixty questionnaires were distributed with a one hundred percent (60) response. Of the sixty participants who completed the questionnaire, thirty-eight had been in the club for three or more years, twenty for two years or more, and three for one year or less.

Interviews

Twenty players were chosen at random from those whose parents agreed to give permission for them to participate in the study. Three rounds of semi-structured interviews, each a duration of twenty to forty minutes, were conducted on a one-on-one basis over a twelve-week period with analysis of each round informing the process of identifying and testing emerging-theory - leading to the identification of substantive-theory. All interviews were conducted before or after training at the club, at times that

suited the participants. Of the twenty participants interviewed, there were five nine-year olds (two male and three female), five ten year olds (three male & two female), and five eleven year olds - who were all male - and five twelve year olds who were also all male. Single interviews were also conducted with three coaches and eight parents, but this Chapter focuses more on the interviews conducted with the players. The first round of interviews, with the players, focused on their reasons for joining the club *and* on factors that might have influenced their decision to join, with the other two focused on their experiences of being in the club and their experiences of, and attitude toward, competition.

Data analysis

Following a constructivist grounded-theory approach (Charmaz, 2006), analysis and data generation were integrated in an ongoing process beginning with the questionnaire. Data were reduced by close reading - and re-reading - of the interview transcripts, in order to identify, and code, chunks of the transcripts. The ensuing use of a constant comparative approach led to the identification of emerging themes, and ideas, that were organised into major categories. Theoretical integration was used at this point to link emerging theory to the analytic concepts of Lave and Wenger (1991). All names of people, the clubs, and locations, referred to in this study are pseudonyms used to protect the anonymity of the participants.

Results

Why They Wanted to Join the Club

In order of importance - from most important to least important - the main factors shaping the children's desire to join the club were: (1) Family influence; (2) desire to extend positive early experiences of participation; and, (3) peer encouragement. They are discussed below.

Family Influence

Most of the children in this study had exposure to the culture of football through their families from a very early age. Their decision to join the club appeared to be a seamless transition from peripheral involvement toward increasingly mature participation that began with joining a team in the club, and developing each year (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Many fathers of the children in the study had played football, or were still playing at the time of the study, with many participants recalling watching dad play