The Sexual Politics of Australian Football:

Social constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence

by

Shawna Marks

Thesis
Submitted to Flinders University
for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

College of Education, Psychology and Social Work

4 March 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores masculinity, heterosexuality, and sexual violence in the context of amateur and semi-professional Australian football. It is a departure from the dominant focus on elite, celebrity Australian footballers. This research actively centred women's sexual experiences with male Australian footballers, to explore masculinity, and sexual violence. Women's experiences are privileged to explore constructions of masculinity, sexuality, and sexual violence in conjunction with male footballers, and Australian football communities. In-depth, semi-structured, participant-led interviews with 10 women were supplemented by quantitative and qualitative survey responses completed by 135 current and former male Australian footballers. This data allowed for examination of the nuances present in constructions of masculinity in the context of amateur football and how this influences sexual relationships and sexual violence. The concept of sexual politics was used to examine how gender is contested and subverted in ways that make gendered power relations and gendered social problems, like sexual violence, appear normal, natural, and inevitable. There is currently a progressive wave occurring in sport, including Australian football, focused on increasing women's professional opportunities, and using sport as a vehicle for sexual violence prevention. This makes the nuanced ways that masculinity, heterosexuality, and sexual violence are constructed in Australian football communities especially relevant for exploration.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and to the best of my knowledge and belief, does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Shawna Marks
17 December 2020

The thesis is dedicated to Dr. Heather Brook

12/09/1964 – 09/08/2019

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis represents the culmination of an intellectual journey but even more than that - an exercise in persistence. In many ways, this thesis is about resistance - resisting that sexual violence is normal and acceptable, despite our cultural messaging telling us otherwise. It is impossible to resist or persist alone. There are so many people who helped me to survive this PhD process, and even better, a few who helped me to thrive.

The people who participated in this study, especially the women who were so vulnerable and giving in sharing their stories with me, represent resistance. We can never resist violence if we do not first recognise it. The women who I was lucky to speak with shared such rich accounts of how violence is able to thrive in our communities. These stories were more often than not, both heartbreaking and inspiring. These women often stood alone, bravely naming and calling out violence when nobody else, not even those close to them, wanted to listen. I am grateful for the opportunity to listen and the privilege to tell these stories. I hope I have done them justice.

Throughout my academic journey I have been supervised by kind, generous, community-minded academics, Dr. Heather Brook, Dr. Dee Michell, Emeritus Professor Chris Beasley, Professor Murray Drummond, Professor Sarah Wendt, and Dr. Deb Agnew. Their commitment and approach to research has informed my own. Each researcher is entirely different, except for their dedication to research and the people it impacts. Thank you to my current supervision team, Murray, Sarah, and Deb for getting me to this point. For a while it seemed like I would never make it to the finish line and your support and stability made the all the difference.

Murray, thank you for unfailing belief in me and your kind words when I needed it most. It means so much to have you in my corner.

Sarah, I knew I wanted you to join the supervision team as soon as you asked me to tell you how my research was feminist. Thank you for your diligence in making sure this project was the best feminist work it could be.

Deb, thank you for casting a keen eye over my work and for your attention to detail and research ethics. Your feedback made me think about things I may not have considered otherwise.

I survived and thrived through this PhD because of my friends and family, and professional help. It's been a rough journey - doing sexual violence research as a survivor takes an emotional toll. I have also faced a lot of hostility and violence throughout this project, in academia and elsewhere. I couldn't have managed if I didn't have loved ones to share with, and two incredible therapists who helped me cope. Katy Perisic and Colleen Dibiamaka provided expert counselling, kindness, and support that helped me make it through the most difficult periods of the PhD. Emotional wellbeing should be a key consideration for PhD students, especially for survivor researchers, but it is not.

My support network is large, thanks to my big and boisterous family, and my loving friends, who are family too. To my mum and dad, Tanya and Tim, Grandma, my siblings, Maddi, Keghan, Jayden, Tenae, Dylan, Jake, Brandon and Kieran, Maddie, Zack, and Angus, and my niblings, Blaize, Kara, Zakai, and Henry – our family is magic, it is resistance, and it is love. We make our own rules about what constitutes family. There is always enough to love to give and share, we never run out, everyone is welcome. This passionate, inclusive, and frankly, chaotic background provided a welcome distraction from hardest parts of this PhD journey. Thank you, all of you, for always being proud of me, even though you had no idea what I was talking about most of the time.

My friends provided much needed support, love, distraction, validation, and solidarity. I have grown up so much during the time I have undertaken this PhD, mostly thanks to them. There are a few in particular who helped me through, held me accountable, and encouraged me to keep plodding along. I don't think I could have finished my PhD without you.

Roxy, how can I begin to thank you. Thank you for sharing every moment of this PhD with me for the last two years. If nothing else, I am grateful to this PhD for bringing us together and helping us to be so close, we practically live in each other's pocket. I am so happy that we have managed to share every part of our lives together, even our office space and our house, and emerged stronger than ever. I am so excited to see how much more we can grow together, and to see you finish your PhD too.

Hayley, thank you for keeping me in constant supply of snuggles, silliness, and absolute love. Your love, support, and encouragement has helped me through so many dark and

scary times. Thank you for showing me that it's okay to share, need help, and accept love. You have so much love to give and I know that I am lucky to receive it.

Caity, I feel so lucky to have been your friend for 12 years and counting. Your calming and loving presence shines through always, whether our connection happens through a phone call or you diagnosing the ways that this PhD stress has showed up in my body. Thank you for sharing your dogs with me, giving me a place to live when I needed it most, and showing up every day to help me through. You are healing, you are love, and I am privileged to have you by my side.

Kolinda, thank you for 14 years of friendship and counting. I know that we will grow old together even though you are obsessed with staying young. I am so grateful for the times we got to escape and explore faraway places. Those times were so rejuvenating and insightful – and undoubtedly helped me make the pivotal decisions that got me to this point. Ove ya bby.

Thank you also to Josephine, Kathomi, Chelsey, Asha, and Caleb for our long fruitful, comforting and supportive chats, and to Nyree, Kristi, and Eleni for the support, laughter, and check ins.

The greatest privilege of doing a PhD is cultivating relationships and community with people who are passionate, motivated, and smart, especially other PhD students. I served as a conference organiser and representative for Gender Studies PhDs throughout my candidature, and this has meant that I have connected with so many incredible scholars and humans. To the squad, Aisha, Amy, Angelica, Ash, Bridget, Chloe, Kathy, Kristi, Lizzie, Lizzy, Roxy, Sarah, Simone, everyone else who has popped in and out, non-squad PhD colleagues, Emma, Shae, and Shoshannah, and all of my various office mates – I am so thankful to have met you all and cultivated community with you. You are all inspiring and I am grateful to have your friendship.

My collegiate community is much broader than PhD students, of course. I'm thankful to have learnt from the many researchers I have crossed paths with, conversed with, and served with on committees, especially the Australian Women's and Gender Studies Association executive and the conference organisation committees for the South Australian Postgraduate and Early Career Researcher Gender, Sex, and Sexuality conference. I have been fortunate to meet many wonderful feminist colleagues, inside and

never have embarked on this PhD, or stuck it out, if it wasn't for Heather's encouragement. This thesis is dedicated to her.

STUDENT PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Peer- reviewed publications:

Marks, S. (2019). "Cinderella at the (Foot)ball: Representations of "WAGs" in Australian rules football." Continuum 33(4).

Marks, S. (2018). 'Bros Before Hoes': Violence against women in the name of 'bromosociality'. Bonds of Brotherhood in Sons of Anarchy: Essays on Masculinity in the FX Series. S. Fanetti. Jefferson, McFarland: 9-23.

Marks, S. (2018). "Explaining 'Stealthing' and the conversation about rape that we need to have." Writing From Below 3(2): online.

Walker, A., Wisdom, T., Marks, S., Pearce, S., and Challans, B. (2018). "To Speak and/as Connect – Beyond the Silencing of Violence, and the Violence that is Silence." Writing From Below 3(2): online.

Conference papers:

Browne, J. and Marks, S. (2016). Fatherhood From Noun to Verb: (Trans)forming the Reluctant Father in Children's Animated Film, 2000-2016. Centre for Research on Men and Masculinities: Future of Fatherhood. Wollongong, Australia.

Marks, S. (2019). Where Did the Feminists Go? Tracking Shifts Away from Feminist Thinking in Research on Sport, Masculinity and Sexual Violence. South Australian Gender, Sex and Sexualities Conference for Postgraduate and Early Career Researchers. Adelaide, Australia.

Marks, S. (2018). Emotional Wellbeing of Novice Researchers in PhD projects on Sensitive Topics. The Australian Sociological Association. Melbourne, Australia.

Marks, S. (2018). How Not to Manage the Emotional Wellbeing of Novice Researchers in a PhD Project on Sexual Violence. Australian Women's and Gender Studies Association. Melbourne, Australia.

Marks, S. (2018). Navigating Emotional Wellbeing and Sensitive Topics as a Novice Researcher. South Australian Gender, Sex and Sexualities Conference for Postgraduate and Early Career Researchers. Adelaide, Australia.

Marks, S. (2017). Explaining 'Stealthing' and the Conversation About Rape That We Need to Have. South Australian Gender, Sex and Sexualities Conference for Postgraduate and Early Career Researchers. Adelaide, Australia.

Marks, S. (2016). Breaking the "Code of Silence": Responses to a Young Female Researcher Infiltrating Male-dominated Sporting Cultures. <u>Australian Women's and Gender Studies Association</u>. Brisbane, Australia.

Marks, S. (2016). Consent & Sexual Ethics: Theory in Practice. <u>Engaging with a Shift to the Empirical in Feminist Scholarship</u>. Sydney, Australia.

Marks, S. (2015). Cinderella at the (Foot)ball: Constructing the 'Imaginary Body' of the AFL 'WAG'. <u>International Network for Sexual Ethics and Politics.</u> Dunkirk, France.

Marks, S. (2015). Transgressing the 'Imaginary Body' of the 'WAG': News Media Representations of Tania Hird During the 'Essendon Supplements Saga'. <u>North American Society for the Sociology of Sport.</u> Santa Fe, USA.

Marks, S. (2015). Playing the 'Good Wife': The Boundaries of Feminine Performance for Football Wives and Girlfriends. <u>Gender Postgraduate Network.</u> Adelaide, Australia.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This thesis critically explores the sexual politics of Australian football through an examination of how masculinity, sex, and sexual violence are socially constructed in the context of amateur and semi-professional (pre-elite) Australian football. This research was designed to actively engage with existing research on masculinity, sex, and sexual violence in the Australian football context; however, it aimed to address two notable gaps in the scholarship. First, there is a lack of qualitative data exploring women's sexual experiences with male Australian footballers and very little existing research focuses on pre-elite Australian footballers. Previously, media debates about Australian football and sexual violence presented allegations of violence as 'sex scandals', in the context of increasing interest in elite Australian footballers as celebrities (Cover 2015; Waterhouse-Watson 2009, 2012a). The academic research that responded to these media debates was then limited in this context and was concerned with reporting on sport, gender, and sexual violence, and legal cases (Cover 2015; Dimitrov 2008; Nurka 2013; Philadelphoff-Puren 2004; Toffoletti 2007; Waterhouse-Watson 2009, 2011, 2012a). Second, there is renewed interest in sport and gender due to substantial efforts to improve women's participation and professional opportunities in sport which means that a re-examination of gender and sexual violence in sport is timely (McLachlan 2019; Toffoletti and Palmer 2019). This present context, in conjunction with wider renewed interest in feminism and gendered issues, such as sexual violence via #MeToo movement, further foregrounds the significance of the research presented in this thesis (Banet-Weiser 2018; Fileborn and Loney-Howes 2019).

The theoretical framework of sexual politics, used in this thesis offers a feminist tool for examining how gender is contested in the context of Australian football and the subversive potential for gender relations in this space (Franzway 2016; Franzway et al. 2019). More specifically, sexual politics offers a lens for understanding how constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence overlap and interact to make visible the conditions that allow sexual violence to occur and remain pervasive (Tuana 2006). Sexual politics explicitly seeks to examine gender outside of binary approaches which allows exploration of the nuanced ways that gender and gendered power are contested. This process of contestation is significant in the context of the research setting for this thesis because Australian football is linked to broader cultural constructions of gender (Agnew and

Drummond 2015; McNeill 2008; Waitt and Clifton 2015; Wedgwood 2008). In this way, the present research on masculinity, sex, and sexual violence in pre-elite Australian football is significant because this space can be viewed as an extension of broader Australian culture. This view of Australian football is productive because it does not seek to problematise the sport or surrounding communities and culture by positioning it as a unique outlier, as previous research has done (McCray 2015). Instead, the value of this research setting is in its ordinariness, as a space where gendered conditions appear normal or neutral and are subsequently taken-for-granted as 'natural'. Consistent with a sexual politics approach, pre-elite Australian football is positioned in this research as a microcosm where gender relations may be heightened or highlighted and opportunities for subversion or resistance might subsequently be made more obvious (O'Neill 2015, 2018).

The importance of exploring sexual politics in Australian football is in response to the significance of the sport as an Australian cultural pastime, strongly associated with national identity and pride, and constructions of idealised masculinity (Tonts 2005; Waitt and Clifton 2015). Participation in Australian football is considered an important rite of passage for young Australian men and is deeply connected to social constructions of Australian masculinity that are perpetuated across class and racial bounds (Bryson 1987; Burgess et al. 2003; Drummond 2002, 2003; Kearney 2012). For example, in South Australia where this study is located, a state of 1.69 million people, 30,000 men play Australian football at the amateur level (ABS 2017; Smith 2017). Due to the social importance of Australian football and subsequent significant participation rates, other researchers and violence prevention practitioners have recognised the positive potential of Australian football for addressing sexual violence (Corboz 2013; Corboz et al. 2016 ; Dyson and Corboz 2016; Dyson and Grzelinkska 2010; Hamilton et al. 2019).

A large body of scholarship has argued that male athletes hold problematic views about women and sexual practice, such as subscription to rape myths, that increase the likelihood of endorsing or committing sexual offences (Benedict and Klein 1997; Benedict 1997; Boeringer 1996, 1999; Burt 1980; Crosset et al. 1996; Crosset 1999; Forbes et al. 2006; Koss and Gaines 1993; Koss and Cleveland 1996; McCray 2015; McMahon 2007, 2010, 2015; Melnick 1992; Moynihan and Banyard 2008; Moynihan et al. 2010; Murnen and Kohlman 2007; Sawyer et al. 2002). This research was foundational in the establishment of the subdisciplines, men and masculinity studies and the sociology of sport and gender, and continues to be influential. Much of the research on masculinity, sport and sexual violence argues that male peer support can increase the likelihood of

sexual violence because normalisation of the sexual objectification of women is common in these settings (Curry 1991,1998; Flood and Dyson 2007; Forbes et al. 2006; Godenzi et al. 2001; Kane and Disch 1993; Messner and Sabo 1994; Murnen and Kohlman 2007; Palmer 2011; Pringle and Hickey 2010). The popularity of sport amongst men in Australia, emphasis on team bonding, and importance of masculinity in work on sport and violence, means that Australian football represents a potential critical site for engaging men in violence prevention.

Violence prevention in Australian football became a particular focus following highly publicised sexual violence allegations against players from both major Australian football codes (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). Australian footballers and organising bodies were scrutinised for instances of sexism and gendered violence that were seen to be largely accepted as part of a football 'culture' (Dimitrov 2008; Toffoletti 2007; Waterhouse-Watson 2012, 2013a; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011). In response to unprecedented scrutiny, the organising bodies for both dominant football codes, rugby (the National Rugby League) and Australian Football League (the Australian Football League), instituted policies and related training programs to address sexism and sexual violence through the late 2000s (Dyson 2007; Dyson and Flood 2008; Hamilton et al. 2019; Liston et al. 2017; Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). The organising body for elite Australian football, (AFL), has since collaborated with prominent anti-violence organisations such as White Ribbon and Our Watch to raise awareness about violence prevention (Hamilton et al. 2019; Liston et al. 2017). Despite these efforts, allegations of sexual violence involving male Australian footballers have persisted and women participants in the sport, including players, have experienced sexist and violent treatment by others in the football community (Marks 2019; Toffoletti 2007; Waterhouse-Watson 2009, 2013a).

More recently, the economic potential of women's involvement and broader progressive wave in sport has meant that organisations such as the Australian Football League (AFL) made concerted efforts to increase women's participation as fans and players (Mewett and Toffoletti 2012; McLachlan 2019; Toffoletti and Palmer 2019). The AFL boasts the highest percentage of female attendees at matches across all Australian sports, and the national women's league has enjoyed several seasons (Mewett and Toffoletti 2012). However, women athletes have consistently complained that they are unfairly criticised and unsupported, relative to the elite men's contest (Pavlidis 2020). Elite women Australian footballers have a shorter season, are paid significantly less than male players, have been critiqued for labour organising and highlighting sexist treatment, and were

infantilised as part of discriminatory action to bar trans woman athlete, Hannah Mouncey, from elite competition (Kemble 2019; Marks 2019; Pavlidis 2020; Sherwood et al. 2019; Storr 2020; Willson et al. 2018). These instances suggest that increased women's participation, while positive, will not make Australian football an inherently more inclusive or safe space for women. In particular, the sexualisation of women participants in Australian football, including instances of sexual violence, further highlight that violence continues to be pervasive in this context and that, as stated above, women's increased participation has not curbed it (Marks 2019).

Women's voices were purposefully centred in this project to elevate the empirical and epistemological value of their stories and address a notable gap in academic literature and media on Australian football, gender, sex, and sexual violence. Despite significant media attention and subsequent academic analysis on sexual violence involving male Australian footballers, research has not spoken directly to women about their sexual relationships and experiences with male footballers, including sexually violent experiences. The dearth of qualitative accounts of women's experiences is notable in the context of significant feminist research on gender, violence, and Australian football (Baird 2009; Corboz et al. 2016 ; Cover 2015; Dimitrov 2008; Flood and Dyson 2007; Marks 2019; Mewett and Toffoletti 2008; Nurka 2013; Palmer 2011; Philadelphoff-Puren 2004; Toffoletti 2007; Waterhouse-Watson 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012a, 2013a, 2016, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c, 2019d). This research, while valuable, often speaks about women rather than to them, with the noteworthy exception of work on women fans (Mewett and Toffoletti 2008) and my published work, based on an interview from the present research (Marks 2018). This thesis, then, aims to re-assert the importance of women's direct contributions to academic research on gender, sex, and sexual violence by centring their experiences, in conjunction with men's responses to a survey and the existing extensive literature, to document the nuanced ways in which gender is contested in the context of pre-elite Australian football.

The particular focus on pre-elite footballers in this thesis is a response to research that has previously focused on elite players (Albury et al. 2011; Baird 2009; Cover 2012, 2013, 2015; Dimitrov 2008; Hirsch 2017; Lonie and Toffoletti 2012; Nurka 2013; Toffoletti 2007; Waterhouse-Watson 2009, 2011, 2012a, 2013a; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011; Watson 2014). There is some scholarship on the social construction of masculinity in amateur football (Waitt and Clifton 2015). However, research on sexual violence involving pre-elite footballers is limited since cases involving these men do not attract significant

media attention (Cover 2015; Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). Additionally, focus on pre-elite players detracts from arguments which link sexual violence to celebrity status, including that male footballers are vulnerable to 'predatory groupies' (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). Instead, this thesis examines how pre-elite male footballers are constructed by communities, predominantly through the lens of women's experiences. This broad approach seeks to examine the connection between the construction of masculinity in the context of Australian football and sexual violence, rather than positioning Australian football as a unique space where violence occurs or dismissing violence altogether.

A re-examination of the connections between constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence in the context of Australian football is significant and timely. This research has been conducted during progressive change in public awareness and interest in two key issues: sexual violence and women in sport. During the period of data collection, analysis and discussion of this thesis, the #MeToo movement drew attention to the breadth and insidiousness of sexual violence (Fileborn and Phillips 2019), and major Australian sport organisations introduced historic professional women's leagues (McLachlan 2019). Recent changes in sport and the spotlight on sexual violence provide a timely context for revisiting connections between sport, masculinity and sexual violence that centre women's experiences. This context and inclusion of women's stories might highlight new approaches to violence prevention that were not previously visible.

Aims

This thesis aims to explore how masculinity, sex, and sexual violence are constructed within the context of Australian football. This aim is situated within the broader goal of examining norms that proliferate within Australian football as an extension of broader gendered social norms. The project uses a sexual politics theoretical framework to explore gendered norms that affect the construction of sexual violence outside of binary approaches to gender. This approach allows for exploration of nuances that permit sexual violence to be normalised in and by communities. This exploration takes place using the following guiding research questions:

1. How is masculinity, sex and sexual violence constructed in the context of non-elite Australian football?
2. What are women's experiences of sex with Australian non-elite footballers?

3. How can pre-elite Australian football contribute to further understanding sexual violence in the broader Australian context?

Chapter outlines

Chapter Two is a critical literature review of scholarship on sport, masculinity, and sexual violence. It considers the major perspectives in subdisciplines, such as the sociology of sport and gender, and critical studies of men and masculinity. The literature review tracks how sport and masculinity have been problematised and linked to sexual violence, effectively constructing sport as a unique site for the proliferation of sexual violence. Major arguments and theoretical positioning are contextualised alongside key debates within Australian sport relevant to sexual violence, sex, and masculinity. The key issues of the sexual desirability of male footballers, 'groupie' culture, and sexual violence responses are crucial for contextualising the findings of this thesis.

Chapter Three explains the methodological approach to the research including methods, epistemology, and positionality. This chapter sets out all facets of the research design and includes discussion of their limitations. Feminism is explored and established in the context of the research design. The major theoretical positioning, sexual politics, is explained. Sexual politics informed analysis of the contested nature of the research process and outcomes.

Chapter Four is the first findings chapter and is focused on constructions of masculinity including how women talk about masculinity in the context of Australian football. Women discussed how male footballers were revered by communities and the mechanisms that informed this reverence. Specifically, women discussed the significance of the 'footy trip' as a vehicle for understanding idealised masculinity and the primacy of men's peer relationships. Women constructed male footballers' masculinity as homogeneous, explained through the 'footy trip' where it was acceptable for groups of male footballers' to behave in destructive and sometimes violent ways. Men surveyed also problematised homogeneous constructions of male footballers, arguing that associated generalisations were unfair or inaccurate. The primacy of collective understandings of male footballers' masculinity is important because of the emphasis placed on peer groups in academic literature, specifically that groups of men can be used to encourage violence prevention.

Chapter Five presents findings from interviews and survey responses relevant to the construction of sex. This chapter focuses on sexual desirability and consent, and the relationship between these overarching concepts. Women explained that the construction of male footballers as particularly sexually desirable informed the construction of sexual consent as able to be implied. This was because 'implied consent' was linked to the sexual entitlement associated with the presumption that male footballers were desirable to all women. Conversely, men's constructed consent through a legal framework and distanced themselves from responsibility for ensuring that sex was respectful. Women suggested focusing on mutual pleasure and respect could be more useful for informing sexual decision making.

Chapter Six discusses findings on the construction of sexual violence, including women's experiences of sexual violence and their responses to these experiences. Women explained that many instances of sexual violence were minimised or dismissed by themselves and community members. Minimisation occurred because of narrow constructions of what constitutes sexual violence and because these constructions were informed by 'rape myths'. Rape myths were in turn informed by legal and media narratives about who commits sexual violence, who experiences it, and the context in which it occurs. Legal narratives were found to dominate much of the construction of sexual violence by women, men, and communities.

Women's suggestions for violence prevention, specifically strategies for accountability and cultural change, are presented in *Chapter Seven*. Accountability measures were suggested to redress the unequal gendered imbalance in responsibility for sexual violence. Women were held accountable for preventing sexual violence, especially involving male footballers. Male footballers' status as community heroes meant that they were exempt from accountability for sexual violence, more than other men. Women also suggested ways to institute cultural change, such as awareness raising and education. These strategies relied on individual male football leaders to deliver violence prevention messaging, utilising male footballers' respected position for social good.

Chapter Eight presents a discussion of key findings, contextualised within the lens of sexual politics. This chapter shows how constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence overlap and consume each other to reveal dominant contestations of gender and key points of subversion that can be used to inform violence prevention. Based upon these findings, this chapter discusses the efficacy of using Australian football as a site for

violence prevention, using women's stories to evaluate points of contention in key literature.

The final chapter, *Chapter Nine*, concludes the thesis by discussing key implications arising from the research for violence prevention, including the usefulness of sexual politics as a framework for engaging with gender in masculinised sites such as Australian football.

CHAPTER TWO: SPORT, MASCULINITY, SEX, AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

This section synthesises existing literature on sport, masculinity, sex, and sexual violence to provide an overview of the scholarly context that this thesis sits in. The subdisciplines that inform much of this work, critical studies on men and masculinity and the sociology of sport and gender, produce and connect with a range of theory, including feminist theories. Each discipline had strong early connections to feminist thinking which were diminished over time. The focus of research on sport, masculinity, and sexual violence has also shifted to focus on the prevalence of sexual violence committed by male athletes, violence as 'sex scandals', and the potential use of sport as a vehicle for violence prevention. These shifts in focus demonstrate a need to examine research on masculinity, sex and sexuality, and sexual violence in the context of sport. By drawing this research together, this section highlights the necessary feminist and scholarly contributions of this thesis and the legacy that it draws on.

Sport and masculinity

The sociology of sport and gender, and critical studies of men and masculinities both emerged in the early 1990s and offered new perspectives for thinking about the relationship between masculinity, sport, and sex. Studies on sport and masculinities were borne out of a long tradition of feminist work in these spaces, which was primarily concerned with women's exclusion from male-dominated sporting spaces and the role of sport in maintaining male dominance (Bryson 1987; Hess 2000; Nelson 1994; Toffoletti and Mewett 2012). Early research considered how women's participation in sport, whether as active participants or spectators, was positioned as less legitimate than men's participation in order to maintain sport as a male preserve (Bryson 1987). This trend can be observed throughout recent research on women and sport, such as trivialising female fans or athletes by sexualising them (Mewett and Toffoletti 2012; Mewett and Toffoletti 2008; Thorpe et al. 2017; Toffoletti 2016, 2017). This feminist research into women's participation in sport framed early work on sport and masculinity, which was initially concerned with sexism, violence against women, and male dominance (Curry 1991, 1998; McKay, Melnick 1992, Messner 1990, 2002, 2010; Messner et al. 2000; Messner and Sabo 1994; Messner and Stevens 2002).

Sporting organisations represent the best and worst aspects of Australian culture in that they foster a strong sense of community pride, responsibility and leadership. At the same time, they can also be incubators for problematic attitudes towards women that are present in broader Australian society (Dyson and Grzelinkska 2010; Flood and Dyson 2007; Spaaij et al. 2014; Toffoletti 2007). Researchers argue that the importance of sport as a socialising institution, participation in sport as a rite of passage, and the capacity for sport to influence communities, makes it an ideal site for violence prevention initiatives that aim to engage men and the broader community (Dyson 2009; Dyson and Flood 2008; Dyson and Grzelinkska 2010; Dyson et al. 2011; Flood and Dyson 2007; Grzelinska et al. 2014; Melton 2015; Sherry et al. 2015; Spaaij et al. 2014).

An examination of attitudes, ideas and behaviours relating to sport within a feminist social constructionist framework positions masculinity and related concepts as socially constructed and therefore open to change. A feminist framework centres gender as a category for analysis and understands gender as political. This project focused on the social construction of masculinity and heterosexuality in amateur Australian football to understand how sexual violence is experienced and understood. Specifically, the study engaged with the theoretical lens of sexual politics, which allows for recognition of gender "as fluid and relational…and continually contested" (Franzway 2016, 19). Other feminist scholars who utilise a sexual politics lens describe the sites of their research as spaces where sex can be seen as "not as a deviation or departure from current social conventions but as an extension and acceleration of existing cultural norms" (O'Neill, 2018, 7, original emphasis).

Sport and masculinities

Both sport and masculinities disciplines were initially built on feminist work and utilised feminist frameworks. Pioneers in sport and masculinity research, Michael Messner and Donald Sabo, acknowledged the long history of feminist work that had informed their thinking and advocated for feminist frameworks to underpin work on the sociology of sport and gender, and men and masculinities (McKay et al. 2000; Messner 1990; Messner and Sabo 1994). Raewyn Connell's influential theory, hegemonic masculinity, emerged at a similar time and influenced much of the early work on men and masculinities and the sociology of sport and gender (Connell 1987, 2005; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005;

Demetriou 2001; Wedgwood 2009). Hegemonic masculinity is a feminist theory built on key concepts such as patriarchy and hegemony and appealed to many thinkers who questioned masculinity, male dominance and the marginalisation of women in sporting spaces (Bartholomaeus 2011; Curry 1991, 1998; McKay et al. 2000; Melnick 1992; Messner 1990, 2002, 2010; Messner and Sabo 1994; Messner and Stevens 2002; Pringle 2005; Pringle and Hickey 2010; Steinfeldt et al. 2011; Wellard 2002). However, there has been a marked departure from explicit feminist framing in favour of frameworks that depoliticise gender, such as profeminist scholarship (Waling 2018).

Profeminist work often draws on feminist scholarship but does not sufficiently engage with key feminist questions such as the exercise of power, gender power relations (Waling 2018), or how gender functions at a cultural and societal level (Beasley 2013, 2015; O'Neill 2015; Waling 2018). Work has instead moved towards large quantitative studies aimed at collecting empirical data about specific problems related to gender and sexuality, such as sexual assault perpetration or homophobia levels (Crosset 1999; Crosset et al. 1996; de Boise 2015; McCray 2015). Quantitative data is important in this space to help understand prevalence and incidence; however, it cannot be at the expense of sidelining consideration of how gender and sexual politics operate within sporting cultures and structures (Anderson 2009, 2011; Anderson et al. 2012; Anderson and McCormack 2016; Crosset et al. 1996; Crosset 1999; de Boise 2015; McCray 2015; O'Neill 2015). Furthermore, much of this empirical work has focused on collegiate settings, perhaps due to easy access to research subjects, but position college athletics as unique settings for sexual violence perpetration, rather than viewing these institutions as a microcosm of broader social problems (Boeringer 1996, 1999; Crosset et al. 1996; Crosset 1999; Frintner and Rubinson 1993; Koss and Gaines 1993; Koss and Cleveland 1996; McCray 2015; Murnen and Kohlman 2007). Crosset (1999) has argued that sociological analyses of sport and sexual violence should move away from feminist frameworks such as rape culture in favour of analyses of prevalence through new institutionalism lens. McCray (2015) has built on this argument but has advocated for a feminist institutionalism to progress discussions about sexual violence and intercollegiate sport. This approach includes discussions of power and privilege but does not engage with broader social structures to understand how sexual violence is socially constructed rather than culturally specific to college sport. Universities and sporting organisations must be acknowledged as cultural institutions that can perpetuate damaging social norms but can also be utilised for violence prevention efforts that engage broader communities (Dyson 2009; Dyson and Grzelinkska 2010; Grzelinska et al. 2011, 2014; Sherry et al. 2015).

The significant departure from feminist theory and depoliticising of gender in men and masculinities and the sociology of sport and gender can be demonstrated through the emergence of "new" masculinities theories that centre men's experiences and do not engage with feminist theory or analysis of sexual politics, such as Inclusive Masculinity (Anderson 2009, 2011; Anderson and McCormack 2016; de Boise 2015; O'Neill 2015). Inclusive Masculinity is based on empirical work on sport, masculinities and homophobia and is underpinned by the secondary concept of homohysteria (Anderson 2009; Anderson and McCormack 2016). Homohysteria refers to a point of high anxiety about homosexuality, explained through examples of particular social moments, like the HIV/AIDs epidemic, when panic about homosexuality was high (Anderson 2009). Anderson argues that in times of low homohysteria, homophobia is reduced, resulting in men being able to be more affectionate with each other, which Anderson reads as a lack of homophobia (Anderson 2009; de Boise 2015). This theory has been subject to significant critique due to methodological and conceptual slippages (de Boise 2015; O'Neill 2015). Inclusive Masculinity has been criticised for being oversimplified, lacking reflexivity, overreliance on university student populations as research subjects, and being derivative of Hegemonic Masculinity without offering a potential solution to many of the valid critiques of the theory, such as essentialism (de Boise 2015; Waling 2018). Inclusive Masculinity has also been criticised for its rejection of feminist theory, lack of analysis of sexual politics, and exclusion of analysis of lesbian women and queer and bisexual people in its engagement with homophobia (O'Neill 2015). Inclusive Masculinity represents an active rejection of feminist work, as it has been established in opposition to feminist work in sport and masculinities scholarship (O'Neill 2015; Waling 2018). The rejection of feminist frameworks in work on sport and masculinities does not allow for adequate exploration of potential for culture change and increased possibilities for inclusivity, since key questions of power and privilege are left unexplored (Waling 2018). A feminist social constructionist approach would allow exploration of sport and masculinity that considers the gender and sexual politics of sport culture. A feminist approach to work on sport and masculinity is essential for understanding key aspects of sport as a socialising institution, the role that sport plays in reproducing social constructions of masculinity and heterosexuality, as well as possibilities for subverting these constructions.

Sport, masculinity and socialisation

Sport has been a focus in work on men and masculinities as an important site for perpetuating social norms about masculinity (Curry 1991; Light and Kirk 2000; Messner 1990; Messner and Sabo 1994; Pringle and Hickey 2010; Schwartz 2020; Waitt and Clifton 2015; Welch 1997; Wellard 2002). Sport can have a positive influence on men's lives as it offers leadership opportunities, physical activity, socialising, and connection to communities (Agnew and Drummond 2015; Dyson 2009; Dyson et al. 2011; Hall 2011; Liston et al. 2017). However, there is evidence that sport can perpetuate problematic ideas about masculinity, competition and team bonding that frame masculinity in opposition to femininity, resulting in restrictions on men's gender expression and denigration of women (Benedict 1998; Boeringer 1999; Curry 1991; Foubert and Perry 2007; Frintner and Rubinson 1993; Humphrey and Kahn 2000; Koss and Cleveland 1996; McMahon 2007; Messner 1990; Messner and Sabo 1994; Moynihan et al. 2010; Young et al. 2017). Male peer groups, such as sport teams, can influence individual men's expression of gender and sexuality and attitudes towards women although this can be conceptualised through a need to 'prove' one's masculinity and heterosexuality (Bird 1996; Cover 2013; Hall 2011; Lusher et al. 2005; Schwartz 2020). This can be problematic if men are expected to perform masculinity that is predicated on misogyny and homophobia as this encourages negative attitudes and behaviour towards women and LGBT+ people (Dyson and Flood 2008; Messner and Sabo 1994; Waitt and Clifton 2015).

Sport plays an important role in constructing Australian masculinity, national identity, and is a significant leisure activity and site for socialisation, especially in rural and regional Australia and amongst Indigenous communities where participation rates are especially high (Hallinan and Judd 2016; Nicholson and Hess 2007; Tonts 2005; Waitt and Clifton 2015). The significant place of sport in Australian culture and particular 'love' of Australian football makes participation in sport desirable and respected and therefore can be expected that boys and men engage in sport as a 'rite of passage' (Agnew and Drummond 2015; Drummond 2020; Klugman 2015; Waitt and Clifton 2015). Sport is also a primary cultural institution for the socialisation of Australian boys and men, particularly in regard to masculinity (Drummond 2020). However, boys and men who are socialised through male-dominated team sports, such as Australian football, might equate masculinity with key aspects of sport such as competitiveness, 'toughness', and physical superiority to

women which can result in negative attitudes towards women (Burgess et al. 2003; Drummond 2020; Messner 1990; Waitt and Clifton 2015).

Participation in sport is made desirable for Australian boys and men because of the relationship between sport and masculinity. The importance of this relationship constructs male Australian footballers as symbols of idealised masculinity due to their perceived physical and sexual superiority (Bryson 1987; Burgess et al. 2003; Nelson 1994; Giulianotti and Armstrong 1997; Wedgwood 2008). Boys and men who exhibit a propensity for Australian football are popular and well-respected members of their peer groups and communities while less athletically inclined boys and men can be denigrated (Drummond 2011, 2020; Keddie 2003). However, researchers argue that the masculine physicality celebrated in Australian sport is not applicable to all male Australian footballers as masculinity is based in colonial frameworks that disadvantage Indigenous men, despite high rates of participation in Australian football by Indigenous populations (Baird 2009; Kearney 2012; McNeill 2008). Men who do not subscribe to white heterosexual masculine ideals through physicality or social expression may be shamed by their peers in the football team, often through feminising practices, (see Waitt and Clifton 2015) which demonstrates the connection to sport in perpetuating idealising forms of masculinity (Cover 2013, 2014; Curry 1991; Waitt and Clifton 2015). Team dynamics are subject to change however, as they are dependent on the attitudes of the leadership group, including coaches and senior players, and therefore do not always reflect problematic attitudes concerning gender and sexuality. Instead sporting teams have potential to be sites for positive social change (Corboz et al. 2016 ; Lusher 2012; Lusher et al. 2005; Spaaij et al. 2014).

The relationship between sport and masculinity in the Australian context also plays a role in socially constructing heterosexual desirability, as male Australian footballers are often seen as sexually desirable to women (Mewett and Toffoletti 2012; Wedgwood 2008). Women's sexual attraction to male Australian footballers is an accepted phenomenon but has received little academic attention (Wedgwood 2008). There has been some scholarship on a 'groupie culture' within Australian football although this has focused on celebrity status, alcohol use, sexual misconduct, and scandal at elite levels (Cover 2012; Lonie and Toffoletti 2012; Mewett and Toffoletti 2008; Toffoletti 2007; Waterhouse-Watson 2007, 2013a; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011; Watson 2014). However, the specific sexual attraction to male Australian footballers is also evident in pre-elite leagues which indicates that this phenomenon is likely not motivated by celebrity but rather the

construction of Australian footballers as the epitome of masculinity and sexual desirability (Wedgwood 2003). The sexual attraction of women to male Australian footballers could provide further motivation for men's participation although this phenomenon plays a role in reproducing a gender order that places expectations on men to perform idealised masculinity and heterosexuality (Bird 1996; Keddie 2003).

Male peers and bonding

There is an association with team sports, male peer groups, and the objectification of women as a form of male bonding (Curry 1991; Cover 2013; Flood and Dyson 2007; Lorentzen 2012; Schwartz 2020; Waterhouse-Watson 2007, 2013a; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011). Early sociological scholarship on masculinity and sport focused on male bonding in the context of the team and argued that bonds between male athletes were forged through the mutual devaluation of women as a means for proving masculinity and heterosexuality to each other (Bird 1996; Curry 1991; Messner and Sabo 1994). This work utilised feminist theoretical frameworks, primarily hegemonic masculinity and homosociality, to analyse men's social practices in key settings such as the locker room (Curry 1991; Kane and Disch 1993; Katz 1995; Messner and Sabo 1994). Homosociality as a theoretical perspective was developed within a feminist framework to work in conjunction with hegemonic masculinity. Homosociality refers to same-sex non-sexual relations and has been used to analyse men's bonding practices. Sharon Bird (1996) posits that there are three key principles within homosociality that are necessary to reproduce and maintain hegemonic masculinity in men's social groups: emotional detachment, competitiveness, and the sexual objectification of women. Emotional detachment discourages intimacy between men, competitiveness requires men to configure their masculinity in relation to each other, and the sexual objectification of women, positions women as inferior to men, useful only for sex, and as a vehicle for enacting competition between men (Bird 1996). These factors work together to enable men to prove both their heterosexuality and masculinity and reinforce strict social norms that discourage men from creating new possibilities for themselves outside of the gender binary (Bird 1996). Male Peer Support is similar to homosociality as it analyses social relationships between men but is not tied to a particular masculinity theory and has instead developed out of social support theory and feminist theory (DeKeseredy and Schwartz 2013). Male Peer Support theory differs from homosociality in that male peer groups are conceptualised as a potential site for perpetuating problematic ideas about masculinity

that can result in negative attitudes towards women, but also as a site for positive influence and potential change (DeKeseredy and Schwartz 2013). This theory offers a comprehensive framework for analysing how men's relationships with each other can be utilised to engage men in positive behaviour change and how male peer groups, such as sporting teams, can be mobilised for social change initiatives including violence against women.

Sport has historically excluded women, trans people, and diverse sexualities and can perpetuate problematic attitudes towards these populations in male dominated sporting environments (Boeringer 1999; Curry 1991; Forbes et al. 2006; Gage 2008; McMahon 2010, 2015; Melnick 1992; Moynihan et al. 2010; Owton 2016). Scholars have responded to evidence of poor attitudes towards women and allegations of sexual violence by helping organisations to implement violence prevention initiatives such as codes of conduct and education programs (Albury et al. 2011; Grzelinska et al. 2014; Katz 1995; McMahon 2007; Melnick 1992; Sherry et al. 2015). There has been a shift however in recent times to cease looking at individual perpetrators in sport and developing punitive measures to discourage perpetrators to examining the cultures of clubs and potential for group attitudes to shift by empowering positive leaders through peer mentorship (Corboz et al. 2016 ; Dyson 2009, 2012, 2013; Dyson and Flood 2008; Dyson and Grzelinkska 2010; Dyson et al. 2011; Grzelinska et al. 2014; Lusher et al. 2005; Sherry et al. 2015; Spaaij et al. 2014). Recent research on sport, masculinity, and sexual violence has built on moves to engage men in violence prevention and analysed potential for changes in sporting culture at the club level, through leadership groups and coaching support (Corboz et al. 2016 ; Dyson and Grzelinkska 2010; Dyson et al. 2011; Grzelinska et al. 2014; Lusher 2012; Lusher et al. 2005; Spaaij et al. 2014). This research emphasises the necessity for analysis of leadership groups including senior players and coaches and highlights the potential for positive change in these spaces, consistent with Male Peer Support Theory (DeKeseredy and Schwartz 2013). This shift in research direction has occurred in conjunction with a move to engage men in violence prevention and masculinity studies and scholarship, which recognises the potential role that sport can play in engaging men and broader communities in violence prevention initiatives.

New possibilities in masculinity theory

The Sociology of Sport and Gender and Men and Masculinities disciplines have offered critical insight into the relationship between sport and masculinities since the 1990s (Messner 1990; Messner and Sabo 1994). However, both disciplines have gradually shifted away from the feminist framing that was important in early work, resulting in a depoliticising of gendered issues (McCray 2015; Waling 2018). A persistent reliance on narrow typologies that essentialise men's expression of their gender are widely critiqued but continue to dominate the field (Waling 2018). Scholarship on sport and masculinities can be progressed through a return to feminist frameworks, including an embrace of new theoretical developments (Beasley 2013, 2015; Waling 2018). This thesis responds to calls from other scholars in both subdisciplines who advocated for a progressive feminist analysis of issues related to sport, masculinity, and sexual violence (Beasley 2013, 2015; McCray 2015; Messner 2015; Nicholas and Agius 2018; O'Neill 2015; Thorpe et al. 2017; Toffoletti 2016). These scholars identify a lack of comprehensive analysis of gendered power relations and persistence of binary models of gender that limit the epistemological potential of the field. This thesis specifically addresses these concerns by employing a feminist social constructionist epistemology and sexual politics theoretical lens (Franzway et al. 2019). Feminist social constructionism links sexual violence to socially constructed gender relations while sexual politics sees these relations as continually contested and subject to change (Franzway et al. 2019). This combined approach to understanding masculinity, sex and sexual violence in the context of Australian football identifies how these constructions inform each other and offers possibilities for subversion that can positively influence both subdisciplines and their subsequent practical applications.

Sport, sex, and desirability

Sport is an important cultural institution in Australian society and globally (Bartholomaeus 2011; Bryson 1987; Burgess et al. 2003; Drummond 2011, 2020; Dyson and Grzelinkska 2010; Frost et al. 2013; Klugman 2015; Nelson 1994; Nicholson and Hess 2007; Wedgwood 2008). The primacy of sport as a cultural influence and use of some sports as masculinising institutions means that male-dominated sports, especially team contact sports, are considered important sites for perpetuating gendered social norms (Curry 1991; Light and Kirk 2000; Messner 1990; Messner and Sabo 1994; Pringle and Hickey 2010; Waitt and Clifton 2015; Welch 1997; Wellard 2002). The importance of sport to Australian national identity and masculinity means that sport is a useful setting for examining the social construction of masculinity and heterosexuality, although it is not unique (Bartholomaeus 2011, Burgess et al. 2003; Drummond 2020; Edwards et al. 2003; Kearney 2012; Klugman 2015; Nicholson and Hess 2007; Tonts 2005).

Sport can be viewed as a microcosm for analysis of the gender and sexual politics that are present in Australian culture, although expectations relating to social norms around gender and sexuality may be heightened (Boucher 2015; Burgess et al. 2003; Drummond 2020; Hess 2000; Kearney 2012; Spaaij et al. 2014; Waitt and Clifton 2015; Wedgwood 2008). This does not mean that men who play sport are inherently violent or that all sports are linked to violence against women. However there is an established link between sport and masculinity, especially team contact sports, and some international evidence that has identified factors that can encourage violence against women in some sport culture (Benedict 1997, 1998; Benedict and Klein 1997; Crosset et al. 1996; Forbes et al. 2006; Koss and Cleveland 1996; Koss and Gaines 1993). Factors that can encourage violence against women, fraternal bonding, entitlement, the sexualisation and subordination of women, valorisation of men's perceived physical superiority and dominance, and 'groupie' culture, are not unique to sport but are reflective of gendered social norms and sexual politics (Crosset 1999; Dyson and Flood 2008; Flood and Dyson 2007; Palmer 2011). Therefore, examination of the sexual culture of Australia's dominant football code, Australian football, is essential for understanding the state of play of the sexual politics of sport and the potential for anti-violence efforts within sport.

The construction of Australian identity through masculinised sport has historically resulted in the exclusion of women from participation, as players and spectators, in some sports and devalued of traditionally feminine sports. The exclusion of women from Australian football culture has coincided with celebration of men's physical superiority and domination, positioning women who pursue footballers for sex as predatory, and excusing or normalising the problematic sexual behaviour of (white) male footballers. Australian sport, including Australian football, is currently experiencing a shift in gender and sexual politics as more women enter sport and compete at professional levels, in a global push to make sport more equitable for women (Toffoletti and Palmer 2019). The contested nature of gender means that (white) male dominance must be continually affirmed and reaffirmed in a constant power struggle, highlighting the fragility of men's dominance over women (Franzway 2016). A sexual politics framework looks at potential for subversion within the current configuration of gender in Australian football culture including avenues for challenging violence-supportive attitudes that are reliant on the idea of men's dominance over women. The binary nature of current social constructions of gender and the interplay between binary gender and heterosexuality mean that male dominance is also prefaced on dominance over diverse genders and sexualities. A sexual politics approach to gender recognises the existence and importance of diverse gender and sexualities, as these categories are seen as dynamic.

It is essential within a framework of sexual politics to question the taken-for-grantedness of male dominance and the (re)production of male dominance through practices such as male bonding and in sites of power relations, such as sport (Franzway 2016). This approach is made further necessary by a historical trend of de-emphasising sexual politics in masculinity studies and in work on sport and gender (see O'Neill's 2015 critique of Eric Anderson's work on homophobia, masculinity and sport). Sexual politics can be taken to mean "an understanding of gender relations as structured by power" (O'Neill 2015, 102). Sport can be understood as a site of power and an important masculinising institution, meaning that sexual politics can be observed through the intersection of sport and gender, as well as other social structures such as class, sexuality and race. It is necessary to examine the sexual politics of sports, such as Australian football, in order to understand how sport might exclude women and perpetuate violence against women through an "unequal effects of a sexual politics in which male dominance prevails" (Franzway 2016, 23). This approach does not attempt to problematise sport, masculinity or sex, and instead focuses on possibilities for subversion and positive change.

Positioning male Australian footballers as dominant assumes that women participants are subordinate, as has been established in international and Australian literature on male-dominated sport cultures (Crosset 1999; Dyson and Flood 2008; Flood and Dyson 2007; Forbes et al. 2006; Messner 2010; Messner and Sabo 1994; Toffoletti 2007). Although the positioning of female fans and athletes may be changing, there does not seem to be a marked change in the representation of sexual partners of Australian footballers (Toffoletti 2017, Toffoletti and Palmer 2019). The positioning of wives, girlfriends, casual sexual partners, 'groupies' and alleged victims and survivors of sexual violence can offer insight into the sexual politics of Australian football as these women are consistently framed in a context that (re)affirms the heterosexual male dominance of Australian footballers. This positioning also warrants examination of the social construction of the sexual desirability of Australian footballers to gain insight into the complex ways that masculinity and heterosexuality intersect in Australian football culture. The sexual politics of Australian football can be observed in scholarship on sport and gender through examination of Australian footballers as pinnacles of heterosexual desire, the function of female romantic partners, and construction of alleged victims of sexual assault by Australian footballers.

Masculinity, Australian football, and heterosexual desirability

Australian footballers represent a standard of desirability due to their perceived physical superiority, sexual desirability and heterosexual prowess (Wedgwood 2008). However, the relationship between sport, masculinity and heterosexual desirability, specifically the sexual attraction of women to male Australian footballers, has received little attention in academic scholarship, despite being a common and accepted occurrence (Wedgwood 2008). It is necessary to examine taken for granted assumptions about masculinity and heterosexuality that occur in relation to Australian footballers to consider how sexual desirability is constructed in sport culture.

Scholarship on sexual desirability in sport and gender has considered the sexualisation of female athletes and fans as part of a historical trend of trivialising women's participation in sport (Bruce 2015; Mewett and Toffoletti 2012; Thorpe et al. 2017; Toffoletti 2017). This research has focused on media representations of female athletes that highlight women's femininity through domestic achievements or heterosexual desirability and sexual availability to men (Kane et al. 2013; Toffoletti 2017). These observations are termed within a 'hot and hard' discourse that reconcile women's athletic ability with their

heterosexual desirability (Bruce 2015; Thorpe et al. 2017). Likewise scholarship on female fans has shifted from women avoiding being conceptualised within a groupie narrative as primarily interested in sport to objectify male athletes, to an increasing representation of the 'sexy sports fan' (Crawford and Gosling 2004; Jones 2008; Mewett and Toffoletti 2008; Toffoletti 2017). However, there is a relative absence of consideration into the sexual desirability of male athletes in the context of constructions of masculinity and heterosexuality in Australian football (Marks 2019; Wedgwood 2003, 2008). Despite significant scholarship on the relationship between Australian football, masculinity and sexual violence there remains limited consideration of the social construction of male Australian footballers' heterosexual desirability (Baird 2009; Cover 2013, 2014, 2015; Lusher 2012; Mewett and Toffoletti 2008; Nurka 2013; Toffoletti 2007; Waterhouse-Watson 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013a; Wedgwood 2003, 2008). Wedgwood has offered valuable theoretical insight into women who are specifically sexually attracted to male Australian footballers, questioning the social construction of heterosexual desire and the function of desire in maintaining the gender order (Wedgwood 2003, 2008).

Literature on female sport fans has grappled with women's sexual attraction to athletes, in the context of motivation to participate in sport fandom (Crawford and Gosling 2004; Forsyth 2007; Mewett and Toffoletti 2008, 2012; Toffoletti 2017; Toffoletti and Mewett 2009). This literature posits that women's fandom is constructed as less legitimate than men's as their motivation is constructed within sexual attraction to male athletes resulting in the sexualisation of female fans and positioning them as 'groupies' (Mewett and Toffoletti 2008, 2012). The groupie narrative often provokes disdain in the sport community as groupies are constructed as predatory. There is also some argument that the sexual forwardness and aggression associated with groupies can attract disdain because it is seen to upset the gender order, although other researchers argue that groupies play an important role in maintaining the gender order in sport (Mewett and Toffoletti 2008, 2012; Wedgwood 2008). This argument then extends to female fans who are seen to participate in sport spectatorship to objectify male athletes because they are positioned as disrupting the gender order as their "…sexual objectification…unsettles the primacy accorded to the male gaze and the privileged status of male sporting endeavours", (Toffoletti and Mewett 2012, 104). The key difference between objectification of women and male athletes and is that women spectators validate men's heterosexual desirability and associated masculine dominance, meaning that male athletes retain their power when objectified (Mewett and Toffoletti 2012). Klugman (2015) provides supporting analysis of the homoerotics of men's Australian football fandom which highlights the

heteronormative context of sport, the use of sexually violent language and metaphors in sport, the relationship between passion and sport, and the limits that heteronormativity places on men's expressions of love for their sporting heroes. Both female and male fans of Australian football participate in perpetuating the construction of male Australian footballers as sexually desirable and pinnacles of heterosexual masculinity.

It is necessary to consider how masculinity and heterosexuality are socially constructed to examine the sexual desirability of Australian footballers (Wedgwood 2008). Wedgwood (2008) argues that understanding of the relationship between male power and the heterosexual desirability of male footballers is necessary to understand how sexual desire functions in Australian football. It is assumed that women's sexual attraction to male athletes is motivated by the physical fitness of male athletes' bodies, similar to the 'hot and hard' discourse present in the construction of female athletes' bodies as heterosexually desirable (Bruce 2015; Mewett and Toffoletti 2012). However, this assumption simplifies sexual attraction and fails to encapsulate the socially constructed nature of desire, as it follows from the social construction of masculinity and heterosexuality. Toffoletti and Mewett (2012, 107) explored the attraction of female fans to male Australian footballers and found that participants drew on concepts such as "hard work", "toughness" and "athleticism" to construct male Australian footballers as sexually attractive, subsequently constructing the sexual desirability of athletes within a heterosexual hegemonic male framework that celebrates the perceived physical superiority of the male body (Wedgwood 2008).

It is also necessary to examine the privileging of some masculinities over others, especially where masculinity intersects with ethnicity and class. These intersections are visible in constructions of masculine sexual desirability as working-class men are constructed as violent and Indigenous men as potential sexual predators (Kearney 2012). The strong representation of Indigenous players in Australian football, complex relationship between Australian football and Indigenous men, and the context of Australia's poor treatment of Indigenous people warrants significant exploration of the relationship between colonisation and social constructions of masculinity, Indigeneity, and sexual desirability (Hallinan and Judd 2012; Hirsch 2017; Kearney 2012). There is limited research that examines the social construction of Indigenous male Australian footballers and the relationship of this to sexual desirability (Hirsch 2017; Kearney 2012; Waterhouse-Watson 2019c, 2019d). This scholarship contends with the legacy of colonisation and its impact on understandings of Indigenous men as sexual predators in media coverage and

legal proceedings involving Andrew Lovett, an elite Australian footballer and Indigenous Australian who was charged and later cleared of sexual assault (Hirsch 2017; Kearney 2012; Waterhouse-Watson 2019c, 2019d). The Lovett case is one of only two high-profile cases involving Indigenous footballers, the other involved white Australian footballer Brisbane Lions' Adam Heuskes and two Indigenous Australian footballers, Port Adelaide's Peter Burgoyne, and Sydney Swans' Michael O'Loughlin. However, the Heuskes/Burgoyne/O'Loughlin case occurred prior to significant interest in sexual violence in Australian sport and has therefore received limited academic analysis (Baird 2009). In her analysis of the Lovett case, Kearney (2012) argues that the ethnicity of Indigenous men is both highlighted and hidden in Australian football and that this process is based in a colonial and white supremacist tradition that positions white masculinity as powerful, desirable and standard and Indigenous masculinity as inherently violent, primitive and sexualised. Kearney (2012) argues that Indigenous men's difference is 'hidden' in Australian football due to the high value placed on sameness in fraternal team settings. However, Kearney (2012) also sees 'difference' as an explanation for exclusion when Indigenous men, like Lovett, are seen to break away from the sense of 'sameness' present in team bonds. Similarly, Hirsch (2017) considers how gender and race intersect in the prosecution of Lovett due to the dichotomy between the white female complainant and the Indigenous male defendant that were presented during the legal proceedings, and the rejection of Lovett by his former team, the St Kilda Football Club. Waterhouse-Watson (2013a) also highlights the outsider status afforded to Lovett by the team based on his Indigeneity, newcomer status to the team, "reputation as a 'troublemaker'" and the fact that the alleged victim had a relationship to another member of the team (126). Importantly, Waterhouse-Watson (2019c, 2019d) has also explored the complex interplay between gender and race in the Lovett trial and subsequent media reporting as the complainant was positioned as unable to "simultaneously be racist and a victim of rape" (153) as her rejection of Lovett was argued to have been based in racism by the defence. Waterhouse-Watson (2019c, 2019d) argues that the idea that the complainant rejected Lovett on the basis of his Aboriginality presumes that she was 'fair game' for other men to have sex with and for any other Australian footballers, relying on stereotypes about Australian football 'groupies' and an assumption that Australian footballers have an entitlement to sex with women. This assumes that Lovett would ordinarily be considered sexually undesirable on the basis of his ethnicity but is entitled to sex because of his athletic status. Waterhouse-Watson (2019c, 2019d) uses Baird's (2009) analysis of media responses to race, gender and sexual violence in several high-profile cases, including one involving some Indigenous footballers. Baird (2009, 377) observes that the perceived sexual threat that Indigenous

men present, or any discussion of race, was absent in the Heuskes/Burgoyne/O'Loughlin case because Indigenous and other non-white Australian footballers "can secure the race-privileged position that professional football in Australia delivers as long as they comport themselves publicly as athletes and not, for example, as radical spokespersons for their race". Lovett represents an example of the socially constructed nature of sexual desirability in Australian football due to the presence of conflicting stereotypes about his perceived sexual undesirability on the basis of his ethnicity and perceived sexual desirability and subsequent entitlement to sex as a result of his position as an Australian footballer. Furthermore, Lovett was excluded from the St Kilda football team, likely on the basis of his Indigeneity, while other white Australian members of the same football team accused of sexual violence were fiercely protected and financially supported by the club (Hirsch 2017; Marks 2018; Waterhouse-Watson 2013a).

The social construction of the sexual desirability of Australian footballers is made complex by intersections between dominant frameworks of masculinity and heterosexuality and marginalised men who might represent a departure from these dominant frameworks. The interplay between gender, sexuality, and ethnicity highlights how some forms of masculinity are privileged over others but also where there are possibilities for subversion. However, the construction of Andrew Lovett as simultaneously sexually desirable and undesirable also highlights that these constructions are subject to change based on the privileged status associated with playing elite Australian football and that this privileged status can be undermined when necessary. The dynamic nature of the social construction of the sexual desirability of Australian footballers in evidence that masculinity is contested, white male dominance being (re)affirmed, and of the sexual politics present in Australian football culture.

Wives and girlfriends

Academic scholarship on athletes' female romantic partners is limited, especially in Australian football. Existing research examines how Australian footballers' female romantic partners maintain dominant frameworks of gender and sexuality (Marks 2019). Most research on athletes' female romantic partners focus on lifestyle difficulties related to increased pressure on wives and girlfriends (Ortiz 1994, 2002, 2011; Powers 1990; Thompson 1995, 1999), 'groupies' (Forsyth 2007; Gmelch and Antonio 1998), time partners are away from home (Ortiz 2011), travelling with players (Ortiz 1997), and

increased expectations on domestic labour (Chafetz and Kotarba 2005; Thompson 1992). Although these lifestyle difficulties are representative of gender relations in sport, much of this literature lacks a feminist analysis that would address sexual politics in sport. There is however some research on the media construction of wives and girlfriends (Clayton and Harris 2004; Marks 2019; Vaczi 2016) and research on "groupie culture" (Forsyth 2007; Gauthier and Forsyth 2000; Gmelch and Antonio 1998; Lorentzen 2012; Wedgwood 2008) that considers gender. Some research also considers the role that wives and girlfriends, popularly referred to as "WAGs", play in maintaining the gender order in Australian football culture and the function of 'WAGs' in the sexual politics of sport (Marks 2015, 2019; Mewett and Toffoletti 2008, 2012; Toffoletti 2007, 2017; Wedgwood 2008). This research will be the focus of this section.

Wives and girlfriends are important participants in Australian football as they provide essential domestic labour support that allows their male partners the freedom and flexibility required to flourish in their career while also offering behind-the-scenes support at the club level (Marks 2015, 2019; Wedgwood 2008). Women associated with male footballers often take on essential volunteer work at grassroots and community clubs that allow for costs to be effectively managed (Wedgwood 2008). Wives and girlfriends also help to make the Australian Football League (AFL) brand appear more 'female-friendly' through their cooperation in appearing at the televised annual Brownlow Medal award ceremony and participating in associated media (Marks 2015, 2019). However, the importance of wives and girlfriends in maintaining Australian football organisations is rarely acknowledged.

'WAGs' reaffirm the sexual politics of Australian football culture as they are utilised as status symbols or 'trophy wives' who demonstrate the masculine and heterosexual prowess of their male partners (Marks 2015, 2019; Toffoletti 2017). Toffoletti (2017, 463) argues that "…women's sexuality is governed and put to use to maintain gender relations of power in sport" and that wives and girlfriends "…attain a certain degree of legitimacy as glamorous and sexy women in sport contexts because such enactments serve a useful function for masculine sporting institutions in ways that do not undermine the privileged associations between masculinity and sport." Wives and girlfriends are considered at the top of a hierarchy of athletes' female romantic partners as they are considered more respectable than "groupies" (Marks 2019). However, despite their respected or legitimised position in sport culture, 'WAGs' are still subject to sexist stereotypes and intense scrutiny (Marks 2019; Toffoletti 2017; Wedgwood 2008). I have argued elsewhere that "the respect

afforded to wives and girlfriends is conditional, hard won and easily lost, leading to public shaming if these women are seen to violate the conditions associated with their role in football culture" (Marks, 2019, 16). Wives and girlfriends play an important role in perpetuating sexual politics that define groupies in opposition to 'WAGs', reproducing the classic Madonna/Whore dichotomy (Toffoletti 2017). This means that wives and girlfriends are expected to remain classy, as opposed to trashy, not exercise sexual agency, and are utilised as decoration (Marks 2015, 2019; Toffoletti 2007, 2017; Wedgwood 2008). The hierarchy of sexual partners in Australian football culture highlights the primacy of Australian footballers' heterosexual prowess and the necessity to demonstrate heterosexuality to reaffirm masculine dominance.

Groupie culture

The 'groupie' narrative is pervasive in sport culture as is evident in the framing of other female romantic partners of athletes, responses to sexual violence in sport, and sensationalised reporting on sexual misconduct involving athletes (Cover 2012, 2015; Lonie and Toffoletti 2012; Marks 2018; Toffoletti 2007; Waterhouse-Watson 2009, 2012, 2013a; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011; Watson 2014). This framework reproduces victim blaming narratives that absolve male athletes of responsibility for sexual misconduct and construct women who have sex with athletes as simultaneously predatory and naïve (Marks 2018; Mewett and Toffoletti 2008; Waterhouse-Watson 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2016). Women who have sex with Australian footballers are then constructed as responsible for any treatment that they may receive, including violence, and are widely disdained within sport culture (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011). Literature on groupies in sport highlights the deviance ascribed to women who have sex with male athletes and the subsequent disdain associated with these women (Forsyth 2007; Gauthier and Forsyth 2000; Gmelch and Antonio 1998; Lorentzen 2012). Toffoletti (2017, 463) astutely states that "[w]omen who have sex with players are dually positioned as both objects for sportsmen's sexual gratification, as well as sexual predators who transgress the boundaries of female sexual propriety and acceptable sport spectating behaviour by pursuing athletes". Researchers like Toffoletti (2017) argue that groupies are disliked as they are seen to complicate the sexual script present in sport and broader constructions of gender and sexual politics (Mewett and Toffoletti 2008, 2012; Wedgwood 2008). However, the sexual attraction of some women specifically to male athletes is conceptualised by Nikki Wedgwood (2008) as important in maintaining the

gender order in sport, which would suggest that groupies play a role in maintaining the masculine and heterosexual dominance of Australian football, although this function may appear differently to that of more 'legitimate' female romantic partners, such as wives and girlfriends. It is necessary to consider how groupies' conceptualisation of the sexual desirability of Australian footballers within a framework of gender that celebrates the physical superiority of men and privileges white heterosexual masculinity impacts on how Australian footballers conceptualise their own desirability and how this might influence the sexual culture of Australian amateur football.

There have been several high-profile media 'sex scandals' involving Australian footballers and many of these have involved allegations of violence. The most high-profile 'scandals' were explored in a series of documentary-style television programs aired on Australian public networks, ABC and SBS (Waterhouse-Watson 2012a). These programs: 'Foul Play' (2004), 'Fair Game?' (2004), and 'Code of Silence' (2009) attracted widespread media attention and motivated significant academic scholarship into the subject of Australian sport and sexual violence but also motivated a lot of vitriol towards alleged victims that painted these women as 'groupies' or 'gold diggers' (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). Deb Waterhouse-Watson (2012a) argues that 'Code of Silence' utilised the 'groupie' narrative to question the complaints of women who alleged sexual violence, especially Charmayne Palavi. Palavi identifies herself as being sexually attracted to Australian rugby league footballers, regularly having sex with them, and setting up other women who wish to have sex with footballers via Facebook. However, Palavi, like other participants in the program, also describes her experience of being raped by an elite footballer. Palavi is not granted the same pity as other participants in the program and is instead presented as somewhat responsible for the culture of footballers' perceived entitlement to sex with women that is described in the program when journalist Sarah Ferguson introduces Palavi by saying, "If some young footballers mistakenly think all women want to have sex with them, Charmayne Palavi is one who doesn't necessarily discourage the idea" (Code of Silence 2009; Waterhouse-Watson 2012a). This statement simultaneously normalises the idea that Australian footballers are entitled to sex with women while recognising that this idea is problematic but the fault of women like Palavi, rather than the Australian footballers themselves or the surrounding culture. The treatment of Palavi by Ferguson highlights a key narrative employed to represent 'groupies', in that Palavi is seen to be simultaneously naïve and responsible for violence enacted against her. This sentiment has been echoed by journalists, fans, and former players, such as the following 'viral' tweet by former player

Peter 'Spida' Everitt', "Girls!! When will you learn! At 3 am when you are blind drunk & you decide to go home with a guy IT'S NOT FOR A CUP OF MILO!" (Krien 2011, 39)

Arguably, the most infamous 'groupie narrative' in Australian football is the 'St Kilda Schoolgirl' case involving then 16-year-old Kim Duthie who alleged that she had engaged in sexual relationships with several St Kilda Football Club players whom she had met when they visited her school and later shared explicit images of those players (Waterhouse-Watson 2014). The explicit images were widely distributed, and the ensuing scandal resulted in an ongoing media furore throughout 2010-11 that painted Duthie as a liar and object of scorn and disgust. Kim Duthie is a complex subject due to her age, circumstance in becoming involved with the St Kilda footballers, ethics in sharing the explicit images, and the multiple claims that she later recanted including being pregnant to a St Kilda footballer and having a sexual relationship with then 47-year-old player manager, Ricky Nixon (Waterhouse-Watson 2014). The multiple contradictions in Duthie's story meant her claims were easily dismissed as false, despite photographic evidence of Nixon and several players either naked or semi-naked. Duthie's actions were seen to be deceptive, unethical and immature therefore undermining her credibility and instead constructing the footballers as victims of her actions (Waterhouse-Watson 2014). Duthie is an example of another prevalent narrative about 'groupies', the predatory woman. This narrative assumes that women who seek out Australian footballers for sex are predating upon these men in order to gain fame or notoriety, which is then seen to extend to women who allege that Australian footballers have been sexually violent towards them (Waterhouse-Watson 2012a, 2013a; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011).

The construction of victims and survivors of sexual violence can be located within the disdain for groupies that is ever present in sport culture, including Australian football culture. The 'groupie narrative' is routinely called upon to critique women who pursue Australian footballers for sex, including in cases where alleged sexual violence has occurred (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). Toffoletti argues that the stereotype of the predatory woman functions to communicate that women can expect to experience sexual violence if they "deviate from the "conventions" of heterosexual relations that expect them to be passive and sexually available, and men to exude sexual virility" (Toffoletti 2007, 433). This narrative holds women responsible for the threat of sexual violence and implies that sexual violence did not occur by constructing Australian footballers as the victims of these 'predatory women' (Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011). This victim blaming practice is not unique to sport but may be heightened as a result of the revered space that

athletes occupy in Australian society (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). Sport can then be utilised as a microcosm for analysing how sexual violence is socially constructed, especially in examination of the construction of victims and survivors of sexual assault perpetrated by athletes.

Victims and survivors

Academic literature on sport and sexual violence has largely explored media coverage of 'sex scandals' and the few legal cases involving Australian footballers (Baird 2009; Cover 2015; Hirsch 2017; Nurka 2013; Philadelphoff-Puren 2004; Toffoletti 2007; Waterhouse-Watson 2009a, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011). This approach frames these discussions through limited legal and media discourses rather than centring women's experiences. There has been significant feminist discussion of the problematic ways that sexual violence in Australian football is discussed including discrediting complainants, diminishing the issue as a product of alcohol or celebrity culture, or utilising a "boys will boys" framework (Hindley 2005; Lonie and Toffoletti 2012; Mewett and Toffoletti 2008; Toffoletti 2007; Waterhouse-Watson 2009a, 2011, 2012, 2013a, 2019a; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011). Sport can be utilised as a microcosm for analysing how sexual violence is socially constructed, especially when examining how victims and survivors of sexual assault perpetrated by athletes are constructed. The construction of victims and survivors can be located within the disdain for groupies present in sport culture, including Australian football culture, and a broader rape culture that diminishes the problem of sexual violence (Marks 2018, 2019; Toffoletti 2007, 2017; Waterhouse-Watson 2009a, 2012, 2013a, 2013b; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011).

Rape culture can be observed through positioning of sexual violence as a problem of the 'other', regarding who does sexual violence and who experiences it. Women who experience sexual violence are constructed within a dichotomy that affects who is granted believability and who is blamed for their experiences of sexual violence (Waterhouse-Watson 2012a; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011). Conversely, men who perpetrate violence are frequently constructed as the innocent victims of spiteful women or as monsters (Livholts 2008; Marks 2018; Messner 2015; Nicholas and Agius 2018; Waterhouse-Watson 2009, 2013a). The narrative of sexual violence is often understood through a legal framework that does not allow for adequate consideration of complexities

within sex, and privileges white male hegemony (Messner 2015; Nicholas and Agius 2018). The construction of victimhood and criminality is then inherently gendered and affected by social constructions of race, class, ability due to the discourses that surround sexual violence (Hart and Gilbertson 2018; Hirsch 2017). The dominance of legal frameworks in discussions about sexual violence is problematic as legal justice is not available to everyone since criminality and victimhood are constructed around social ideas of gender, race and class. A legal framework is a limited tool for understanding sexual violence as it does not allow for the conceptualising of sexual violence as a spectrum, instead often representing the 'worst' instances of violence (Kelly 1988). The most notable cases that Australian people might recall as part of their understanding of sexual violence involve cases where the victim was also murdered, such as nurse and former pageant queen Anita Cobby who was murdered in Sydney in 1986 and media employee Jill Meagher murdered in Melbourne in 2012, are memorable for their brutality, and fit with popular narrative about constitutes sexual violence due to the perception of the perpetrator(s) and victims (Hart and Gilbertson 2018; Marks 2018; Powell et al. 2017; Serisier 2005, 2018). Cobby and Meagher garnered public sympathy and significant media coverage because they were seen to embody a particular ideal, as young, white, attractive, married women (Hart and Gilbertson 2018; Marks 2018). These women are also memorable because the men who raped and murdered them fit within a 'monster myth narrative' due to their criminal or socially awkward backgrounds, brutality of their violence, and the fact that they had no prior relationship to the women that they murdered (Livholts 2008; Marks 2018). The dichotomy between victims and perpetrators can be observed in reporting and public responses to other high-profile cases, such as the rape and murder of Indigenous woman Lynette Daley, and in cases where the alleged perpetrator is well-respected as has been the case in charges against Australian footballers (Hart and Gilbertson 2018; Marks 2018; Waterhouse-Watson 2009, 2012a, 2013a, 2019b). This question of visibility and whose experiences of sexual violence are seen as 'legitimate' has become especially relevant in recent years due to responses to #MeToo. The familiar patterns as outlined above repeated in popular discussion around #MeToo which demonstrates that visibility of sexual violence, including sexual harassment and other forms of 'everyday' sexual violence, does not necessarily translate to increased visibility or justice for all who experience violence (Fileborn and Phillips 2019).

The dichotomy between legal proceedings, media coverage and public reaction to cases involving Australian footballers highlights how sexual violence, victimhood and criminality are socially constructed. This is especially evident in comparison of proceedings against

Stephen Milne, a white Australian footballer, and Andrew Lovett, and Indigenous Australian footballer, who both played for the St Kilda Football Club (Hirsch 2017; Kearney 2012; Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). Andrew Lovett's case highlighted how white womanhood can be weaponised against Indigenous men within the legal system and the othering of Indigenous men in Australian football spaces, while Milne's case highlighted the limitations of the legal system (Hirsch 2017; Marks 2018; Waterhouse-Watson 2013a, 2019). Although Milne was eventually convicted of indecent assault, his case was marred by evidence and witness tampering, police corruption, and intimidation from fans for the case to be dropped (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). Lovett and Milne both played for the St Kilda football Club when charges were brought against them. However, they received very different levels of support from their club and had different experiences with the legal system (Hirsch 2017; Waterhouse-Watson 2013). Andrew Lovett was cleared of all charges, although his trial is evidence of the intersection of race, gender and class in the context of Australian football (Hirsch 2017; Waterhouse-Watson 2019c, 2019d). Hirsch (2017) argued that the complainant in the Lovett case, a white woman and professional model, was positioned as helpless and virtuous by the prosecution through a narrative of being rescued by her white footballer ex-boyfriend after being violated by Lovett, while the defence positioned the complainant as being motivated by racism and falsely accused Lovett to attract the attention of her ex-boyfriend (Hirsch 2017). During the trial Lovett was repeatedly identified through racial markers meant to signify "deviance and non-white masculinity-darkness, Aboriginality and blackness" (Kearney 2014, 32). The trial seemed to represent a battle between the prosecution and defence to undermine or uphold the virtue of the complainant, since Lovett's deviance was already assumed (Hirsch 2017; Kearney 2012). Waterhouse-Watson (2019c, 2019d) however argued that racism was indeed present in the proceedings and subsequent media coverage but that this related to a complex interplay between deviance, race, and gender. Specifically, the allegations that the complainant was motivated by racism sought to discredit her by implying that her potential racist sexual preferences outweighed the potential that she had been raped (Waterhouse-Watson 2019c, 2019d). The assumption of Lovett's deviance may not have been entirely ascribed to his Aboriginality due to his reputation for off-field misconduct and because he was on trial for rape, however there was a marked difference in treatment of Lovett compared to Stephen Milne who was eventually convicted of indecent assault (Kearney 2012; Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). Stephen Milne was widely supported by his club, fans, and media and was described as 'distressed' by the allegations (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). Conversely the complainant was described as "…just one of those footy sluts that runs around looking for footballers to fuck…" to a Senior Detective assigned to

Milne's case (Waterhouse-Watson, 2013a, 57). The assumption that complainants are automatically assumed to be "footy sluts" in cases involving white Australian footballers gives credence to the argument that Lovett was assumed deviant because of his Aboriginality and offers insight into the complex interaction of gender, race, and class within the social construction of sexual desirability and sexual violence in Australian football.

The portrayal of the complainant in the Milne case as a "footy slut" was prominent in media that painted Milne as the victim of false accusations from a 'predatory woman' (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). The portrayal of Australian footballers as victims implies that sexual violence did not occur and allows for the issue to be downplayed, often through a narrative of 'boys behaving badly' or 'boys will be boys' (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). This narrative has placed the onus of responsibility on victims and survivors rather than acknowledging the role of individual footballers, football organisations, and football communities. This erasure of responsibility can be seen through explanations for 'bad behaviour' such as alcohol, the pressures of celebrity, and 'predatory groupies'. Deb Waterhouse-Watson (2013a) argues that these excuses move past shifting blame for sexual violence from to victims and survivors, resulting in the erasure of sexual violence altogether. The erasure of individual, organisational, and cultural responsibility and accountability is then compounded by a reliance on the legal system to provide explanation, evidence, and vindication for accused Australian footballers (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a).

Sexual violence and Australian football

Following intense media attention on sexual misconduct in sport, the elite organisations for Australian football and Rugby League, the AFL and NRL, solicited expert advice to develop solutions (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). This resulted in the organisations introducing sex education that focused on respectful relationships and a policy to deal with allegations of sexual misconduct (Albury et al. 2011; Corboz et al. 2016). The NRL instigated respectful relationships education based in a sexual ethics framework, following an in-depth research project with rugby league footballers (Albury et al. 2011). The AFL established a working group of experts from a broad range of fields including health, law and sexual violence prevention and developed the Respect and Responsibility policy in response to the experts' recommendations (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). This policy was

also informed by an academic report for the AFL prepared by violence prevention researchers (Dyson 2007; Dyson and Flood 2008). However, the Respect and Responsibility policy has been critiqued for inconsistency and a lack of transparency and accountability (Waterhouse-Watson 2013). The Respect and Responsibility policy relies on punitive legal measures to direct organisational responses to sexual violence allegations and does not offer potential responses to problems within Australian football culture (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). Instead sexual violence is seen as a community issue, separate to influence of powerful Australian football organisations and aspects of Australian football culture that can perpetuate norms that allow sexual violence to proliferate (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). The separation between sexual violence and Australian football occurs despite research on the positive potential role that sport can play in preventing gendered violence and existing moves to use sport to engage communities in violence prevention (see Our Watch 'Preventing Violence Against Women Through Sport' campaign) (Corboz 2013; Corboz et al. 2016 ; Dyson and Corboz 2016; Dyson and Grzelinkska 2010; Hamilton et al. 2019; Liston et al. 2017).

Sport and sexual violence

The connection between sport and sexual violence is a contentious issue due to differences in epistemological approaches to the topic and interpretation of results. In particular, some researchers argue that some male-dominated sports might be more likely to support, encourage or perpetuate violence-supportive norms and behaviours (Crosset 1999; McCray 2015). Sociologists of sport and gender have approached sexual violence by examining the existence of rape cultures within sporting subcultures; the prevalence of sexual violence perpetration in certain men's sport environments, and institutional cultures that can perpetuate sexual violence (McCray 2015; Schwartz 2020). This scholarship has shifted from feminist research into sexual violence as a gendered social issue towards pro-feminist frameworks, which some feminist researchers argue is an inadequate approach to studying gender as it ignores key issues of sexual politics (McCray 2015; O'Neill 2015; Waling 2018). A major criticism of both disciplines has therefore been a lack of engagement with key feminist research principles, concepts that are considered essential for research on gendered issues such as sexual violence (Beasley 2013, 2015; McCray 2015; O'Neill 2015; Waling 2018). Research on sexual violence that does not examine the sexual politics of sport is likely to lack adequate engagement and analysis of power as it relates to gender and other social structures such as ethnicity, sexuality, class,

and race. It is necessary to examine how power functions between men, such as in male peer groups and in the marginalisation of some men, as well as how power relations factor in the sexual relations between men and women. A sexual politics approach to examining sport and sexual violence allows for power relations to be examined through processes of affirming and reaffirming masculinity and heterosexuality (O'Neill 2015, 2018). This approach to sexual violence and sport positions sports such as Australian football as sites where gendered norms are visible, and perhaps heightened, but not unique to sport.

The legacy of research on men and masculinity, and sport and sexual violence identified that sport culture perpetuates key aspects that contribute to violence against women. Specifically, researchers argued that sports such as Australian football justify the separation of men from women and privilege men's perceived physical superiority and domination of others (Coakley 1982; Nelson 1994; Runfola and Sabo Jr 1980). This claim has been echoed by others researchers who examined key factors linked to the acceptance or justification of sexual violence in sport, specifically male bonding; aggressive sports; the sexualisation and subordination of women; celebrity status and entitlement; groupie culture; and institutional support (Crosset 1999; Dyson and Flood 2008; Flood and Dyson 2007; Forbes et al. 2006; McCray 2015; Palmer 2011; Schwartz 2020). This research has been crucial for establishing sport as an important site for violence prevention initiatives, despite little evidence that factors linked to acceptance of violence have shifted.

Australian football has historically excluded women from participation as evidenced by the trivialising of female fandom and lack of playing opportunities for women prior to the recent establishment of the professional women's league (Toffoletti 2017; Toffoletti and Mewett 2012; Toffoletti and Palmer 2019). The exclusion and trivialising of women's contributions to Australian football has occurred in conjunction with similar sexist treatment of male Australian footballers' female romantic and sexual partners, as evidenced through representations of wives and girlfriends and 'groupies' (Marks 2019; Wedgwood 2008). Although there has been a recent push to make Australian football more diverse by increasing playing opportunities for women, there is little evidence to suggest that such changes will result in meaningful cultural change (Toffoletti and Palmer 2019). One reason for this is that Australian football must be acknowledged as an influential space but also as an extension of broader cultural norms. Sport is a space that can be utilised to examine how cultural norms around gender and sexuality are constantly (re)affirmed in a space where gender, specifically masculinity, is significant. Australian football can be understood

as a masculinising institution and an important space for the socialisation of many Australian men who play the sport (Drummond 2020). Sport is an important site for examining intersections between broader cultures of sexual violence because of the importance of Australian football as a cultural institution. Football plays a role in communicating dominant norms and ideologies related to masculinity and heterosexuality. Australian football can be understood as a space in which cultural norms about gender, sexuality, and sex including sexual violence are present as an extension or continuation of norms that exist in broader Australian culture.

Sexual violence is conceptualised as a continuum within this thesis in order to broaden the definition of violence to include forms of violence that do not necessarily meet legal requirements and to situate violence within broader cultural norms rather than as an aberrance or uncommon experience (Kelly 1988). Sexual violence is common for many women and is made more common due to overlapping systems of oppression such as dis/ability, race, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality. A continuum of sexual violence then allows for conceptualisation of a broader range of experiences since many instances of sexual violence are considered "minor" and outside of the realm of legal definitions of sexual violence, which are inaccessible to many, limited, and difficult to gain legal justice for (Fileborn 2016; Kelly 1988). This approach allows for consideration of how sexual violence exists within social constructions of gender, sex and sexuality, and in power relations. It aligns with the theoretical lens of sexual politics allowing for exploration of contested social construction of gender and sexuality. For example, physical domination, subordination, sexualisation of gender constructs and relations (Chung 2005; Dyson and Flood 2008; Palmer 2011). Similarly, pressure to 'perform' or 'prove' heterosexuality and masculinity can result in privileging of relationships between men, treatment of women as 'status symbols', generate competition over heterosexual prowess, and objectification of women (Bird 1996).

It is reasonable to expect that dating pressures, as an extension of norms associated with the social construction of gender and sexuality, would be present, and likely heightened, in Australian football culture due to increased visibility or 'fame', emphasis on male 'difference' based in biological essentialism, importance of the male peer group in teams and clubs, and attention from women who are specifically sexually attracted to male footballers (Dyson and Flood 2008; Flood and Dyson 2007; Waterhouse-Watson 2013a; Wedgwood 2008). However, these norms are contested and constructed and should be understood as a continuation that exists outside of sport culture. Sexual politics allows us

to examine such norms in the site of Australian football, as a cultural institution and space in which masculine norms are perpetuated. It also allows for an examination of the contestation of gender relations and hence sport is an ideal site for violence prevention (Corboz et al. 2016 ; Dyson and Grzelinkska 2010). Men's team sports, such as Australian football, are especially useful because literature suggests that violence prevention efforts should engage men and that male peer groups can perpetuate violence supportive norms and subsequent violent behaviour (Dyson and Flood 2008; Flood and Dyson 2007; Flood 2011; Moynihan et al. 2010; Pease 2008). Australian football can be utilised as an example of male peer groups that have potential to justify, excuse, support or subvert violence-supportive norms and ideologies (Dyson and Flood 2008; Lusher 2012). An analysis of male peer support within Australian football can reveal important potential contributions to understanding engaging men in violence prevention, the role of the male peer group and the potential role of sport in engaging communities in violence prevention.

The 'special' case of sport

The suggestion that male athletes are more likely to perpetrate sexual violence than other groups of men has driven an extensive and contentious body of literature that has experienced multiple evolutions. Early North American research suggests that male athletes have a greater propensity for violence against women although the relationship between sport and sexual violence cannot be proven unequivocally (Benedict and Klein 1997; Flood and Dyson 2007; Melnick 1992; Schwartz 2020; Smith and Stewart 2003). This research was influenced by feminist work that problematised the connection between masculinity and violence and saw sport as an important socialisation tool and bastion of sexist attitudes and behaviours (McCray 2015). Feminist scholarship offered a foundation of work that argued that men's team sports was based in a framework of men's superiority over women and connected this to the objectification of women and high occurrences of sexual violence (Benedict 1997; Forbes et al. 2006; Koss and Cleveland 1996; Koss and Gaines 1993; Messner and Sabo 1994; Nelson 1994). This scholarship combined with media attention on sport and sexual violence led to an assumption that athletes are more likely to be violent towards women than other populations (Crosset 1999; Forbes et al. 2006). The legacy of this research is important because it was used as a basis for arguing that men's sports, such as Australian football, should be utilised for violence prevention efforts.

Most academic research on whether male athletes were more sexually violent than other men was conducted in the 1990s and continues to be widely cited (Boeringer 1996; Frintner and Rubinson 1993; Melnick 1992; Smith and Stewart 2003). This included a survey of male students that found athletes had a greater likelihood of perpetrating sexual violence and were more likely to report potential use of coercion, alcohol, drugs, and force to gain access to sex if there was no chance of being caught (Boeringer 1996); and three separate studies that found student athletes were overrepresented as perpetrators of sexual violence on US college campuses (Crosset et al. 1996; Frintner and Rubinson 1993; Melnick 1992). There is also a demonstrated link between collegiate athletics, dating aggression, and sexual coercion (Boeringer 1999; Crosset et al. 1996; Frintner and Rubinson 1993; Koss and Gaines 1993; Sawyer et al. 2002). Although there is evidence to demonstrate a connection between athletic membership and sexual violence perpetration these results are inconsistent (Koss and Gaines 1993; McCray 2015). Melnick (1992) proposed several key factors to explain the relationship between sport and sexual violence, that sport was used as a setting for proving masculinity, encouraged use of physical violence, privileged male peer groups and bonding practices, treated intercollegiate athletes as celebrities, and a lack of consequences for perpetrators through the athletic justice system. However, these factors are not unique to sport and suggest that instead sport can be viewed as a setting for understanding the connection between masculinity and sexual violence.

The influence of early research on sport, masculinity, and sexual violence is enduring and present in several major factors identified by researchers who utilised men's sports as a setting for understanding men's violence against women. These factors include male bonding (Flood and Dyson 2007; Messner and Sabo 1994; Messner and Stevens 2002); aggressive sports (Crosset 2002; Flood and Dyson 2007; Forbes et al. 2006); the sexualisation and subordination of women (Palmer 2011); celebrity status and entitlement (Crosset 1999; Flood and Dyson 2007; Palmer 2011); 'groupie culture' (Benedict 1998; Melnick 1992); and institutional support (Crosset 1999; Dyson and Flood 2008; Flood and Dyson 2007; Forbes et al. 2006; McCray 2015; Palmer 2011). Other explanations for higher incidences of sexual violence in male athlete populations include drug and alcohol abuse; group socialisation; head injuries; self-selection; and identification (Crosset 1999; Flood and Dyson 2007; Palmer 2011). Other researchers have pointed to specific aspects of sporting cultures such as 'party' atmospheres or alcohol 'cultures' in which alcohol is used in team bonding exercises and can result in exaggerated displays of masculinity and

heterosexuality in the context of the male peer group (Crosset 1999). These factors are explored in more detail below.

Male bonding is considered an essential part of men's team sports and has been a focus of significant historical research on masculinity and sport (Curry 1991; Flood 2008; Messner 2002, 2010; Messner and Sabo 1994). However, some researchers in early scholarship argued that team bonds are strengthened through a range of practices that promote the separation of men and women and men's superiority over women (Messner and Sabo 1994). More recent research has problematised male bonding as loyalty to the group is thought to override personal integrity if the peer groups support violence against women (Cover 2013; Dyson and Flood 2008; Flood and Dyson 2007; Palmer 2011; Schwartz 2020). Male bonding can increase the difficulty of challenging other men who might exhibit attitudes or behaviours that could be considered sexist or violent, especially in settings where there is a clear hierarchy between men, such as sports teams (Corboz et al. 2016). Research on male bonding demonstrates the importance of men's peer groups as a source for sustaining or challenging violence-supportive norms and behaviours and is therefore an essential site for examination of sexual violence prevention (DeKeseredy and Schwartz 2013; Schwartz 2020).

'Aggressive' contact sports are considered a factor in men's violence against women due to physical aggression, competitiveness, emphasis on toughness, inflicting pain on others and glorification of violence (Agnew and Drummond 2015; Crosset 1999; Flood and Dyson 2007; Kalof 2014; Lusher 2012; Messner 1990; Messner and Sabo 1994; Palmer 2011; Waddington 2018). Aggressive sports were considered problematic in early research that focused on male physical superiority, particularly as inflicting pain and physical domination of others was glorified (Crosset 1999; Messner 1990). An emphasis on men's physical superiority as a visible expression of masculinity was thought to encourage men to demonstrate attributes such as physical domination, and separation from women, interpreted by some as superiority over women (Crosset 1999; Dyson and Flood 2008; Flood and Dyson 2007). However, some researchers warned against 'aggressive sports' as an explanatory factor in men's violence against women as a generalisation that is not applicable to many sports (Crosset 1999, 2002; Forbes et al. 2006).

The absence of women's roles in sport or the subordination of women is seen to contribute to attitudes that can encourage violence against women (Palmer 2011). Scholars consistently argue that privileging men's participation in sport can reaffirm male superiority

through separation from women which can be compounded with other factors such as glorifying bonds between men and physical violence and domination (Curry 1991; Messner 1990). Attempts to exclude women from participation in sport can be found in historical evidence although modern sports also exclude women or trivialise their participation (Toffoletti 2017; Toffoletti and Mewett 2012; Toffoletti and Palmer 2019). The trivialisation of women's roles in sport can be observed through examination of female athletes (Kane et al. 2013; Toffoletti 2017; Toffoletti and Mewett 2012; Toffoletti and Palmer 2019), fans (Crawford and Gosling 2004; Forsyth 2007; Mewett and Toffoletti 2008, 2012; Toffoletti 2017; Toffoletti and Mewett 2012), and other participants such as romantic partners (Forsyth 2007; Gauthier and Forsyth 2000; Gmelch and Antonio 1998; Lorentzen 2012; Marks 2019; Wedgwood 2008). Palmer (2006) identifies four roles for women present in Australian football that normalise sexual violence through a discourse of 'boys will be boys': the good wife/mother; stoic spouse; decorative hyperfeminine prop; and the other 'sexually available' woman. These models construct women as carers or decorative, highlighting a gender order that reaffirms masculine and heterosexual dominance and reinforces the separation of men and women. This is substantial because some critics point to women's roles in particular sports, either as sexualised props for men's performance (as cheerleaders), or as supporters and carers, as implicated in sexist norms (Crosset 1999).

Celebrity treatment of athletes is thought to breed entitlement and discourage accountability off the field because athletes are held in high regard by community members and institutions alike (Crosset 1999; Flood and Dyson 2007; Lefkowitz 1997; Palmer 2011). Some scholars argue that celebrity treatment is a consequence of a highly misogynist sport culture that grants athletes elite status and reverence (Safai 2002) while others see celebrity as a mass media response to societies that value sport and sports people (Mewett and Toffoletti 2008). The celebrity culture that is seen to surround athletics is connected to the presence of a 'groupie culture' that some scholars argue could encourage a sense of entitlement and shape assumptions about sex and consent (Benedict 1998; Melnick 1992; Mewett and Toffoletti 2008; Palmer and Thompson 2007). The sexual availability of some women who demonstrate a sexual preference for athletes simultaneously complicates and affirms the sexual script that assigns male athletes dominant and revered status (Wedgwood 2008) 'Groupie culture' has received limited academic attention as it is a taken for granted aspect of sport culture however 'groupies' are worthy of significant exploration as this explanation is utilised to dismiss, normalise, or excuse allegations of sexual violence involving male athletes in media, legal and academic

contexts (Waterhouse-Watson 2012a, 2013a, 2019a; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011; Wedgwood 2008).

There is limited research on specific factors that contribute to violence against women within Australian sport. However, the factors that have been discussed are not unique to sport, as some scholars have argued. Rather factors that contributed to sexual violence within sporting cultures are reflective of the current social configuration of gender and the sexism present in norms and broader Australian culture (Flood and Dyson 2007). Australian football can then be viewed as an extension and continuation of norms located within dominant ideologies of gender and sexuality that contribute to a culture of sexual violence. This perspective allows for Australian football to be utilised as a microcosm for understanding sexual violence as a common social problem that is connected to social constructions of masculinity and heterosexuality which can then shed light on the transformative potential of sport for violence prevention initiatives. Scholarship on sport and sexual violence has shifted in focus from locating sporting culture within broader rape culture to internal incidences of sexual violence in the sporting community (Crosset et al. 1996); athletes' perpetration of sexual violence in specific communities i.e. the collegiate sector (Benedict and Klein 1997; Curry 1991, 1998; Earle 1996; Forbes et al. 2006; Gage 2008; McCray 2015; McMahon 2015; Moynihan et al. 2010; Murnen and Kohlman 2007; Steinfeldt et al. 2011; Young, Desmarais et al. 2017); features of sporting cultures that might encourage violence against women (Dyson and Flood 2008; Flood and Dyson 2007); and utilising sport as a violence prevention tool that can engage broader communities (Dyson 2007; Dyson and Grzelinkska 2010; Rowe, Karg et al. 2018; Sherry et al. 2015). This thesis attempts to consolidate scholarship on sport and sexual violence in order to understand insights from shifts in the literature that can be utilised to reconceptualise sport as a space where social constructions of masculinity and heterosexuality might be heightened and subsequently normalise, but where associated norms and ideologies can shift and transform.

Sexual violence in Australian sport

There is no Australian research to uphold the notion that male athletes are more likely to perpetrate or support sexual violence than other men (Dyson and Flood 2008; Flood and Dyson 2007). However, there is significant scholarship on sport and sexual violence in the Australian context developed in response to several high-profile cases of violence

involving Australian footballers. This work was led by feminist scholars who located the issue of sexual violence within a broader sporting culture that perpetuated problematic attitudes towards women and had historically excluded women and the LGBT+ community from legitimate participation. Scholarship on sexual violence and Australian footballers focused on the culture of Australian football (Hindley 2005, 2006); willingness of the Australian public to forgive (white) Australian footballers accused of sexual violence (Baird 2009; Hirsch 2017; Kearney 2012; Nurka 2013; Waterhouse-Watson 2009a, 2011, 2013a); portrayal of women who accuse footballers of sexual violence (Cover 2012; Mewett and Toffoletti 2008; Nurka 2013; Toffoletti 2007; Toffoletti and Mewett 2009; Waterhouse-Watson 2014; Watson 2014); role of media in painting sexual violence as 'sex scandal' (Cover 2012, 2015; Lonie and Toffoletti 2012; Osborne et al. 2016; Toffoletti 2007; Watson 2014); and legal responses to Australian footballers accused of sexual violence (Hirsch 2017; Philadelphoff-Puren 2004; Waterhouse-Watson 2009a, 2011, 2013a). Much of this scholarship is focused on elite Australian football with the exception of work on primary prevention, and women's safety and inclusion in community and semi-professional Australian football that followed institutional responses to allegations of sexual violence (Dyson 2009; Dyson and Grzelinkska 2010; Dyson et al. 2011; Grzelinska et al. 2014). Australian research on sexual violence in sport can be analysed within a framework of sexual politics in that this work identifies the exclusion, subordination, and sexualisation of women participants and critiques those institutions that work to reaffirm the current configuration of gender and sexuality and dominant ideologies within social constructions of masculinity and heterosexuality, namely sport organisations, media, and the law (Hirsch 2017; Kift 2005; Mewett and Toffoletti 2008; Philadelphoff-Puren 2004; Toffoletti 2007; Toffoletti and Mewett 2009; Waterhouse-Watson 2009, 2011, 2012a, 2013a, 2019a; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011).

Research on sport, masculinity and sexual violence in Australia developed in response to a series of allegations of gang rape involving elite rugby league and Australian footballers in the 2000s (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). Media reports began to centre on debates about Australian footballers and rugby players and sexual assault in 2004, culminating in the national ABC network airing an episode on sexual assault and the AFL as part of its *Four Corners* program. The episode featured three sexual assault cases that had occurred in 2000, one involving an unidentified AFL player and local league associates; gang rape involving four Brisbane Lions players including Adam Heuskes, and a gang rape case involving Port Adelaide player Peter Burgoyne, Sydney Swans' Michael O'Loughlin and Adam Heuskes (Waterhouse-Watson 2012a, 2013a). 'Gang rape' became an academic

focus in scholarship on sport and sexual violence with varying explanations arising for this form of sexual violence, including team dynamics, cultures of entitlement, masculine practices, or a collective dehumanising of women (Baird 2009; Cover 2013; Kift 2005; Lorentzen 2012; Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). An additional *Four Corners* episode in 2009 sparked intense media interest into sexual violence in sport and focused on a case involving a dozen rugby league players and staff, including television presenter Matthew Johns, who were alleged to have gang raped a woman, who was interviewed for the episode (Nurka 2013). Some senior football insiders admitted that there had been a culture of sexual violence in these sporting codes but that these issues had been kept out of the public eye (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). The role of media in excusing and justifying sexual violence was of significant concern within the scholarship, particularly in regard to victim blaming and the 'narrative immunity' that was granted to Australian footballers accused of sexual violence (Waterhouse-Watson 2009, 2011, 2012a, 2013a; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011).

Media and legal discourses intertwined in significant 'scandals' involving Australian footballers and sexual violence or misconduct particularly in reporting of criminal reports, cases, and trials (Waterhouse-Watson 2009, 2013a). There have been at least 15 reported cases of sexual violence involving elite Australian footballers between 1998 and 2011 but only one case that has resulted in a legal conviction (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). This sexual assault case involved St Kilda footballer Stephen Milne who had engaged in 'partner swapping' following a night out with teammate, Leigh Montagna, without the consent or knowledge of the woman involved. The case was initially tried in 2004 and resulted in an acquittal but was reopened following allegations of police corruption, intimidation, evidence and witness tampering that had interfered with the initial trial (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). Milne plead guilty to a lesser charge of indecent assault and was convicted following his retirement from professional football (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). St Kilda Football Club had maintained Milne's innocence throughout the saga and had contributed financially to Milne's legal costs, along with many of his teammates (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). St Kilda players were also involved in other 'scandals' at the time with new recruit Andrew Lovett also facing charges of sexual assault that were later cleared; and the notable St Kilda Schoolgirl scandal (Cover 2012; Hirsch 2017; Kearney 2012; Waterhouse-Watson 2013a, 2014; Watson 2014). There are also fewer examples of media reporting on sexual violence involving amateur and semi-professional Australian footballers, likely due to their lack of celebrity status not attracting national media attention. There have been two recent cases that garnered national media

attention, one case involving a Victorian Football League player in association with AFL players from Collingwood Football Club, and another case involving three members of the Brisbane Lions academy (AAP 2015, Hobday 2011). Another case that received significant local media attention in the South Australian context involved a South Australia National Football League player, Nicholas Murphy (Fewster 2016). Fraser James Pope was tried and cleared over sexual assault charges that occurred during a series of events involving separate allegations against Collingwood footballers, Dayne Beams and John McCarthy (Hobday 2011; Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). It was alleged that the victim had consensual sex with one man and was then coerced into sex with Beams while two to three other men were present including McCarthy, and that Pope had later raped the woman in a nearby alleyway (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). This allegation became the subject of a high-profile trial in which Pope was cleared of charges. Three former Brisbane Lions academy players; Bailey Hayes-Gordon, Jacob Watson, and Nicholas Jackson, were found guilty of raping their teenage friend who was unconscious and intoxicated at an Australia Day celebration (Petrine 2017). The trio penetrated their friend with a glass bottle, filmed the incident and posted it on social media, arguing that it was a drunken prank and intended to be funny (AAP 2015). The three men received two-year sentences that were to be suspended after six months (Petrine 2017). Nicholas Murphy, a former captain of the South Adelaide Football Club, was charged with the digital penetration of a woman who had been unconscious and intoxicated at his friend's home after a night out (Fewster 2016; Marks 2018). Murphy argued that the woman had wanted a threesome with him and his friend, who was also asleep at the time, and that he had waited for his girlfriend to leave the house to initiate sexual contact (Fewster 2016; Marks 2018). Despite inconsistencies in his testimony, Murphy was cleared of charges (Marks 2018).

These cases highlight the role of dominant ideologies of gender and sexuality in the social construction of sexual violence and how this manifests through media representations and legal outcomes that employ victim blaming narratives, absolve Australian footballers of personal responsibility, and demand little response from sport organisations. Changes that sport bodies have employed, such as the introduction of policies and sex education for players, are motivated by media attention and employed through a punitive legal framework.

Much of the academic research on Australian football and sexual violence has focused on specific cases or individual perpetrators to explain the discourses connected to sport, including media   (Toffoletti 2007; Waterhouse-Watson 2012a, 2013a; Waterhouse-

Watson and Brown 2011) and legal institutions (Hirsch 2017; Philadelphoff-Puren 2004; Waterhouse-Watson 2009, 2013a, 2019c, 2019d) and dominant ideologies of white male dominance that are rooted in Australia's colonialist context (Baird 2009; Kearney 2012; Hirsch 2017; Waterhouse-Watson 2019c, 2019d). However, there has recently been a shift in focusing on individual perpetrators of violence within sport to focusing on how sporting organisations can be utilised to confront violence-supportive norms and ideologies and engage community members, including male athletes, in the prevention of violence against women (Hamilton et al. 2019; Liston et al. 2017). This shift is located within a broader push to engage men, including male athletes, in violence prevention strategies and initiatives and a subsequent 'sport for social change' movement (Fabiano et al. 2003; Moynihan et al. 2010; Pease 2008; Sherry et al. 2015). The shifts in the violence prevention space also align with an increase in women's athletic participation and the establishment of a professional women's Australian football league (Toffoletti and Palmer 2019). The current focus on sport and men in violence prevention work means that Australian football represents timely potential to re-examine how dominant gender and sexuality ideologies and associated peer norms proliferate in Australian football and how these norms might excuse, justify or encourage sexual violence.

This thesis aims to examine how masculinity, sex, and sexual violence are constructed in the context of Australian football. Australian football is positioned as a microcosm for examining broader cultural norms about gender and sexual violence, specifically how these constructions overlap and inform each other. This examination centres women's sexual experiences with male Australian footballers in departure from literature that spoke about women, as groupies or victims, rather than to them. Women's experiences are used, in conjunction with survey results from male footballers, to identify how masculinity, sex, and sexual violence are constructed in the context of Australian football, women's sexual experiences with male footballers, and the potential for contributions of this knowledge for violence prevention. The next chapter outlines the methodology for this research.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

This thesis used a feminist social constructionist epistemology to position sexual violence as a product of socially constructed gender relations (Beasley 2005; Kelly 1988). This positioning, in conjunction with a sexual politics theoretical lens, informed analysis of constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence, including how these factors overlap and inform each other. Sexual politics specifically addresses how gender relations are continually contested or reaffirmed, meaning that constructions of gender and violence can shift (Franzway et al. 2019). The contested nature of gender and violence were examined in a mixed methods research design, specifically a survey conducted with 135 male amateur and semi-professional Australian footballers and in-depth interviews with 10 women. This project specifically centred women's experiences of sexual violence, as part of the broader feminist goals of the project.

Design and epistemology

Feminist research is underpinned by the pursuit of social justice and is based on an epistemological rejection of notions of objectivity and universal truth (Hesse-Biber 2014; Pini and Pease 2013). A feminist social constructionist epistemology was used to position gender as socially constructed and link sexual violence to the social construction of gender (Beasley 2005; Kelly 1988). This epistemology avoids essentialist identity categories or typologies and instead focuses on power relations as the source of constructed notions of difference (Beasley 2005). Sexual politics complements this approach as it provides a lens for analysing how gender is constantly contested, subverted, and maintained, outside of essentialist binary notions of gender (Franzway 2016; O'Neill 2015). Moreover, sexual politics frames the construction of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence in the context of Australian football as a continuation of broader social constructions of gender. This approach shifts away from problematising sport and masculinity, and associated presumptions that sexual violence is inevitable and limited to certain types of perpetrators (Livholts 2008; Marks 2018; Powell and Henry 2014). Sexual politics also presents a framework for understanding methodological issues such as resistance to feminist

research and ideology and the associated complex process of the contestation and subversion of gender happening within and outside of the academy.

Research setting

This research focused on amateur and semi-professional (pre-elite) Australian football leagues based in South Australian organisations, the Adelaide Footy League, South Australian Community Football League (SACFL), and the South Australian National Football League (SANFL). The Adelaide Footy League and SACFL are considered amateur leagues as the purpose of play is based on fostering a sense of community, rather than elite and paid competition, although some SACFL players do receive compensation. The SANFL is a semi-elite league and players receive a wage commensurate with the level of play, as semi-professional players. However, many SANFL players may seek additional employment to supplement their wages.

These three leagues encompass regional, rural, and remote South Australia and metropolitan Adelaide and participants were recruited from across these regions. South Australia is not as densely populated as some other Australian states, as most of the small state population reside in the capital city and the remainder are spread amongst smaller regional centres and townships. In regional areas and Indigenous communities, participation rates in Australian football are high and sport membership is valuable for fostering community and a sense of belonging (Waitt and Clifton 2015).

Aims

This thesis sought to understand women's experiences of sex with Australian pre-elite footballers and use these experiences to explore the constructions of masculinity, sex and sexual violence. Women's sexual experiences, supplemented by male footballers' understanding of sex, consent, and gender, provided a nuanced exploration of how these constructions overlap and inform each other. These nuances have particular implications for violence prevention, a key aim of the thesis.

This thesis was guided by three research questions including:

1. How is masculinity, sex and sexual violence constructed in the context of pre-elite Australian football?
2. What are women's experiences of sex with Australian pre-elite footballers?
3. How can pre-elite Australian football contribute to further understanding sexual violence in the broader Australian context?

Methods

The study contained two stages. Stage 1 involved semi-structured interviews with women who had sexual experiences with non-elite Australian footballers and Stage 2 involved a large-scale survey with amateur and semi-professional Australian footballers. Interviews were used to centre women's stories and men's survey responses were used to supplement interviews with detail about how male Australian footballers construct gender, sex, and sexual violence. All participants were recruited through social media using Facebook pages that contained information about the study. Facebook was used as a recruitment method to reach a wide range of participants across metropolitan and regional South Australia and a variety of demographics. A total of 10 interviews were conducted and 135 survey responses collected. The data was then thematically analysed and considered in the context of debates about sex and sexual violence in Australian football that have taken place over the last decade.

Interviews with women

Interviews with women were used to centre women's stories in debates about Australian football, sex, and sexual violence. Interviewing women about their sexual relationships with amateur footballers was used to counteract dominant narratives of passive trophy wives or predatory female groupies that had proliferated in debates about sport and sexual violence. Instead interviews were used to elicit a range of perspectives on the intersecting norms and ideologies in the context of Australian football. Interviews with women provided rich insights into the sexual politics of South Australian amateur and semi-professional Australian football leagues and the nuances present in negotiating sexual interactions with male Australian footballers.

Recruitment

Women were recruited via a purpose-built Facebook page and recruitment flyers that were distributed through social media (see Appendix One). Facebook was used as a recruitment strategy to reach a broad range of participants. Recruitment flyers called for participants over the age of 18 who had some sort of sexual experience with amateur and semi-professional Australian footballers, although consideration was also given to one interview where the respondent discussed her experiences with an elite player.

'Sexual experience' was used, rather than 'relationship' or 'sex' to capture a broad range of experiences including consensual, non-consensual, committed, and casual relationships. Sexual violence was conceptualised using a continuum to avoid privileging any particular forms of sexual violence and to recognise a spectrum of sexually violent experiences that might not usually be included in models that rely on legal models, including harassment (Kelly 1988). Most participants self-selected to participate because they had some connection to my personal and professional network and recognised me as trustworthy. Eligible participants self-selected by contacting me via email or purpose-built Facebook pages to express interest in participating. They were then provided a copy of the consent form and participant information letter to provide context for the study and inform their decision to participate. Participants were advised through this process that questions would centre around sexual and non-sexual interactions with football players, attitudes towards women, how society views footballers, and how footballers view themselves.

Sample

The recruitment process resulted in a diverse sample of 10 women from regional and metropolitan South Australia, described in Table 3.1. Demographic information was not specifically collected, and listed information was surmised from interviews or is an approximation, i.e. age. The sample is diverse in experience as there was a broad selection criterion. Participants drew on a range of experiences including long-term relationships, casual sexual encounters, and sexual violence. Many of the participants discussed multiple experiences including consensual sex and sexual violence. The level of detail and breadth of experiences across the 10 interviews allowed for the study to

capture the nuances present in sexual experiences, and a range of experiences of sexual violence including harassment, coercion, non-consensual condom removal, and rape. Pseudonyms are used.

Table 3.1.

Participant	Description	Experience
Alyssa	Early 20s, worked in hospitality. Resided in metropolitan Adelaide.	Alyssa was in a stable and happy relationship with a male footballer at the time of the interview. Prior to this relationship Alyssa explained several negative interactions with other men who played football, in particular an experience of being intimidated by a group of footballers and raped by one of them. She also described some interactions with male footballers that occurred while working in hospitality.
Bianca	Mid-20s, young professional. Residing in metropolitan Adelaide.	Bianca discussed her varying experiences with SANFL players and an AFL player. In particular, Bianca juxtaposed her experience of fulfilling consensual casual sex with an AFL player and various unfulfilling sexual interactions with SANFL players. She also discussed her observations from the position of football fan and former resident of a regional area with strong community investment in sport.
Brooke	Late 20s, young professional. Residing in regional South Australia.	Brooke described consensual casual sexual experiences with a local football player from the country area that she resided in and another with a footballer who was visiting the area on an end-of-season trip. Her experiences were couched in descriptions of the culture of regional South Australia and connection to sport.
Courtney	Approximately late 40s, occupation unknown. Resided in metropolitan Adelaide.	Courtney reflected on her past relationship during the 1990s with a semi-professional footballer who later played at an elite level. Courtney focused her reflections on her relationship and the way that she and other partners were treated by coaches at the two SANFL clubs that her partner played for during their relationship.
Kim	Early 30s, young professional. Resided in metropolitan Adelaide.	Kim discussed her experiences of sexual harassment from footballers while attending a secondary school with a dedicated program for developing Australian football talent. She also described an instance of group sexual harassment that occurred after leaving school at a pub frequented by male footballers. Kim described experiences involving her sister and friends that further reinforced her fear of footballers.

Monique	Mid 20s, stay-at-home mother. Residing in regional South Australia.	Monique discussed her marriage to a senior SANFL player and involvement with the club that he played for. She also compared her experiences to her husband's former club in the regional town where they lived.
Naomi	Late 20s, worked in hospitality. Residing in metropolitan Adelaide.	Naomi discussed her experiences with a long-term partner, an amateur footballer and her involvement with his club. She also described being sexually harassed by footballers at her job as a hospitality professional, witnessing footballers sexually harass others while on end-of-season trips, and an instance of physical violence that resulted in the death of a young man.
Nina	Approximately 40s, university student. Resided in metropolitan Adelaide.	Nina discussed her experiences of football culture, while living in regional South Australia and her past relationship with a male footballer during the 1980s.
Sasha	Early 20s, university student. Residing in metropolitan Adelaide.	Sasha spoke about her experience of being sexually assaulted by an SANFL player, whom she met on a night out, coming to terms with her experience, and later attempting to communicate with the footballer about her experience.
Vanessa	Approximately late 20s-early 30s, stay-at-home mother. Residing in regional South Australia.	Vanessa reflected on her experiences living in a small town in regional South Australia and the normalisation of sexual violence by footballers in this area. She described an instance of sexual violence that occurred when she was a teenager and a series of incidents with a male footballer who she had an 'on and off' relationship with for approximately 10 years.

Method

Women were interviewed face to face for approximately one hour. A participant-led interview method was chosen to allow for private discussion that would allow participants time to discuss their experiences at-length and in a level of detail that they were comfortable with. The purpose of the interviews was topical and a semi-structured approach was employed, using interview themes rather than questions to allow participants to direct the interview (see Appendix Four) (McCray 2015). The semi-structured approach to interviews meant that responses were diverse and broad, although organised by themes in the research, and redistributed some of the interview authority to participants (Hesse-Biber 2014).

Interviews were held in neutral public spaces such as cafés in the Adelaide metro area, at the University of Adelaide, and via phone. One phone interview took place as the participant was not comfortable discussing her experience face-to-face. This participant had a traumatic experience and was struggling to communicate about the experience due to the shame and sense of responsibility that she felt. Interviews were approached with sensitivity and assured participants a non-judgemental and anonymous space to discuss their experiences in. Flexibility in interview mode and location was offered to participants to ensure that they were comfortable and to minimise any inconvenience to them as part of a feminist ethics of care and responsibility (Hesse-Biber 2014). Participants were also reimbursed in recognition of their time with $30 vouchers for a supermarket and retail group.

Interviews began with introductions and discussion about motivations for participation. Participants were often eager to tell their stories and discussed their experiences without rapport building or prompting. The interview was designed for participants to feel in control of the interview and follow ups were kept to a minimum during the initial introductory phase of the interview. Some follow-up occurred related to general attitudes towards women and any issues of sexism in club environments. Women who had negative experiences with sexual violence and sexism did not require prompting. However, women who were not connected to a club or had positive experiences were invited to reflect on women's positions in football clubs. These discussions involved wives and partners' contributions to clubs, recognition of partners by players and coaches, women working in club environments as volunteers or coaches, and partnerships with women's sports such as netball or Australian football. The interview would close with consideration of sexual violence and Australian football as a general phenomenon and the opinion of participants on the role that clubs should play in educating players about consent and ethical sex, who should be responsible for educating players, and other ideas about tackling sexism and sexual violence.

Participants who did not discuss sexual violence or other trauma appeared comfortable throughout the interview process and were not pressed to discuss anything that they did not seem actively willing or enthusiastic to discuss. For instance, some women were uncomfortable discussing their sexual experiences and reflecting on gender roles during sex. 'Gender roles' were confusing unless women had experience with someone who they perceived as particularly domineering and therefore 'masculine'. I countered this by reiterating to participants that they did not need to answer any questions if they did not

want to. This process was more difficult to manage with participants who discussed trauma because they indicated a willingness to discuss the issue early in the interview but appeared to become uncomfortable later and engaged in some internalised victim blaming. I developed a strategy of disclosing my insider status in the research, as a survivor of sexual violence, to ensure women were comfortable disclosing traumatic experiences to me and were assured that they would not be blamed or judged.

Ethics

This research was approved by the University of Adelaide Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). Ensuring the comfort and privacy of all participants was the primary concern of the research team and was considered through every aspect of the research design. The Human Research Ethics Committee were satisfied that participants' anonymity had been considered and appropriate data management process were in place. Data was deidentified and participants were assigned pseudonyms to protect their anonymity. Any data that could potentially identify participants, for example consent forms, were stored in locked cabinets at secure facilities and electronic data was stored on secure university servers. Participants were also notified in information letters (see Appendix Two) that any illegal activity disclosed in interviews might need to be reported to the HREC.

The ethics review process did not include significant consideration of participant or researcher wellbeing, particularly emotional wellbeing. I developed strategies to address participants' emotional wellbeing in consultation with a counsellor to avoid retraumatising women during interviews. This included disclosing my insider status as a sexual violence survivor and having knowledge of local specialised support services. However, researcher emotional wellbeing was not a concern throughout milestone requirements and should have been flagged during ethics review and initial research proposal milestones given the sensitive nature of the research, my experience with sexual violence, and the risk of vicarious trauma. These concerns are discussed in more depth in the reflexivity section of this chapter.

Surveying men

Surveys were used to reach a large population spread over a significant geographical area and a range of demographics. There are over 30,000 men playing at over 350 amateur and semi-professional men's Australian football clubs in South Australia across the Adelaide Footy League (formerly South Australian Amateur League), South Australian Country Football League, and the South Australian National Football League. Surveys represented a method that allowed men anonymity, privacy, and a comfortable option to talk about personal and uncomfortable topics without having to relay them to me directly. This method helped circumvent some of the recruitment issues in working with men especially as a young woman and outsider in the sport community.

The surveys consisted of multiple-choice questions and hypothetical scenarios that related to men's construction of gender, sex and sexual violence in the context of Australian football. Questions were similar to those included in the VicHealth National Community Attitudes Survey and were adapted from a survey conducted with elite male Australian footballers following sex education and respectful relationships training. This meant that comparisons are able to be made between the general Australian community, elite Australian footballers and amateur and semi-professional players although survey responses were not intended to serve as broad generalisations of male football players. Survey responses were used to supplement and offer additional context to interviews with women about their sexual experiences within the context of social constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence in Australian football.

Recruitment

As an outsider in the sport community, I did not have existing relationships with any Australian football clubs or organisational bodies that I could utilise. I attempted to build a relationship with the SANFL and gain their support for the project but was unsuccessful. The SANFL were slow to respond and ultimately rejected any involvement with the project citing that they did not wish to overwhelm their players with research projects. The Adelaide Footy League President was supportive of education programs on factors related to men's violence against women and wanted the state government to fund and institute such a program (Smith 2017). However, most email contact with clubs from the Adelaide

Footy League and other leagues within the SACFL did not receive a response and most participants elected to be involved independent of club or league involvement.

Social media recruitment meant a broad range of demographics could be reached. Facebook targeted advertising was used to reach men over 18 who were interested in Australian football. A Facebook page was created to distribute recruitment flyers, promote sponsored Facebook advertising, and host website and survey links (see Appendix Six). A website was created to use as a landing page that could host the Participant Information Letter (Appendix Seven), contact information and a link to the online survey. The survey was hosted using Google Forms website that held a Participant Information Sheet, the survey questions, and space for feedback. The survey was hosted online to easily capture participants across South Australia, a large region encompassing many remote areas. The online mode also ensured participant anonymity. Participants self-selected to complete an online survey following a recruitment drive on Facebook (see Appendix Five).

The research would have ideally been complemented by semi-structured interviews with male footballers and this was included as an option in the research design. However, no participants contacted me to proceed with an interview despite multiple prompts to do so built into the survey format. This highlighted the difficulty in recruiting men but also that this subject matter may be difficult to discuss at length in an interview setting.

Sample

The survey (Appendix Five) was made available for anonymous completion online by any male current or past player of an amateur Australian football league based in South Australia (including border towns). This allowed for men from leagues including the Adelaide Footy League (SAAFL), South Australian Country Football League (SACFL), and the South Australian National Football League (SANFL) to participate, ensuring potential for a broad spread across regions, professionalisation, and playing commitment. No other selection criteria were imposed to encourage high levels of participation and resulted in a total 135 responses.

These participants varied in age and locality (see Figures 3.1. and 3.3.), although most participants were young men, currently playing at clubs in metropolitan Adelaide.

Participants ranged in age from year of birth 1961-1999. The average year of birth was 1985, with the highest number of respondents born in 1994 and 1998 (see Figure 3.1.).

Participation by league or playing type also varied (see Figure 3.3.) as 86.3% of players came from community or metropolitan clubs that may compensate players but are not considered elite playing groups. A large majority of players who identified their club were amateur players within the SACFL (86.3%) and a further 9.7% could be categorised as semi-professional players, belonging to the state league, the SANFL.

Participants self-selected to complete the survey. However, there were two or more respondents from 56% of represented clubs (not shown to preserve players' anonymity) which suggests that men may have played a role in encouraging each other to complete the survey and that some clubs may have advertised or encouraged participation. Participants were able to select all clubs that they had played for during the last 10 years of their career and a total of 100 clubs were represented across 91 responses. A further 44 respondents chose not to identify which club/s they were associated with and are therefore not reflected in the below statistics. 142 clubs were represented across 25 leagues. Individual clubs represented between 0.4% and 3.5% of the sample. Data on individual clubs is not presented here to protect the anonymity of participants. The South Australian Community League is made up of 31 further leagues including the large Adelaide Footy League. The Adelaide Footy League represented 51% of the sample.

Figure 3.1.: Participants' year of birth
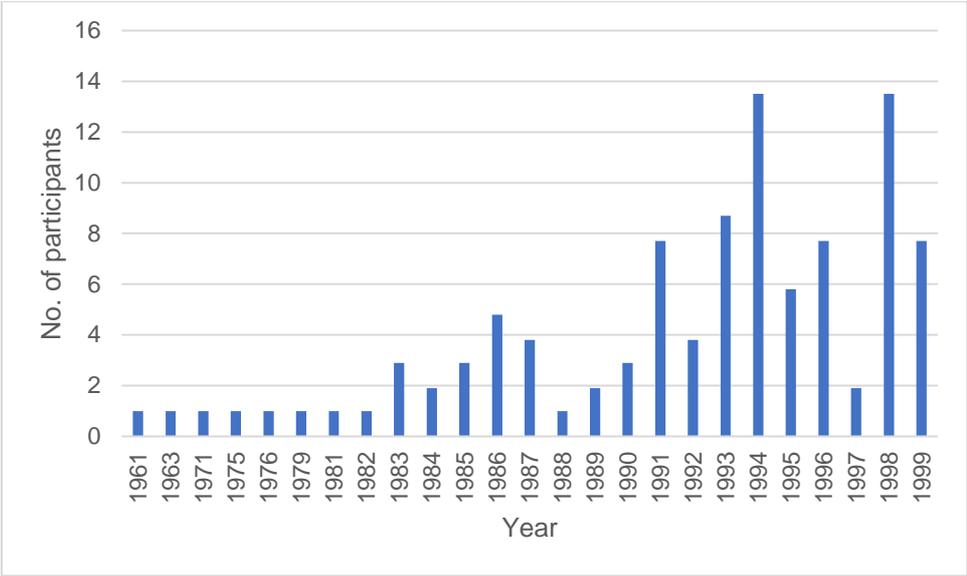
Figure 3.2.: Current football membership
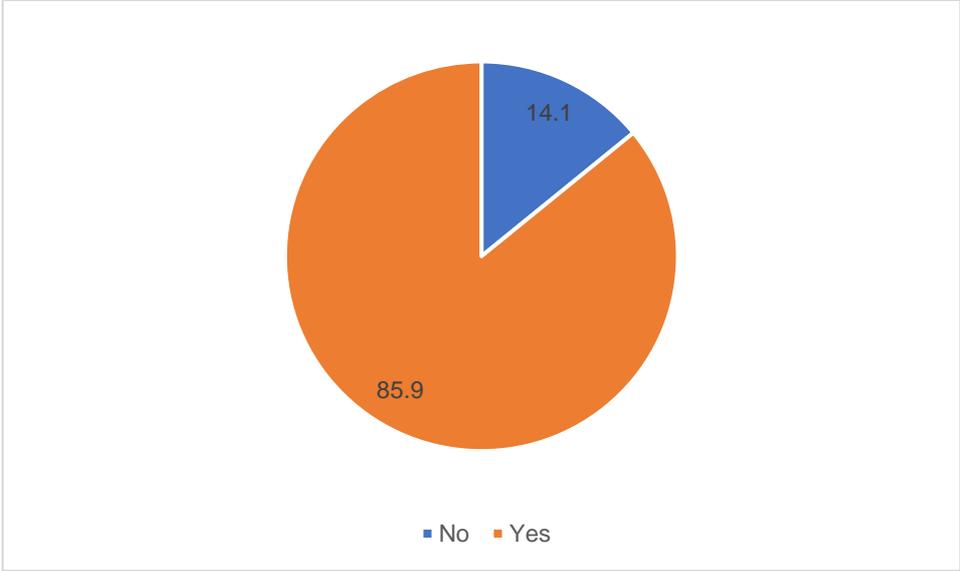
Figure 3.3.: Percentage of participants by league
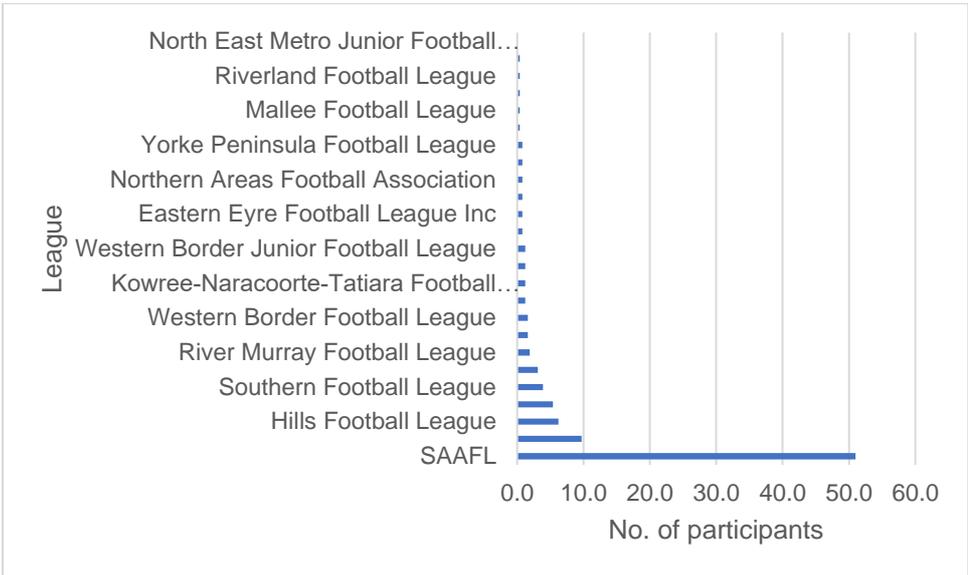
Figure 3.3.: Percentage of participants by league type
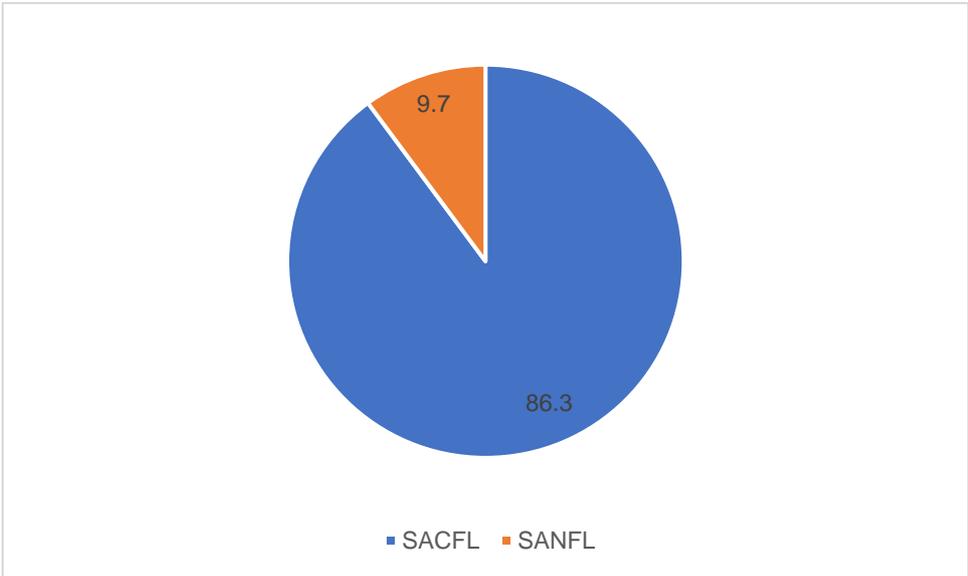
Male amateur and semi-professional (non-elite) footballers were sampled to address a gap in scholarship on masculinity and Australian sport that had primarily focused on elite Australian footballers. Non-elite players make up a broad range of participants and could give more insight into the scope of Australian football as a cultural institution. The potential range of footballers who could participate was kept intentionally broad to include a breadth of experiences across metropolitan Adelaide and regional, remote, and rural South

Australia. Border towns and Broken Hill were also included as these areas are part of South Australian football leagues. The amateur and semi-professional playing group also offer a more potential for community interventions into violence prevention which further highlights the need for research in this space.

Method

A survey method was chosen to engage as many participants as possible over a broad and large sample, amateur and semi-professional Australian footballers. According to the websites for each league there are 69 clubs in the Adelaide Footy League, 272 across 29 leagues in the SACFL, and 10 clubs in the SANFL. Based on reported data there was at least one participant from 56% of the Adelaide Footy League clubs, 80% of SANFL clubs, and 19% of the SACFL.

The survey that was distributed was an amended version of the survey 'Taking a Stand – A Case Study of Responsibility in the AFL' that was distributed to AFL players who had completed Respect and Responsibility training (Corboz et al. 2016). The 'Taking a Stand' survey contained similar questions to the VicHealth 'National Community Attitudes Survey' (Webster et al. 2014) and was used to ascertain professional Australian footballers' attitudes and knowledge about sex and consent after completing the Australian Football League Respect and Responsibility training, aimed at improving players' knowledge of consent and legal ramifications for sexual assault, and ethical sexual behaviour. The evaluation tool consisted of multiple-choice survey questions that tested participating players' knowledge of key concepts such as consent and asked them to apply this knowledge by selecting a response to a range of scenarios. The survey also tested the players' attitudes towards various 'rape myths', such as whether a woman can be raped by someone that she is in a relationship with (Corboz et al. 2016).

The survey used in the present research built upon 'Taking a Stand' so that comparisons could be drawn and because similar aspects, Australian footballers' ideas about gender and consent, and the influence of the football club on this, were measured. The survey was then updated to reflect questions asked in interview with women relating to women's participation in clubs and associations with women's sports. The survey was organised around four themes, You and Your Club, Sex and Consent, Sexual Assault, Group Dynamics and consisted of a range of multiple choice and short answer questions

regarding club culture, support available to players, subscription to common rape myths, and responses to hypothetical scenarios.

The survey was billed as an opportunity for footballers to have input about issues that are important to them and processes at their club, related to generalisations about footballers and training programs. Options for a follow up interview were built into the research design but there was very little uptake and no participants followed through with an interview. However, there was substantial qualitative data in survey results due to in-built options to add feedback through an open-ended response option at the end of the survey.

I had several informal discussions with male footballers through my networks but was unable to confirm any interviews. Discussions ranged from how social issues presented and were dealt with in specific clubs and the range of dating challenges that playing football can present. These informal discussions were likely to influence my interpretation of results. Interactions through the recruitment process on Facebook were also taken into consideration in analysis of the data.

Ethics

The survey portion of this research project underwent a rigorous three-month ethics review process through the University of Adelaide HREC and a further amendment process after the SANFL decided not to be involved in the research. The ethics committee were primarily concerned about protecting the anonymity of players, potential misrepresentations or generalisations about the participant sample, and burdens on participants. The Human Research Ethics Committee had helpful suggestions for safeguarding the anonymity of male participants that improved the research design and cemented the online survey model. The survey was designed to be as quick and easy to complete as possible. The consent form and participant information letter were embedded in the survey including counselling services and hotlines that participants could utilise if they were distressed by the survey content.

There was significantly greater concern expressed about the anonymity and comfort of male participants and potential bias in the wording of survey questions despite the survey being an amended version of a previously approved survey. Concerns about bias were expressed throughout the research process by the HREC, some male participants, and

community members who engaged with the research through social media recruitment drives. This indicated a desire to protect the football playing community but also fears about generalisations being made about footballers. Many of the survey questions asked participants to respond to common stereotypes which was intended to allow participants to respond to any misinformed generalisations. Generalisations seemed to be an issue that many footballers were aware of, as some men reporting in informal conversations that they changed their behaviour or did not mention that they played football to avoid being typecast.

Analysis

Analysis of interview and survey data took place using an in-depth thematic analysis. This method allowed for interpretation of patterns within data that considered the context and associated meanings present in the dataset (Hesse-Biber 2014). Interview and survey data were analysed separately, with themes developed from both data sets, although immersion in each data set likely influenced my interpretation of each individual dataset.

Interviews were transcribed and then loaded into NVivo for analysis. I began analysis by creating vignettes of each women's stories to refamiliarise myself with the data and identify how the stories overlapped (see Table 3.1. for brief descriptions). I then used a broad open coding method to begin to identify themes followed by grouping to create smaller subsets of themes. The broad codes were organised under each conceptual category from the research questions: Australian football, masculinity, sex, and sexual violence. Inductive codes were then developed and refined according to volume and significance (see Table 2.2. for top-level codes). Each top-level code consisted of several sub-codes that guide discussions in subsequent chapters.

Table 2.2.

Australian football	Masculinity	Sex	Sexual Violence
Community and Club culture Competition End-of-season trips Reputation Respected figures Women participants Segregation Women's sport	Gender roles Good guys Men in groups Reputation	Alcohol Attitude Gender roles Influences Sexual negotiation Normalising bad sex Pleasure Relationships Reputation Desirability Respect Sexual consent	Accountability Excusing violence Explanations Impact Prevention Sport - society What is sexual violence

The conceptual categories that formed from analysis of interviews then informed a thematic analysis of survey. I identified major and significant themes from each category within the survey and organised them within the four organising areas from the research questions: masculinity, sex, sexual violence, and Australian football. Within these four major areas, significant themes were identified (see Table 2.3.).

Table 2.3.

Masculinity	Sex	Sexual Violence	Australian football
Male peer groups Sexual desirability	Knowledge of consent Learning about sex Putting knowledge into practice	'Good guys don't rape' Allegations of sexual violence as a weapon against men Consent is complicated Challenging other men	Club culture Men in groups Respected figures Women participants in football clubs

I also considered the opportunities for qualitative feedback provided to participants within the survey and interactions from Facebook during the recruitment process. Additionally, the thematic analysis was influenced by informal conversations that took place throughout the research and my own experience of conducting the research. The collective thematic analysis of each component of the research was then subject to selective coding in order

to consider the relationships present in survey and interview data and to contextualise findings within the sexual politics of Australian football (McCray 2015).

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is an essential aspect of feminist research practice to improve the application of research for feminist gain and research ethics through attention to power relations (Pillow 2003). This practice reflects a commitment to broader goals of social justice and a divestment from gendered power (Ferree 2018; Pillow 2003). Reflexivity focuses on reciprocity with research participants and is an ongoing process throughout every aspect of the research project including design, data collection, and analysis (Pillow 2003). This practice is grounded in a rejection of objectivity and posits that the positionality of the researcher must be considered as it impacts the research (Hesse-Biber 2014).

In this research project, I operated as an insider because of my experiences of sexual violence and an outsider because of my lack of investment in Australian football. These and other aspects of my subjectivity impacted on the research processes and presented various challenges. Specifically, my position as young feminist woman researching men and Australian football elicited varied reactions from members of the public and academia. These challenges and advantages are discussed in this section through a sexual politics framework in the context of what it means to do feminist research in a heavily contested and masculinised space.

The contested nature of the research context

The academic feminist tradition in academia has in part arisen in response to academia as a historically masculinised institution that privileges knowledge created by white, class-privileged men above all others (Anderson, Gatwiri et al. 2019; Michell et al. 2015; Ryan 1991; Wilson et al. 2010). Recently, scholars have documented shifts in academia in response to neoliberalisation that have resulted in an increasingly masculinised institution (Poggio 2018; Wilson, Marks et al. 2010). Successive Australian governments have fast tracked neoliberalism in academia due to changes to entry requirements, funding allocation, and an anti-intellectual agenda consistent with a rise in global conservatism (Doidge, Doyle et al. 2020; Michell et al. 2015; Thomas et al. 2020). The increase in competition, masculinisation of academia, and anti-intellectualism has negatively affected

social sciences, in particular feminist researchers (Acker and Wagner 2019; Baird 2010; Lipton 2017; Nash 2013; Spongberg 2010). Feminist research has endured a long struggle to be recognised as a legitimate discipline due to the rejection of objective notions of truth and the strong social justice focus that are at the core of the discipline (Hesse-Biber 2014). In recent years, Women's and Gender Studies departments have been downgraded and closed across Australian universities or have been de-politicised and absorbed into other departments (Baird 2010; Simic 2010). There have also been instances of government interference in the allocation of national research funding, an overall decrease in funding for social sciences, and rejection of research that identifies as feminist (Acker and Wagner 2019; Damousi 2018).

The shifts in academia that have reduced the presence of feminist research have occurred as broader societal interest in feminist thinking has increased. This is most clearly demonstrated by the global interest in the #MeToo movement and the swift institutional response across a range of industries. The popularisation of feminism has permeated all aspects of social life, including media, business, government, and law, resulting in an increase in the prominence of feminist arguments. However, the rise of popular feminism is problematised by some feminist researchers as a co-opting of feminist ideas for commercial gain and subsequent diluting of the political goals of feminism as a movement (Banet-Weiser 2018). The popularisation of feminism has also occurred simultaneously with a 'pushback' against feminism demonstrated by the rise of 'incel' and other targeted anti-feminist movements (Banet-Weiser 2018; Barber and Bridges 2017).

The political context of feminism is marked by contestations in academic and broader social spaces – a demonstration of sexual politics at play. This means that the term 'feminist' or 'feminism' can elicit extreme reactions (Dixon 2014; Holland and Cortina 2013). In an increasingly competitive and politicised academic context, this can mean that feminist ideas are rejected as risky or less profitable and marketable than other forms of research. The political context of feminist research meant that this research took place in an already contested space. The contestations and resultant tensions were compounded by my subjectivity as a young woman and feminist, the explicit feminist epistemology of the research, my insider/outsider positionality, and the contentious topical content of the research.

Australian football is a significant masculinising institution linked to persistent conservative ideals around gender and sexuality (Drummond 2011, 2020; Flood and Dyson 2007;

Nicholson and Hess 2007; Waterhouse-Watson 2007). Although there have been some progressive recent developments in Australian football, women participants, and especially gender non-conforming or trans women, continue to experience gendered harassment and allegations of sexual violence involving male footballers persist. The context of gender in Australian football is constantly being renegotiated and is politicised due to the significance of the sport in Australian culture, again an example of the existence of sexual politics. The charged nature of debates involving Australian football and gender, combined with tensions surrounding feminism and research, meant that the research process was marked by contention.

Subjectivity, positionality, and insider/outsider status

My subjectivity as a young woman and as white and working-class interacted with the research process in different ways. Other peoples' perception of me was influenced by my subjectivity and influenced research access, how others communicated with me, and my navigation of the research experience. As a young woman I experienced more sexual attention than a male researcher might have and was more routinely dismissed (Pini 2005). I also needed to apply extra considerations to navigate academic internal workings, culture, and requirements as a working-class person with no previous insight into these kinds of professional workplaces. Simple decisions such as what to wear to conferences were complicated due to the complex interweaving of my subjectivity and the necessity to actively work to be seen as a capable professional rather than a sex object.

My positionality as a feminist, sexual violence survivor, and outsider within the sport community presented numerous benefits and challenges. Each of these aspects of my positionality helped me to gain the trust of women participants, especially those who were more vulnerable. Women trusted me to listen to them without judgement and represent them fairly. My insider status as sexual violence survivor was useful with women for making them feel more comfortable, meaning that the responses that they gave were more in-depth and different to what another researcher might have received. Disclosing my experiences with sexual violence worked as a strategy to help women get over defensiveness and internalised victim-blaming that they seemed to exhibit when recounting experiences of sexual violence. In contrast, others were concerned that I would misrepresent footballers because of my lack of investment in sport and the feminist quality of the research. My outsider status within sport also means that I lacked relationships that

could have allowed for ease of research access. This outsider status coupled with feminist and young woman subjectivity hindered the research and created obstacles.

Contentious research and tensions in the research process

Numerous tensions arose in the research process in response to my subjectivity, as a young female researcher, and my positionality, as an insider/outsider in the research. These tensions can be understood within the gendered political context of feminism and sexual politics framework. The influence of sport as a cultural institution remains taken-for-granted and attempts to question this influence are subject to suspicion, criticism, and harassment (Marks 2019; Toffoletti and Palmer 2019). Women who research men and masculinities have also documented numerous challenges and tensions that take place in reaction to their subjectivity, including dismissive attitudes, aggression, infantalisation, and sexualisation (Pini 2005; Olive and Thorpe 2011). The significance of sport and subsequent influence on social norms and community investment means that critical commentary on Australian football can attract significant criticism, especially for women (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). My credibility as a researcher was consistently questioned because of my outsider status and compounded by my gender, age, and feminist identity. This lack of credibility operated as a barrier to recruitment and meant that the context surrounding the research was sometimes hostile.

Australian football is a topical research subject and hence opinions differed greatly depending on the individuals' level of investment in the sport. This meant I was in constant dialogue about the research. Some questioned my motivations for researching the topic, some assumed I was being deliberately inflammatory or had a vendetta against footballers or men, some applauded me for researching the topic, and some shared their stories with me. I spoke with male Australian footballers who discussed clubs' resistance to accept outsiders or different opinions and remarked on Australian football clubs as reflecting the best and worst aspects of Australian culture, particularly in relation to racial politics.

The common themes in research tensions present in this project are *protectiveness* and *sexualisation*. I located these tensions within the contentious nature of feminist research and research on sport and masculinity that reproduced in response to current social constructions of gender.

Protectiveness

My outsider status within the research setting, Australian football, seemed to evoke suspicion from individuals in academia, sport, and the broader community. People questioned my motivations for doing the research, were protective of football and footballers, and were concerned that I would misrepresent footballers. The Human Research Ethics Committee consulted for research approval posited that survey questions were overwhelmingly negative and that participants would be forced to choose answers in multiple-choice questions that might misrepresent their actual feelings about sexual violence. These ethics review underwent a three-month long process, despite most of the survey questions having been approved for use with elite Australian footballers at another university.

Members of the public also raised questions about potential bias and misrepresentations due to the research topic and method of interviewing women about their sexual experiences. These concerns were assuaged when I explained that the study aimed to confront stereotypes and that participants were able to respond to these however they chose. The persistent presence of this specific questioning highlighted the suspicion that followed the project throughout recruitment, data collection, and later stages of the project. Other issues related to the use of women's sexual experiences to explore gender politics in sport and whether the women could be considered trustworthy. These views are consistent with stereotypes about 'lying predatory groupies' levelled against women who alleged sexual violence by male footballers (Mewett and Toffoletti 2008; Waterhouse-Watson 2012a; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011).

Sexualisation

The sexualisation I experienced during the research process likely arose in response to a complex intertwining of my subjectivity, positionality, the research context, and subject. The Human Research Ethics Committee responsible for approving the research assessed some aspects of safety in the context of research, although this process was not comprehensive. Other researchers have argued that HRECs have a key role in prioritising research students' wellbeing but that this potential resource is currently underutilised (Velardo and Elliott 2018). In practice, internet safety posed a greater threat than physical safety in this project. For example, a potential participant used an online discussion about

eligibility criteria as an opportunity to sexually proposition me. He then persistently stalked me across multiple social media platforms for several years. Similarly, I was sexually harassed more often by senior male academics than by research participants. These instances usually occurred at conferences following discussions or presentations about my research. The complex power relations that play out in masculinised academic settings mean that young female PhD students are particularly vulnerable to sexual harassment and other violence at conferences and other academic events (AHRC 2017). The content of my thesis compounded with my subjectivity as a young female novice researcher could have increased my vulnerability to sexual violence if others assumed that I was more interested in sex or sexually available because of my research topic. This rationale could explain the instances of sexual harassment involving being unwillingly engaged in inappropriate sexual conversations. Other instances involved sexualising me and my body in front of others, reducing me to a sexual object in professional settings, and continued sexual humiliation through sexual terms used to refer to me in place of my name. These instances of sexual harassment can be understood in conjunction with the "well-intentioned" forms of sexualisation that I experienced as part of the broader sexualisation of women and the use of sexualisation to diminish women's professional efforts more broadly (Pini 2005). The experiences of sexualisation that I faced over the duration of this doctoral project could not have been entirely prevented by university institutions. However, the persistent pattern of sexualisation, range of experiences, and diversity of perpetrators highlights an aspect of university institutional culture that was ongoing despite national studies and interventions implemented during my candidature (AHRC 2017). The nature of my experience as part of a documented, persistent problem means that this issue warrants further attention by academic institutions and the various mechanisms within universities responsible for ensuring research ethics and researcher wellbeing. These mechanisms include but are not limited to HRECs, research student support and governance services, university governing bodies, supervision teams, and student and industrial unions.

Limitations

The major limitations, or areas for improvement, in this research project related to research design, recruitment, and research safety ethics. These areas for improvement were identified when reflecting on the difficulties and amendments that arose during the

research process. These are areas for consideration when researching contentious or sensitive subjects, recruiting men, and insider research on trauma.

Research design

Limitations in the research design are specifically related to the survey and reliance on attitudes and hypothetical scenarios that may not be as significant in analysis of sexual violence as norms and ideologies (Flood and Pease 2009). These limitations highlight an overreliance on the Taking A Stand survey model which would ideally have been subject to a more critical approach and complemented by other data collection methods such as interviewing. Interviews with men would have added perspective on the nuances present in what men know about dominant ideologies and norms of gender and sexuality, how they understand and learn about them, and how they practice gender and sexuality in conjunction with other facets of their identity such as race or class.

Recruitment

Recruiting men for interviews was difficult due to the lack of relationships that I had within the sport community and the suspicion associated with this outsider status. I was able to access many men through social media recruitment for the survey but did not receive follow-up requests for interviews, despite multiple prompts located in the survey. Potential interviewees could have felt that the survey provided a comprehensive opportunity for them to add their perspectives or conversely could have felt that the survey did not cover issues that they wished to comment on. Some interactions on social media and in feedback options for their survey indicated that respondents felt questions relied on generalisations, were loaded, negative, and represented bias. I used social media interactions to explain that generalisations were so that men could confront them and that there was further opportunity to discuss generalisations at length in interviews. Although men were receptive to this rationale, they still chose not to participate further. Interviews might have been easier to organise if I had relationships with football clubs or footballers to utilise to assure participants. For this project, my insider status with women and the interview design meant that interviews with women provided rich data that can form the basis for this research, lessening the necessity for interviews with men.

Conclusion

In summary, this thesis aimed to explore constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence in the context of sexual violence, establish women's sexual experiences with male footballers, and assess how these findings could be utilised to impact violence prevention initiatives. These aims are explored through a feminist social constructionist epistemology and sexual politics theoretical framework. Despite limitations presented by a contested research context, a total of 10 in-depth interviews were conducted and 135 survey responses collected. The findings from the interviews and survey are presented in the following chapters. These chapters outline how men and women constructed masculinity, sex, sexual violence, and violence prevention.

CHAPTER FOUR: CONSTRUCTING MASCULINITY

Introduction

The construction of footballers as a group was consistent across interviews with women and additionally present in men's qualitative survey responses. This construction suggested that women viewed footballers as collectively performing their masculinity. This 'collective masculinity' reflected dominant media narratives about footballers, as well as women's experiences of footballers (Cover 2015; Lorentzen 2012; Toffoletti 2007; Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). Women specifically discussed their experiences of groups of male footballers in social and celebratory situations involving alcohol, best represented by the 'footy trip'. The 'footy trip' is a colloquial phrase for the end-of-season trips that many football teams and clubs embark on to celebrate their achievements over the football season. These occasions were seen as important for maintaining and strengthening bonds between team members but were also viewed as unruly and sometimes hazardous due to high levels of alcohol consumption. The 'footy trip' was at the centre of women's constructions of footballers as a collective, marked by a 'pack mentality'. However, by positioning male footballers as a homogeneous group, women were employing similar constructions to those that they had problematised. Additionally, male footballers who were surveyed expressed discontent with being constructed as a homogeneous group and resisted these constructions in various ways.

Women's constructions of masculinity

Masculinity as a collective was the dominant theme presented in the women's interviews and men's responses to survey questions. This theme also permeated other subsequent themes and sub-themes, perhaps due to the prevalence of stereotypes about footballers that relied on perceptions of footballers as a group. The notion of collective understandings of masculinity refers to the overarching constructions of male Australian footballers, and men in general, as a group rather than a set of individuals. Several common codes were identified through thematic analysis that cemented the construction of men and masculinity as collectivised, such as 'men in groups', 'pack mentality', and 'competition'. Other more general codes, such as 'club culture', 'gender roles' and 'stereotypes' included a narrative which constructed male footballers as belonging to a collective. As expected,

the generalisations that women utilised were related to the construction of footballers as part of a team, club, or community. However, women commonly identified and relied on constructions of footballers in the context of celebration and end-of-season trips.

All interview participants talked about this media landscape, unprompted, and discussed these in reference to the idea of the 'typical bloke', celebratory end-of-season trip, and sexual desirability of footballers, related to media constructions of male footballers and football 'sex scandals'. For example, 9 of the 10 interviews with women engaged with ideas about the 'footy boy' and men on 'footy trips', as well as a 'pack mentality' that was displayed on such trips. Women discussed how masculinity was constructed in opposition to femininity, using concepts such as dominance, nurture, and passivity, and references to men's physiques. Women also discussed men's attitudes as a marker of masculinity, such as aggression or bravado. Overall, women's conceptions of the intersection between masculinity and Australian football were constructed through a homogeneous collective understanding of masculinity. This was evident in the prevalence of constructions of groups of footballers as 'the footy boy', 'the footy trip', 'footy troupes', and 'pack mentality'. These constructions are discussed below in the in the context of end-of-season trips and the juxtaposition between footballers in groups and individual footballers whom women knew personally, such as romantic partners or friends.

The first major idea that women discussed was the 'footy boy'. This figure was seen as rowdy, a heavy drinker, often in groups with other footballers, and attempting to pursue women for sex. The construction of the 'footy boy' was associated with typical, colonialist Australian constructions of men as 'larrikins', which Nina described as "…[e]asy to get along with, fun to be with and funny…" and the 'good bloke', who she said was "[e]asy to get along with but also cares about his mates." Many of the women described how men prioritised time with male friends above their female romantic partners and that this would often involve heavy drinking, which was normalised within socialising around football. Nina explained further:

> I think that was hard for all of those guys because there's this pack of those guys. They were living together, five of them living in a house together, they all played football together and also the masculinity is playing out, like, living up to that. And so, let's say that your girlfriend wants to go home earlier than your mates want to go, that's not fitting in with the bloke culture, going "we're going to go [home] early." I can see now there was that pressure to be that person in that world and also be a good boyfriend which didn't always happen. (Nina)

This balancing act between competing priorities, being a good friend and a good partner, was discussed sympathetically by Nina.

Naomi and Monique also discussed building friendships and linked this to being a 'good' and supportive partner. Monique discussed how club officials made a concerted effort to provide opportunities for female partners to bond with each other so that they were motivated to attend games and social functions, inadvertently constructing wives and girlfriends as a potential barrier to men playing football and participating in social aspects of football clubs. Naomi similarly spoke about bonding with other female partners and said she felt actively excluded from her partners' club, in part by other male footballers' female partners, but mostly because of frequent sexist and homophobic comments made by other male players that went unaddressed. Naomi's conflict with the culture of her partner's club conflicted with how she viewed her partner and meant that she perceived her experiences with footballers as impacting on him and his ability to connect with his club. Specifically, she said that her perceptions of footballers were based on her experiences with footballers on footy trips while she worked in hospitality and in a separate instance that resulted in the death of a young man. Naomi explained that she felt her misgivings about 'footy trips' impacted her partner feeling comfortable attending these group celebrations.

> I trust him, I don't think anything untoward goes on but I've always been really vocal, from what I've seen about footy trips, that I wouldn't want him to go and feel pressured to behave in the appalling way that guys on football trips behave. It's just not him at all and I've kind of discussed with him that if he was to go on that football trip, I would expect him to be the one that sees reason. I think sometimes that he doesn't go because I don't think that he can really fulfil that role of being a part of the team and also not let me down by being the one that sees reason. I think that he would feel really torn and struggle and find it really hard to be the only guy out of the group of 20 saying this really stupid thing is a really great idea, and you're the one saying "no". (Naomi)

Naomi's quote shows importance of the footy trip as necessary for team bonding and 'being part of the team'. However, the footy trip represented a tension that she may be intervening in her partner's ability to participate because she would "expect him to see reason", potentially ostracising her partner from his team. Naomi understood that football was an important part of her partner's life and was essential for his wellbeing but saw him as fundamentally different to other footballers, despite how vital football was to him. Naomi perceived 'footy trips' and other footballers as the 'problem' which

enabled sexual and other forms of violence, rather than her partner and his willingness to challenge other men. During her interview, Naomi reinforced the narrative surrounding 'footy trips' and footballers' 'bad behaviour', common in 2000s media reporting on football 'scandals' (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a, 2013b).

Like Naomi, most of the women constructed footballers on 'footy trips' as the 'typical bloke', defined through heavy alcohol use, and as participating in a perceived 'pack mentality', connecting the masculinity of men in groups to playing football and binge drinking. The men that they described through this construction were seen as a nuisance and potentially dangerous, depending on the kinds of experiences women had. Groups of male footballers were constructed as something to avoid and were further problematised because of women's experiences with being harassed and coerced into sex by similar groups of men.

Several women had been sexually harassed by men on footy trips and those with experience working in nightlife were especially familiar with these men's perceived inability to take 'no' for an answer. This attitude manifested in several ways including sexual harassment and assault, physical violence, destruction of property, and general harassment of other patrons. Naomi described an account of what she said was "typical behaviour" by male patrons who attended establishments that she worked at on 'footy trips'.

> They come in, try to push the boundaries of all the rules of what's decent, especially in a bar environment… They do things like they take their shoes off, throw glasses, spit at each other, come up to groups of girls and outwardly harass them, and they won't leave them alone... They think they're God's gift…I remember I was working at this one bar and they would come and pick me up and take me away over their shoulder without even asking if I was okay with it. (Naomi)

Naomi's description of men on 'footy trips' contextualised many of the other women's less descriptive comments about the 'footy trip' that reinforced a problematic dynamic in the behaviour of groups of men. Alyssa, who also had experience working in bars, also problematised the behaviour of groups of men on footy trips but was reluctant to apply the construction of 'footy boys' to all men who play football.

> I don't want to tar them all with the same brush but most of my interactions with footy players have been like, you're a fucking wanker. I work in a bar and we have all the

footy troupes coming through and stuff and it's just like, you're just all drunken idiots. It is hard but then you've also got friends who might play footy and they'll act perfectly fine. It's hard. I don't want to say that they're all bad. (Alyssa)

The "footy troupes" that Alyssa described were routinely problematised by women with a caveat that individual footballers, particularly current partners, did not necessarily behave like "drunken idiots". Although many women had personally experienced sexual violence by male footballers on 'footy trips', they explained that male footballers in groups and the way these men legitimated each other's behaviour and avoided accountability were the issue, rather than individual men who might be able to be challenged or redeemed in some way.

The women interviewed commonly connected poor behaviour on footy trips, to a 'pack mentality', where individual ethics were suspended in favour of the equilibrium of the group, making the group difficult to challenge. 'Pack mentality' was commonly problematised as a space in which moral judgement was suspended in favour of a 'group ethic' and driven by peer pressure and alcohol consumption (Cover 2015). Half of the women discussed a "pack mentality" that they associated with groups of male footballers, especially those on "footy trips". Naomi explained that,

The impact of the pack mentality is that no one wants to be against the pack so the second that one person has an idea; they're all going to go with it. They're going to go along with it, they're going to support each other with it, and if you're in that team and you're a part of that team, you don't want to be the one person standing back and going "no" because then you'll be out of the pack. You won't be included in whatever they're doing and to them it's all very much about bonding. They're all very bonded together by what they do, so none of them actually ever want to step out of line from what the group is doing. (Naomi)

'Pack mentality' was a common explanation for why male footballers may have difficulty challenging other men who behaved inappropriately or violently. Women placed significant importance on the necessity of men to challenge each other on violent behaviour or behaviour that is linked to violence but described this as difficult for them, due to the potential for being ostracised from the group. This potential ostracisation was linked to the maintenance of a collective masculinity. The contrast between individual and collective masculinities were evident in Brooke's assertion that challenging men is perceived as 'unmanly' and her contrary perception that it was indeed a masculine activity.

"I think there's a lot of good guys out there who would stand up to women being catcalled or really bad attitudes and women being disrespected and stuff like that, but they don't have the guts to do it in front of their mates. It's not seen as being manly. You know, it's not seen as being bravado and masculine to go, "hey, it's not cool," when that's one of the gutsiest things. That's kind of the manliest thing you can do, is to call out someone who's disrespecting someone who's seen in the cultural way as being lesser than you." (Brooke)

Other women echoed this sentiment and said men did not challenge other men because they didn't have the 'guts' or 'balls' required, drawing a direct association between a collective masculinity and challenging other men, inadvertently reinforcing the forms of masculinity they had challenged. This contention was an overall theme present in discussions.

Women's construction of a 'collective masculinity' was logical given the range of experiences women had with groups of male footballers. However, in discussing potential solutions, women inadvertently invoked generalisations that could potentially reduce the culpability for men's actions. For instance, usage of the 'footy boy', 'footy troupes', 'footy trip', and 'pack mentality' positioned men's actions and behaviours as inevitable in the context of heavy drinking with male peers. Similarly, women's assertion that cultural change must be initiated through men challenging their peers' behaviour but that to do so would be considered 'unmanly' reinforced the ideas about masculinity that women aimed to challenge. Women also did not recognise diversity amongst men and their expression of masculinity present in Australian football teams and clubs. This occurred despite women's insistence that their friends and partners behaved atypically to other male footballers and that this difference posed a barrier to challenging male peers and risking ostracisation.

Men's constructions of masculinity

In contrast to the women's interviews, men's survey responses, particularly qualitative entries, attempted to challenge the ideas of 'footy boys', 'footy trips' and 'pack mentality'. Men's responses indicated that they rejected a homogeneous idea of masculinity in the context of football. This rejection appeared as defensiveness in responses to scenarios that implied some responsibility for preventing violence through confronting others or making ethical sexual decisions. In addition, answers to questions about men's

conceptualisation of their own significance to communities revealed a reluctance to believe that they held community importance by playing football.

Men responded to a survey consisting of questions related to men's conceptualisation of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence. These questions allowed men to choose the most appropriate answer, sometimes selecting multiple answers, and add commentary in an 'other' section and extended space at the end of the survey. Defensiveness was present in a significant portion of all opportunities to provide qualitative responses and in recruitment material posted on social media. These responses ranged from questioning the research purposes or questions, i.e. "I don't understand the connotations of (not) act(ing) responsibly and 'trouble' in this question: unclear, no comment" (Participant no. 15), to more hostile responses such as, ""Comments" is very broad. Not everything guys say to girls in the street is inappropriate. This crap is why people don't talk anymore." (Participant no. 54). Although some respondents welcomed the research, other comments were concerned that the research was overly reliant on stereotypes about footballers and sought to reinforce them. This perceived aim was present in perceptions that the research was "sexist", biased, "contrived", and "aggressive". This defensiveness seemed to be a response to stereotypes about male footballers that men felt were unfair, untrue, or at least not applicable to their experiences. For example,

> Why are all these questions hypothetically pointing towards male footballers sleeping around? I know plenty of great footballers who would not relate to this as they are either married or in a very strong relationship. (Participant no. 83)

Qualitative responses to a question involving a scenario where a coach makes inappropriate comments in a half-time speech (see Table 4.1.) further reinforced that men did not think that the scenarios matched their own experiences or perceptions of football culture. Although qualitative responses suggest that some men did not react defensively to the assumptions present in the question others such as "[t]hat's the dumbest thing I've ever read" (Participant no. 117) highlight that such assumptions present inadequate understandings of Australian football culture.

Table 4.1.

The coach gives a half time address to the team and makes inappropriate comments about a player's sister, saying "maybe we need to get Jimmy's hot younger sister in a mini skirt to come down and motivate the boys."				
There is no way that kind of thing happens in our club	The players just wear it. It's just part of the game	It's harmless, people shouldn't be too sensitive	It bothers some players, but we support each other	I'd like to complain but would feel uncomfortable about doing it
52%	12%	14%	16%	7%
Qualitative comments:				
I feel that comments like these are made, but not at something as official as a half time speech. Personally, I don't like this culture but I'm just there to run around and have fun. (Participant no. 4) Unlikely to be said. (Participant no. 10) [Metropolitan community club] is a family club, and any comments like that would not be acceptable, coming from anywhere. (Participant no. 17) That's the dumbest thing I've ever read (Participant no. 117)				

Importantly, the qualitative responses to the scenario presented in Table 4.1. indicated a variety of common viewpoints across the men surveyed. Several actively rejected much of the survey content, others responded negatively to perceived insinuations football culture and footballers might be sexist, and most respondents chose not to comment on the survey content. Despite responses commonly rejecting a homogeneous construction of male footballers, and in some cases of men, many of these responses inadvertently generalised about male footballers. For instance, Participant no. 105 wrote:

> I've never heard anything like this during my footballing years but I'm sure it happens. I know for sure that a lot of my teammates would feel that it's inappropriate, but others wouldn't think twice about it. (Participant no. 105)

This response invoked a similar narrative to women interviewed, to identify 'bad behaviour' and simultaneously detach from it. Participant 105 was clear that he did not agree with inappropriate comments referenced in the scenario but that they are likely made, albeit in

contexts he was not connected or privy to. In distancing himself from this behaviour he also distanced his role in identifying and addressing inappropriate comments. However, the majority of qualitative responses suggested that many men did not identify with a collective football masculinity based on objectifying and sexualising women, and that associated generalisations about footballers did not apply to men they knew or to themselves. These findings could support the disconnect present in qualitative responses between social constructions of footballers as a group, and individual footballers' perception of themselves in relation to those constructions. For example, Participant no. 90 wrote:

> I[t] [sic] concerns me that this research is going potentially to reinforce negative stereotypes around 'football culture', a cultural connotation that has been largely driven by media. Is the problem 'football culture' or working class/dickhead culture, common in all areas of Australia? (Participant no. 90)

It is reasonable that men may reject stereotypes which typecast themselves and other male peers in ways that they view as unfair or unrealistic. However, most comments contextualised stereotypes as based in "sexism" and negative media stories about men who play Australian football, or as a problem that existed in another subsection of the community.

The Male Peer Group: Bonding and belonging

The themes of bonding and belonging featured regularly in the women's interviews when they discussed Australian football. Women discussed how male peer groups function, using bonding and belonging, to explore why the peer group is, in their view, of primary importance to men who play football. The male peer group has consistently been identified as a significant influence on men's construction of masculinity and adherence to associated gendered social norms (DeKeseredy and Schwartz 2013; Flood and Dyson 2007). Men's constructions of male peer groups contradicted women's assertions and the academic literature that positioned these groups as influential spaces for motivating social change.

Women's constructions of male peer groups

Bonding in groups of men has a significant history in academic research on men and masculinities, especially in research on sport (Bird 1996; Cover 2013; Crosset 1999; Curry 1991; Flood 2008; Flood and Dyson 2007; McCray 2015; Messner 1990; Messner and Sabo 1994; Palmer 2011; Waterhouse-Watson 2013a, 2013b). This research argues that particular forms of masculinity are perpetuated through bonding practices that involve sexually objectifying women, positioning men's peer groups as inherently problematic as a source of potential justification for sexual violence (Bird 1996). Bonding was mentioned by women interviewed in the present research, such as Naomi's assertion that a team dynamic assumes a group is already bonded but that related social practices mimic on-field team dynamics, i.e. a 'pack mentality'. However, despite relying on the idea of bonding, Naomi also relayed the importance of belonging which she saw as complicated by inherent hierarchical power dynamics among players. Belonging was used to describe how masculinity was maintained through dynamics within male peer groups. This concept then recognised inherent power dynamics and intimacy between men without assuming that problematic bonding practices had taken place. Naomi explained that the hierarchical structure in male peer groups as it related specifically to men's Australian football teams.

> You've got your coaches, you've got your captains, you've got your top goal kickers, you've got your stars, and then it whittles down. The lowest people in the pack are the ones that are maybe not very fit, or they didn't get many passes or they're not very good at the game. They're the ones that are really trying to assimilate and fit in…They don't have any power in that situation… and I can't say whether it's those guys that are trying to be the heroes to prove a point within that group or whether it's the guys at the top who are just trying to establish their dominance. (Naomi)

Naomi was one of a few women interviewed to recognise the hierarchical structure and importance of power dynamics in male peer groups. The lack of concern about power could explain the uptake of 'belonging' instead of 'bonding'. In particular, reference to men asserting power or dominance over other men was not common. However, all women discussed the respect afforded to leaders and others whom Naomi identified as especially powerful, which inadvertently recognised hierarchical power. This nuance in women's discussions of hierarchies suggest that while these exist within male peer groups, they may not be specifically organised. Instead, respected leaders could be viewed as powerful determinants in male peer groups as other men navigate belonging, rather than a struggle for dominance as outlined in academic discussions of bonding. For example, Monique,

whose husband played for a semi-professional team, discussed club structure in more detail and from an insider position, in direct contrast to Naomi's self-identified position as an outsider in her partner's club.

> There's a leadership group where you've got your captain and…vice-captains…They're in that group because they're more mature, so basically anything that happens it's not dealt with by the coach it'd be dealt with by them. It's a bit of a, "C'mon man, don't do that"… I think the leadership have a lot to say because people do follow, and I think if they act respectfully to women the men will. (Monique)

In this example, Monique discusses leaders' influence on how bonding occurs and their resultant potential to determine the direction of the culture formed within groups, including norms related to masculinity.

Women recognised the influence individual leaders had within football teams and clubs but most often discussed the power of footballers as a group, especially in communities where sport was valorised. Vanessa said, "I grew up in a small country town, so footballers are the town's heroes. Nobody is allowed to talk about anything bad that they do." Kim also discussed this dynamic and gave an example of how masculinity was maintained through the group.

> There was an instance that I refused sex and the guy still told everybody that he had sex with me anyway and spread rumours about me. That was not an isolated incident for my group of friends. Nobody would do anything to try and fight against it. I felt totally violated, in that somebody had taken my reputation and completely made up a lie, and told everybody, and there was nothing I could do about that because nobody was going to believe me. The football boys were just the kings of the school. Everybody listened to them. (Kim)

Rather than trying to bond with other men, practices such as those listed above assume that men are already bonded but must constantly negotiate their importance to the rest of the group. In the below quotation, Vanessa described an instance where it was clear that a male footballer who she was sexually involved with "was trying to impress someone". Her assertion highlights how male footballers might negotiate their position and importance to their team, and within its structure.

> …I went in there [the bedroom] and he was being really, really strange and all the lights were on, it was really bright and something about him was weird, he was just kind of off. He was like "just come over here, take your pants off" and was just being

really strange. And I sort of went, "I just want to go to the toilet" and he was like "oh no, you can't use the toilet in here." And all this stuff kind of went back and forth for about twenty minutes. And I was just like because he was being so strange, the things he was saying were almost like, he was trying to impress someone and there was a lot of stuff going on. It got to the point where I just went and opened the bathroom door and two of the other guys [from his football team] were in the toilet. Then I would like to say that I left but I went inside the house, only with him. I was like," I'm not doing anything with them watching" and he was like, "okay, fine". (Vanessa)

In women's experiences, the constant negotiation of men's position within male peer groups manifested through competitiveness. Women remarked that many men who play Australian football treated sex as a competition between other men. This competitiveness was described by women through practices such as ranking women; attempting to have sex with as many women as possible; attitudes such as "every hole is a goal"; acting entitled to sex and becoming irate when rejected; threatening reputational damage and other harassment to women who reject their sexual advances including pursuing sex with women's younger sisters; treating sexual practices as 'bucket list items'; parading women in front of friends for their approval; group sexual talk; sexual harassment; and coercing women into sex. Alyssa specifically connected competitive attitudes to 'getting sex' to a sense of competition and a need to maintain their reputation amongst the other men.

As soon as they go out, that competitive nature is still there and it's like who can make the biggest idiot of themselves, who can get the most girls. It's just competition, competition, competition, and they're willing to do anything. I think that given some of the altercations that I've had with amateur footy boys, I just see it as I'm just another notch in their belt and it's just like "woo-hoo". I think it's a competition. (Alyssa)

The practices described above in the context of Alyssa's perceptions, directly linked competitiveness around sex to reputation, especially amongst other men. However, although competition was a significant factor in women's experiences, these practices appeared to signify a mutual need to belong within the male peer group, rather an inherent competitiveness in Australian football. Women placed inherent significance on the inner workings of male peer groups as an explanation for why groups of men might behave in particular ways and this, they thought, appeared impenetrable and resistant to change. The male peer group was perceived as particularly powerful due to competitive and bonding practices that enhanced a sense of belonging and affirmed a hierarchy.

Men's constructions of male peer groups

In contrast, men did not place significant emphasis on the male peer group and overwhelmingly stated that they were comfortable challenging other men. However, men demonstrated a reluctance to challenge male peers based in a commitment to individual responsibility and a trend of downplaying the behaviour described as not severe enough to warrant intervention. Overall, men invested in their individual identity above maintaining relevance to a collective football identity or masculinity. The focus on individualism was subtly undermined as men's responses suggested they were more willing to challenge others if it was considered socially acceptable, such as in the context of 'footy banter' - a playful and light-hearted way that men addressed behaviours. In this case, footy banter was used to address a teammate spending more time with a romantic partner at the expense of socialising with teammates. Responses that invoked footy banter made clear that this form of challenge was limited as men prioritised the comfort of other men. Men deemphasised male peer groups, bonding and belonging, comparative to the women, although these concepts were present in responses. Instead, bonding and belonging were more insidious and underlying, such as prioritising social equilibrium.

Male participants stated that they were comfortable challenging men in their peer groups, including their football teams, although these results were inconsistent. In table 4.2., responses to statements about behaviour and group dynamics showed that most men would challenge others or were neutral. The neutral response could indicate that men would intervene under the 'right' circumstances. Questions related to group dynamics registered neutral response ratings between 20 and 40% and a clear majority agreement or disagreement on most questions (see Table 4.2.). High levels of neutral responses, considered in conjunction with qualitative data, suggest that men were comfortable challenging other men but that their intervention was context dependent.

Table 4.2.

I sometimes act differently around women because other guys are watching me or egging me on	Broad agreement: 25%				
	Broad disagreement: 54%				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
	30%	24%	20%	23%	2%
If I am with mates who are behaving in ways that might offend women (even if it's all in fun), I have no problem telling them to stop	Broad agreement: 51				
	Broad disagreement: 16				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
	4%	12%	33%	37%	14%
When I am in a group of men who are speaking disrespectfully about women, I would feel uncomfortable telling them to stop	Broad agreement: 27%				
	Broad disagreement: 34%				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
	12%	22%	40%	18%	9%

Notes: SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, N: Neutral, A: Agreement, SA: Strongly Agree

The 'it depends' approach, determining appropriate severity before deciding to intervene, was also clear in qualitative responses to hypothetical scenarios. For example, in a scenario that asked men how they would react if their friends started making "comments" towards women in the street after "a bit to drink" (see Table 4.3.), responses suggested that men needed more information to make a decision, specifically the kinds of comments their friends expressed, as noted below.

"Depends on comments" (Participant no. 8)

""Comments" is very broad. Not everything guys say to girls in the street is inappropriate. This crap is why people don't talk anymore" (Participant no. 54)

"It just depends what they're saying." (Participant no. 68)

Other responses indicated that aspects of the question were unclear and would affect decision making, such as their own intoxication levels. Most quantitative responses indicated that men would either apologise to the women involved, reprimand their friends, or separate themselves from the situation. A small percentage of participants directly indicated that they would feel uncomfortable challenging their friends.

Table 4.3.

You are with a group of mates who have had a bit to drink and are having fun calling out and making comments to women in the street.				
Tell your mates it's not on and that it's disrespectful	Separate yourself from your friends so no one thinks you are part of what's going on	Apologise to the women and move away	Do nothing. I don't approve of their behaviour but I'm not comfortable speaking up	Join in. It's only a bit of fun and nobody's getting hurt anyway
27%	26%	36%	9%	2%

Qualitative comments:

Depends on comments (Participant no. 8)

Either separate or apologise (Participant no. 26)

Answer 1 & 3 (Participant no. 31)

"Comments" is very broad. Not everything guys say to girls in the street is inappropriate. This crap is why people don't talk anymore (Participant no. 54)

Apologise for your mates because they are drunk, they don't know what's going on (Participant no. 62)

Apologise to the women, walk away and tell my mates they were in the wrong (Participant no. 65)

It just depends what they're saying. (Participant no. 68)

This doesn't happen within my circle of friends (Participant no. 90)

Harmless, laugh but not join in (Participant no. 91)

Do nothing, as long as they don't get carried away or go further with it. (Participant no. 94)

Depends how much I've had to drink. I'd probably tell them to stop in a way that didn't separate me from the group (Participant no. 115)

Men repeatedly remarked that they would only intervene in situations that were especially problematic or if they had a personal stake in the outcome or situation. For example, a response from a teacher indicated that he would feel obligated to report and address a scenario involving potential statutory rape due to his industry requirements. Other men said that their willingness to intervene was dependent on other factors, such as the age of the girl involved and her response. Quantitative responses to this question were split between telling the friend his behaviour was "not on" or that he could be prosecuted (see

Table 4.4). However, 20% of respondents said that they would not get involved. The relatively high rate of responses that indicated men would take no action, despite the potential criminality of their friends' actions, suggests that the 'it depends' responses represent more than trepidation in decision making.

Table 4.4.

Your friend brags to you that he had sex with an underage girl at a weekend that has been pursuing for quite some time. You are concerned that your friend might have broken the law and could get into trouble with the police. What do you say to him?				
Do nothing, it's none of my business	Tell him that kind of behaviour is not on	Tell him that she could report him to the police for rape	Ask him if he made sure that she wasn't going to tell anyone	Say nothing and seek advice from someone you trust
20%	34%	38%	2%	6%
Qualitative comments:				
B and C -behaviour not on, she can report to police (Participant no. 37) I'm a schoolteacher so I would report what has happened, I would talk about that situation with the person also. (Participant no. 51) Sounds bad, but if the girl was okay with it and the age wasn't extremely horrific it would not bother me, and I wouldn't let it ruin my day. (Participant no. 65) I don't mix with the type of person that would do such a stupid thing. (Participant no. 83) I'd tell him that he might get in trouble with the police and that he should be careful and know the consequences of doing so. (Participant no. 105)				

Some qualitative responses insisted on the individual responsibility of their friends and women involved in scenarios as a rationale for not intervening and challenging their friends. Qualitative responses to a scenario in which two friends, who were intoxicated, were flirting with an inebriated woman at a bar linked desire not to intervene to individual responsibility (see Table 4.5). Men indicated that they did not think it was necessary or appropriate for them to intervene in situations involving teammates or friends that could potentially involve sexual violence, because they were not implicated, and their associate was seen as an adult responsible for their own actions. For example, in the following

comment, "[b]oth parties are drunk, they are all adults and responsible for their own behaviour" (Participant no. 7).

Additional comments indicated that intervention would be based on each person's level of intoxication,

> "I would probably do nothing, but it depends on how intoxicated each person was and other factors." (Participant no. 119)

> "Depends how drunk 'pretty drunk' is." (Participant no. 68)

Overall, quantitative responses were split between intervening by stopping the interaction or allowing it to continue. Other options for men to consult others to decide had low response rates, further reinforcing an investment in individual responsibility. These responses directly contradict women's assertion that men either make decisions as a group or do not make decisions because they do not wish to challenge other men and risk their position within the peer group.

Table 4.5.

You are in a pub with a group of mates celebrating after a game. Two of your friends have had quite a bit to drink and are being chatted up by a girl who seems pretty drunk. You think maybe your friends are too drunk to act responsibly, and you're worried that they might get into some trouble.				
Be a good mate and try to steer them away from the situation	Talk to others in the group about the best way to resolve the situation	Talk to the most senior player there about what to do	I'd leave them alone. It looks like they're having fun, so good luck to them!	I would probably just follow what my teammates do
47%	14%	3%	35%	2%

Qualitative comments:

Both parties are drunk, they are all adults and responsible for their own behaviour. (Participant no. 7)

I don't understand the connotations of (not) act(ing) responsibly and 'trouble' in this question: unclear, no comment. (Participant no. 15)

Do nothing. If both parties are intoxicated there is a responsibility on both parties not just the guy. Sexist much? (Participant no. 54)

Mediate the conversation, acknowledge the intoxication of, gauge the response of the woman in terms of the extent to which she is dissatisfied with their state, allow the woman to kindly walk away if she feels necessary (Participant no. 66)

Depends how drunk 'pretty drunk' is. (Participant no. 68)

I would probably do nothing, but it depends on how intoxicated each person was and other factors. (Participant no. 119)

Additional qualitative survey data suggested that men might object to some behaviour but would assess their likeliness to intervene based on whether or not it was socially acceptable to intervene, for example in a joking manner (see Table 4.6). For example, some men mentioned "footy banter" as an explanation for why men might not react to behaviour that could make them or others uncomfortable, as it was part of the 'fun' involved in club atmospheres and was not intended to be disrespectful. For example, several responses to a question about a teammate neglecting social events to spend time with a partner (see Table 4.6.) indicated that men challenge each other in the context of a joke,

[I would} Give him a bit of stick about it, but in a completely joking manner. All the other players cop the same treatment, and it's all meant in good fun. If any of the lads does get uncomfortable, it'd stop. (Participant no. 17)

I'd give him a hard time with the other boys as all of us like to give each other a hard time about these things. I do the same thing, and as long as things don't get too extreme, I don't think anyone really cares in the end anyway. (Participant no. 65)

The 'joking' approach identifies how men might 'gently challenge' male peers who use violence and situates challenging other men as inherently difficult or least fraught. Responses that invoked this approach indicated that they consider men's potential reactions when making light-hearted challenges. This social context suggests that the trepidation present in men's decisions to challenge other men could represent resistance to upsetting a seemingly fragile balance in male peer groups. In this case, men's resistance to challenging other men would be motivated by maintaining belonging, as women argued, but would represent a more subtle and nuanced resistance.

Table 4.6.

Since getting serious with his girlfriend, one of your mates has started going home early after a game to be with her instead of spending social time with the team. What would you do?					
Give him a hard time about being under his girlfriend's thumb	I like to go home and spend time with my partner too	I would wait to see how my teammates react and do the same as them	I wouldn't do anything. It's no big deal, whatever makes him happy	Suggest to the team that girlfriends and partners should come to these get togethers too	Tell him that after a game his loyalty is to the team and he should stay with his mates
22%	9%	1%	28%	33%	4%
Qualitative comments:					
Combination of hard time and invite the gf. (Participant no. 8) Give him a bit of stick about it, but in a completely joking manner. All the other players cop the same treatment, and it's all meant in good fun. If any of the lads does get uncomfortable, it'd stop. (Participant no. 17) A bit of footy banter but respect his decision. (Participant no. 62) I'd give him a hard time with the other boys as all of us like to give each other a hard time about these things. I do the same thing, and as long as things don't get too extreme, I don't think anyone really cares in the end anyway. (Participant no. 65) It's compulsory to attend post-game functions, so all players are encouraged to do so and is unrelated to anybody's relationship status. (Participant no. 87)					

The context surrounding an 'it depends' approach was best encapsulated by responses to the question 'What happens on end-of-season trips, stays on end-of-season trips'. Responses to this question can be categorised in three main groups, agreement, neutral, and disagreement, like other scaled questions, and were relatively evenly split amongst these groups (see Table 4.7.). This question is divisive, but the majority agreed with the association of 'sanctity' and the 'footy trip'. These responses were similar to women's assertions that linked the 'footy trip' with acceptance of groups of men 'behaving badly' and prioritised men's peer relationships at the expense of women's safety, discussed in Chapter Six. Importantly, 28% men were unsupportive of the idea that 'what happens on footy trips' remain unspoken and a further 30% were neutral. These responses could

indicate a more complex reading of the function of male peer groups in football teams or a potential cultural shift.

Table 4.7.

What happens on end-of-season trips stays on end-of-season trips	Broad agreement: 42%				
	Broad disagreement: 28%				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
	13%	15%	30%	27%	15%

Notes: SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, N: Neutral, A: Agreement, SA: Strongly Agree

Despite most men stating that they do not modify their behaviour based on peers and that they would challenge their male friends, a close and nuanced reading of responses suggest that men do act to maintain their position in male peer groups. Men's adherence to social norms, such as prioritising light-hearted challenges to other men, indicated that bonding and belonging are relevant to men. Taken together, men's responses suggest that peers do impact on men's decision making and behaviour, albeit in subtle and nuanced ways. In this context, men's insistence that other men are responsible for their own behaviour and hesitance to intervene could be indicative of a larger desire to maintain their position in male peer groups.

Conclusion

Women constructed masculinity within the context of popular dialogue about Australian football and male footballers. They used ideas such as the 'footy boy', 'footy trip', and 'pack mentality' to contextualise and describe many of their experiences with football players, clubs, and community. These ideas described how performances of masculinity involved heavy drinking, a commitment to the male peer group, and the sexual objectification of women. These performances were considered difficult to subvert due to a desire to maintain a sense of belonging within male peer groups and therefore avoid disrupting these social norms. However, women singled out individual men whom they knew, particularly romantic partners as departures from the norm. Men who responded to the survey seemed hyper aware of homogeneous generalisations about male footballers, such as those the women described. However, men actively rejected these generalisations and positioned them as unfair or untrue in line with their experiences.

Women placed significant emphasis on bonding and belonging in male peer groups as sites for maintaining or subverting gendered social norms. This emphasis recognised that key figures in male peer groups can influence other men and help shift group ideology and behaviour. However, these assertions inadvertently reproduced similar homogeneous generalisations that women had previously problematised as these perpetuated competitive masculinity dynamics. Additionally, male peer groups were described as impenetrable and inflexible because of men's need to maintain their position within groups of men. Men's survey responses suggested that they act to maintain dynamics within male peer groups but do not change their behaviour based on male friends.

Men indicated that they were comfortable challenging other men but were mostly unwilling to, dependent on context. This context could include social acceptability, situational severity, or insistence that individuals take responsibility for their own action. However, men also indicated that they routinely 'challenge' other men in the context of 'footy banter' in situations where a challenge is socially acceptable, light-hearted, and comfortable. This finding supported women's assertion that challenging other men is fraught because of and the social context surrounding male peer groups and a need to maintain belonging within the group.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONSTRUCTING SEX

Introduction

Women and men's constructions of sex consisted of two major overarching themes: sexual desirability and implied consent. Within these major themes, subthemes were reputation, competition, entitlement, misunderstandings of consent, and lack of pleasure and respect. Constructing male footballers as beloved athletes and community members, as discussed in the previous chapter, meant that male footballers were positioned as desirable romantic partners. This positioning constructed a reputation associated with male footballers, that 'all women want to have sex with them'. Women in intimate relationships with footballers were perceived to receive some social benefits due to their proximity to male footballers, although these benefits were conditional and only to some women. Male footballers' reputation was bolstered by their sexual desirability and actively maintained by men, including through competitive sexual practices. However, women who were sexually available to male footballers and therefore participated in maintaining their reputations were chastised or ostracised by their communities, highlighting a clear separation between acceptable sexual behaviour for men and women. Men's survey responses also highlighted that sexually available women were perceived as less deserving of care or respect. The demarcation of gender as it related to sex supported women's assertions in the previous chapter that male footballers were constructed as 'good' and within this lens, that their 'bad behaviour', including use of sexual violence, was accepted. Interestingly, male respondents were seemingly unaware of the power and influence that they had in communities, particularly related to sexual desirability.

Implied consent was closely linked to the construction of male footballer as sexually desirable to all women. Women explained that assumptions about consent were often displayed as sexual entitlement, where male footballers would aggressively pursue sex with women, including through competitive means, and become irate or arrogant if their advances were rejected. Women connected men's arrogance to anxieties about men needing to maintain their reputation as sexually desirable, and subsequently maintain their relevance to male peers. The connection between constructions of masculinity and sex then only further emphasised unequal gender relations by undermining women's sexual autonomy while punishing them for their perceived sexual availability. Notably, men's survey responses reinforced the assumption that consent is 'implied' because their

responses regarding questions on consent focused on liability and risk-avoidance rather than an ethics of care, pleasure, and respect. Women specifically emphasised pleasure and respect as essential in combatting misunderstandings of consent, highlighting their awareness of inequality present in constructions of sex.

Sexual desirability

The sexual desirability of footballers was linked to idealised masculinity and the construction of footballers as community heroes. Most women, 7 out of 10, discussed the idea of sexual desirability, while 8 out of 10 women discussed the subthemes, reputation and entitlement. Women said that 'reputation' established men who play Australian football as community heroes, sexually desirable, and symbols of idealised masculinity. The reputation of men who play football was also transferable to women who sought relationships with Australian footballers, due to an increase in social status. Reputation was intrinsically linked to and derived from sexual desirability and subsequently connected to sexual entitlement. Women spoke of entitled attitudes to sex especially in instances when male footballers made statements to them such as "you're lucky to be considered by me", reminiscent of perceptions of male footballers as exceptionally sexually desirable and more powerful than other men. These attitudes were seen to encourage footballers to believe that all women wanted to have sex with them and, purposefully or inadvertently, misconstrue processes of navigating and negotiating consent, by assuming that consent was implied.

Women's constructions of reputation and competition

'Reputation' explained how social status and sexual desirability functioned for male footballers, footballing communities, and women's sexual experiences with footballers. Women explained how male footballers' reputation was bolstered or hindered by sexual desirability, including women's desire to partner with male footballers to bolster their own reputation. However, the construction of sexual reputations, for men and especially women, was a double-edged sword, requiring participants to meet narrow and often unattainable parameters.

The perception of footballers as particularly sexually attractive, was usually due to a combination of factors including physique, attitude, and social status, linked to the

construction of footballers as community heroes and a broader societal adoration of sport and athletes. Bianca discussed how communities positioned footballers as supremely attractive because of their popularity, or reputation, a common thread in women's stories.

> In a country area, sports people were always the popular people, they were always the attractive people. A lot of people hold that true, for them it's [playing sport] a highly desirable quality I guess. (Bianca)

Australian footballers were most often constructed as particularly masculine and sexually desirable in smaller regional communities and other settings where social status and sporting affiliation and ability were linked. The community reputation of footballers afforded them social status, and this meant that women wanted to be with them, romantically and sexually. Vanessa explained that men were not required to be conventionally attractive because their desirability was derived from community status, relational to their position within their football cohort, reinforcing that sexual desirability was primarily derived from social status.

> In a football team there's [t]wenty players, the top six are the best ones and they're the ones that all the girls want to like them and want to hook up with them because they're the towns superstars. Then you start to try to get their attention and you want that validation because you're like, "oh wow, I'm now with this football player" and in a really gross way, [it] makes your status seem better…(Vanessa)

The social positioning of footballers as sexually desirable formed a homogeneous reputation that could be applied to all male footballers, whether they actively maintained it or not. Women explained that male footballers were perceived as 'intrinsically good' by members of communities that valued football, since footballers were an important part of social cohesion and cause for celebration that football often represents. Courtney explained that this occurred because:

> …football clubs are community, so they are the stars in that community because everyone's life revolves around what's going to happen on Saturday from March to September, they are the Gods of that [community]. (Courtney)

Male footballers were placed on a pedestal by their community which increased expectations that they maintain a sexual desirability linked to masculinity and heterosexual prowess. This sense of community admiration was linked to the construction of masculinity discussed in the previous chapter, where individual male footballers were considered

above reproach, groups of footballers were expected to 'behave badly', and any 'bad behaviour' was subsequently accepted by communities. Men were seemingly unaware of the power that they were afforded by communities, made clear in their survey responses discussed in the previous chapter. Women explained however, that the function of reputation for men was maintaining relevance and belonging to their peer group. This explanation perhaps explains why men may not have seen themselves as powerful or influential as this 'power' required constant negotiation within their peer groups.

The constant negotiation of men's position among peers, in women's experiences, often manifested through sexual competitiveness. Women remarked that many men who play Australian football treated sex as a competition between men as demonstrated through practices such as ranking women; attempting to have sex with as many women as possible; attitudes such as "every hole is a goal"; acting entitled to sex; and becoming persistent or irate when rejected. These practices were not entirely limited to male footballers though as women explained that sexual competitiveness was reminiscent of modern dating culture. For instance, Bianca explained that dating apps like Tinder heightened competitive aspects of dating culture, which she likened to a "game" which allows competitiveness approaches to sex to "thrive".

The connection between sexual competitiveness in Australian football and dating was then further heightened by the competitiveness that women saw as inherent in male peer groups which were particularly important for male footballers. Kim described how a competitive sexual dynamic was normalised among groups of male footballers. She said that male footballers at her secondary school humiliated women who were not interested in sex with them, as part of a game, connected to having sex with as many women as possible.

> After I had decided I didn't want to have anything to do with these groups of boys anymore at school, one boy that I'd not had sex with, but I'd been intimate with, decided that he would make it a challenge to go after my little sister. It seemed from my perspective, it was a game for them to see how many girls they could have some kind of sexual encounter with and then squash anyone that got in their way. (Kim)

The "games" and "challenges" that sex was centred around highlighted how sexual competitiveness was normalised in group settings, such as those that Kim described. The humiliation Kim described was not limited to women who refused sex with footballers as Alyssa explained how she was further humiliated by a male footballer who had coerced

her into sex and then anally raped her. She said, "I remember in the morning, he didn't know my name and just said like, "oh, that's something I can check off my bucket list". I just felt like such a joke." Alyssa's experience further emphasised that sexually competitive practices, and subsequent humiliation and dehumanisation of women, were normalised in men's peer group spaces, in connection to male footballers' superior reputation.

The above experiences that women had endured were described through competitiveness and an overall need to "get" sex to maintain a reputation for being sexually desirable, in connection to other men. The primacy of men's peer relationships here meant that, as Alyssa explained, male footballers would do whatever necessary to gain sex with women as their primary concern was maintaining their relationship to other men and women were the vehicle for maintain these relationships.

> As soon as they go out that competitive nature is still there, like who can make the biggest idiot of themselves, who can get the most girls. It's just competition, competition, competition and they're willing to do anything. I think that given some of the altercations that I've had with amateur footy boys, I see it as I'm just another notch in their belt, like "woo hoo". I think it's a competition. (Alyssa)

Experiences like Alyssa's within the broader context of the primacy of men's relationships highlighted a clear demarcation between men and women, where women's sexual autonomy and enjoyment were not considered. The key concepts, reputation and competition revealed a hierarchy set up amongst women, in addition to the dichotomy between men and women. This hierarchy was present in the treatment of long-term romantic partners who experienced more favourable social status because of their proximity to footballers, in opposition to casual sexual partners who experienced disdain.

Women explained that women who dated male footballers had improved reputations in their communities, linked to the status of her male partner, but were subject to much narrower standards than male footballers for acceptable behaviour. Nina explained the narrow range of acceptable behaviours for male footballers' female romantic partners in the context of alcohol use, relative to men.

> One long-term girlfriend would always often drink too much and become really over friendly with everyone and be really all over the place, falling over drunk. I know how that affected her reputation and how people thought of her, not taking her as

seriously. If you were a guy that was getting really drunk and carrying on, you'd probably be like "oh, he's just having a great time" but for her, we definitely saw her differently. We'd be thinking "oh he's just a bit of a dick" but we'd certainly be thinking less of her to be losing control and all over the place, [v]omiting in the corner, crying and stuff like that. Girls don't do that. (Nina)

Nina and other women explained that there was a fine line between reputational advantage and disadvantage in being sexually involved with footballers. The sexual desirability of footballers meant that women who had their attention were also considered more desirable and attractive than other women, but only for wives and girlfriends. This context meant that long-term relationships was seen to be the goal of women who were sexually available to male footballers and encouraged a competitive attitude among women. Courtney explained that competitiveness, although encouraged by the construction of male footballers as influential and desirable, poorly reflected on women who were not in relationships with these men. In particular, women who engaged in sexual competition and 'chased' male footballers were assumed to be 'up for anything' because they had surrendered their consent by appearing sexually available.

I'll give you an example, we [Courtney and her ex-partner, an SANFL and AFL player] were just at the [local pub] one night and [I was] talking to my partner. A girl stepped in [between us], turned her back to me and just kept talking [to him]. I'm standing there going, "hello", and finally, he's going, "uh, uh, uh, this is my partner" and she's going, "hi, how are you?" It's like they don't even think about anything other than a 'take a man' mentality, "this is what I want." So, in terms of consent, I think they've surrendered their consent before they even got in there. Honestly, I'm not condoning anything they [male footballers] do, they probably don't know the difference [between presence and absence of consent]. They're so used to women throwing themselves at each other, that if a woman says no, they might think she's playing hard to get. (Courtney)

This passage reflects that while women in long term relationships face intense reputational pressure, women who were considered 'up for sex' were immediately tarred with reputational disadvantage that undermined women's sexual autonomy, marking them as less deserving of care and respect.

The reputation constructed for male footballers, in conjunction with the perceived sexual availability of women and subsequent reputational disadvantage, meant that women, and girls, were powerless if they were targeted for sex by male footballers. In fact, Vanessa described receiving unwanted sexual attention as a child from a high-profile adult male footballer. This incident was witnessed by her community, but nobody intervened or

supported her, instead a negative reputation was constructed for her by her schoolmates which she had anticipated.

> He was dancing with me which I was then like, "oh wow! This is one of the great football players". Then I remember feeling really uncomfortable because he put his hands on my bum and this was in front of people that were like, like my parents' friends and you know my friends' parents. I can remember being in the middle of the dance floor and not being able to get away. Then he tried to kiss me and then I left because I was like, "you know what? I am thirteen years old; I've got to go to school on Monday and deal with that [potential reputational fallout.] (Vanessa)

In the scenario that Vanessa described, an older man who she knew and who knew her parents, acted sexually towards her at a venue in which she was working, in front of other community members who were aware of their age difference. The adults present did not challenge the man's behaviour, which Vanessa attributed to his status within the community as a respected footballer. Instead, Vanessa bore reputational damage for her actions when she became a topic of interest at school. She explained this dynamic, saying "…for a woman, in a country town to be even half as promiscuous as a football player is like, so bad. Nobody cares about them." Vanessa's experience, contextualised by the example provided by Courtney, illustrates that women's sexual agency functioned as reputational disadvantage, while for male footballers this was advantageous.

The experiences and attitudes that women described demonstrated that reputation functioned as a double-edged sword for both men and women, but that women were much more likely to be adversely affected. This meant that male footballers were able to use women's sexual reputations to coerce them, such as in Kim's experience of being threatened and humiliated. Similarly, sexual competition benefitted men socially, although perhaps not personally, while women were maligned. In the context of male footballers' perceived sexual desirability, reputation and competition has serious consequences for women who were considered to be competing for the sexual attention of footballers. These women were objects of scorn and distrust because they were seen as sexually aggressive and therefore having 'given up' their right to consent to sex to any and all sexual acts. This perception affected other women who were objects of male footballers' attraction in any kind of sexual situation, even if unwanted or inappropriate, such as in the scenario Vanessa described. In this way, male footballers' reputation for being sexually desirable did not have merely ephemeral effects since all women would potentially be subject to

various forms of sexual violence to maintain this reputation. The relationship between sexual reputation and sexual violence is presented in the next chapter.

Men's construction of reputation

Men did not explicitly discuss reputation in qualitative responses and instead communicated concern about 'generalisations' that they said negatively affect male footballers. Specifically, men's qualitative responses communicated concern regarding assumptions that male footballers were sexually aggressive, promiscuous, or unfaithful. They described this as unfair, discriminatory, or untrue. Participant no. 90, explained this concern, stating "…It concerns me that this research is going to potentially reinforce negative stereotypes around 'football culture', a cultural connotation that has been largely driven by media." Other responses communicated frustration with these kinds of generalisations that indicated a sense of powerlessness. Some men, such as Participant no. 77 below, showed concern with responsibility placed on men to act as sexual aggressors and assessors of sexual situations, explaining that such assertions are a double standard.

> Pretty annoying and sexist that all the questions were about how women are raped, assaulted, harassed etc and men are always the aggressor when I'm sure a netball team or something of that kind can do just as much harm to a man and be as much of an aggressor too! (Participant no. 77)

Participant no. 77 highlighted that male footballers were unfairly tarnished by generalisations about their sexual reputations, particularly by assumptions that they were violent. However, men also applied negative assumptions about women based on their sexual reputations, specifically that "women who sleep around are not good girlfriend material" (see Table 5.1.). These responses suggest that reputation was indeed significant to men and affected their construction of women and sex.

Men's responses to questions about sexual reputations highlighted a clear difference in how men constructed women's sexuality in comparison to their own sexual desirability. Most men did not agree that women were more likely to be attracted to male footballers than other men or that access to women was a benefit of playing football, although these results were mixed (see Table 5.1.). The high percentage of neutral responses, 40%, might indicate that men thought women were more attracted to *some* male footballers but

not all. These responses can be contextualised by men's previous assertions that playing football did not automatically imply their importance (see Table 5.1.). In this context, men might have felt that they were not automatically attractive because they play football. This finding was consistent with men's constructions of masculinity and male peer groups that suggested men did not think of themselves as powerful and influential, reinforcing that men constructed themselves as separate to 'football culture' despite their participation in football.

Table 5.1.

How important is being a man to who you are?	Broad agreement: 48%				
	Broad disagreement: 18%				
	VU	U	N	I	VI
	4%	13%	34%	27%	21%
A real man always says 'yes' to sex	Broad agreement: 6%				
	Broad disagreement: 81%				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
	53%	28%	13%	4%	2%
How important is being a football player to who you are?	Broad agreement: 48%				
	Broad disagreement: 28%				
	VU	U	N	I	VI
	8%	20%	24%	30%	18%
How important is football to your community?	Broad agreement: 81%				
	Broad disagreement: 6%				
	VU	U	N	I	VI
	1%	5%	13%	49%	33%
How important do you think that you are, as a footballer, to your community?	Broad agreement: 25%				
	Broad disagreement: 43%				
	VU	U	N	I	VI
	16%	27%	32%	16%	9%

Notes: SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, N: Neutral, A: Agreement, SA: Strongly Agree,

VU: Very Unimportant, U: Unimportant, N: Neutral, I: Important, VI: Very Important

Men's construction of women's reputations in some questions (see Table 5.2.) suggested that men subscribe to the double standards women identified in interviews. Men's responses were split into three groups, agree, neutral, and disagree, in answer to determining if a woman wanted to have sex with them (see Table 5.2.). Men varied in their

perception of their own sexual desirability but agreed or were neutral about whether a woman who has a reputation for sex with multiple people was 'girlfriend material' (see Table 5.2.). This finding could further reinforce that men do not consciously construct an awareness of their own sexual reputations, although they make assumptions about others' reputations, particularly women's. High levels of responses that agreed with negative connotations associated with women's sexual reputation supported the importance of reputation in understanding sexual desirability and social status, and the construction of hierarchies about which women were deserving of care and respect, consistent with women's experiences.

Table 5.2.

Women are more attracted to men who play football then men who do not	Broad agreement: 18%				
	Broad disagreement: 43%				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
	14%	29%	39%	13%	5%
A woman who has a reputation for sleeping around is not good girlfriend material	Broad agreement: 42%				
	Broad disagreement: 22%				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
	7%	15%	36%	25%	17%
It is easy to tell when a woman wants to have sex with me	Broad agreement: 34%				
	Broad disagreement: 39%				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
	19%	19%	27%	22%	13%
Having casual sex with footy chicks or groupies is a benefit of being a footy player	Broad agreement: 11%				
	Broad disagreement: 73%				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
	47%	26%	16%	10%	1%

Notes: SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, N: Neutral, A: Agreement, SA: Strongly Agree

Men's responses regarding reputation showed that they were largely unaware of how reputation functioned for them unless they were negatively impacted. Conversely, men subscribed to reputational conditions and generalisations for women as they related to sex. This finding was consistent with women's assertions that reputation was gendered as women were subject to harsher conditions and surveillance than male footballers. Women argued that other women and themselves were negatively impacted by their sexual relationships with male footballers but that these men were benefited by their sexual

reputations. This assertion contradicted men's sentiments that their sexual reputations were based on unfair and incorrect assumptions about how male footballers behaved. Instead, men stated that they and other male footballers did not behave according to generalisations including those presented in survey questions. In particular, men took issue with insinuations that male footballers acted violently or disrespectfully towards women, especially in sexual situations.

Sexual consent

Women routinely discussed the idea of 'implied consent' and linked this to sexual entitlement, expressed not only by footballers but by many men in the process of procurement and negotiation of sex. Implied consent was particularly relevant to footballers because of their elevated social status, based on the construction of their masculinity and status in communities, and the subsequent sexual desirability ascribed to them. Women identified the construction of male footballers as particularly sexually desirable as a complication for understanding and negotiating consent as footballers believed that 'all women wanted to have sex with them', were not used to being rejected, and believed that women were 'lucky' to have attracted their sexual attention. These attitudes were further complicated because consent was commonly seen to be 'implied' during sex which informed subsequent misunderstandings about sexual violence; discussed in the next chapter. Implied consent was different to ignoring an explicit "no", coercion, and use of force, which women were more likely to recognise as violent. Instead, implied consent was marked by assumptions, misunderstandings, and a lack of communication that were deeply rooted in constructions of gender, sex, and sexuality.

'Implied consent' was described by women as a series of cultural markers, interpreted as a willingness to have sex, such as agreeing to a date, drinking alcohol, flirting, or sharing a taxi. The concept invoked men as sexual aggressors and centred their sexual autonomy, consistent with the competitive sexual practices women had described. Conversely, men indicated frustration with being cast as sexual aggressors and argued it was unfair and sexist for men to be held solely responsible for determining if sexual situations were consensual. Women also problematised common interpretations of consent, instead emphasising frameworks based on mutual pleasure and respect. However, women also inadvertently held men responsible for shifting sexual conceptual frameworks in this way

instead of indicating that women could act as drivers in sexual scenarios, overall centring men's sexual desires and autonomy.

Women's constructions of entitlement

The assumption, and reality in many communities, that women wanted to be in relationships with male footballers meant men would likely perceive sexual access to any and all women, described by women as sexual entitlement. Women said that positioning male footballers as community heroes based on their sexual desirability and role within the community, created a 'reputation' which perpetuated unequal and gendered social dynamics. Courtney explained that this dynamic reinforced "…Godlike status for men and servitude for women, in a sexual connotation." This "Godlike status" referred to a reverence for male footballers, discussed in connection to masculinity in Chapter Four, particularly in regional communities, accompanied by sexual attention from women, or the assumption that women were sexually available to male footballers.

Sexual entitlement was linked to the attitude that women were "lucky to be with [footballers]" or that "all women want [them]" (Bianca). This attitude was linked to sexual violence but was most often discussed as an annoying arrogance that permeated courtship dynamics and social dynamics in community settings, particularly in regional areas. Bianca explained this attitude using messages she had received from male footballers via the dating app Tinder.

> The couple [of amateur footballers] that I talked to over Tinder and caught up with, it was very much, "you're in my top 10", "it's an honour that I'm talking to you", "you should be so lucky to be considered within the top 10 hottest people I consider [dating] at the moment (Bianca)

This arrogance was based on the reputation and respect male footballers experienced in many communities. Sexual entitlement was explicitly linked to reputation by women who explained that some players, such as amateur or less senior or popular men, who acted entitled to sex with women were 'trying to prove something'. In fact, some women argued that male footballers seek out the attention of women to maintain their reputation as sexually desirable and would become irate if rejected. Reputation, and subsequent competition between men, was seen to facilitate sexual entitlement. Brooke argued men understood their own desirability as necessary for maintaining reputation among male

peers, specifically "[i]ts entitlement but it's also proving yourself. [Y]ou have to get that many notches on your belt to prove that you're the biggest stud out there." The maintenance of men's reputation within their male peer group, and reputation as a male Australian footballer, was viewed by some women as a façade. This, according to Alyssa, occurred because men actively maintained their image as sexually desirable and minimised the role that their entitlement to sex played in interactions with women. Alyssa explained that the entitlement to sex and perception of an inherent sexual desirability associated with male footballers reduced their ability to see the effort it took to maintain the idea of their own sexual desirability.

> [T]hey think that they're hot and they're playing footy and all the girls want them. [S]o if they land a girl it's like "oh, she wanted it". They don't ever want to take responsibility so the next morning they're like "yeah, I fucked this girl", but then the lead up to it was like "nah, she wanted me, she was chasing me". They'll never admit to how hard they had to try to get a girl. They think that; "Oh yeah, she's just lucky to be with me", " I'm a footy player, I'm a legend, I'm a hero." (Alyssa)

This 'requirement' that male footballers at least appear to be sexually active was linked to the sense of arrogance that women associated with male footballers who expressed sexual entitlement. Bianca described an instance of arrogance and entitlement that an elite male footballer displayed after being rejected by her friend.

> He'd [AFL footballer] been in a bar with a friend of a friend and he liked the look of her [my friend]. I think she had a boyfriend, wasn't interested and didn't find him attractive. When she rebutted him *chuckles* at the bar he said, "how can you not like me I'm so and so". Very kind of, "you know who I am", "it's a privilege to have me telling you you're attractive." (Bianca)

This arrogance that women associated with footballers who displayed sexual entitlement was described as particularly off-putting and often meant that women would avoid "these types of men", and in some cases all male footballers. In this way, the perceived sexual desirability of male footballers and the necessity of maintaining a sexual reputation hindered men's efforts to bolster their sexual reputation, since women would avoid footballers who displayed entitlement. In part, women described men's sexual entitlement as irritating but occasionally entitlement was considered dangerous. The danger of sexual entitlement was present when combined with an adherence to 'implied' consent. Women explained that men who acted entitled to sex would use arbitrary markers associated with sex to assume that sex would occur. In this way, sexual entitlement and implied consent

were similar and intrinsically linked, as adherence to one concept would likely increase the probability of the other.

Women's construction of 'implied' consent

Implied consent referred to assumptions that arbitrary markers, such as those listed below by Bianca, could be interpreted as signals that a person wanted to have sex.

> A lot of guys seem to be under the assumption that girls will go along with something [sexual] and if they've said yes at one point then that continues the entire way through. Yes, to sharing a taxi means yes to going home which means yes to getting in bed which means yes to you know. Yes, it's fine for me not to use a condom or whatever. I don't think it should be that way. I think in general consent is a huge issue that a lot of people make assumptions about. (Bianca)

Bianca explained that the use of subjective but culturally loaded signifiers was pervasive in modern dating practices. In her experience, men often assumed that sex would take place despite having no relevant discussions to explicitly indicate this. For example, Bianca described meeting men from the app, Tinder, who assumed that by meeting them for a drink, she wanted to have sex with them immediately. Women who consented to an activity with sexual connotations, such as meeting for a date, were assumed to have consented to any other sexualised activity. This meant that women had to be wary about which activities would be coded as sexual and explicitly reject these if they did not want to have sex, since their consent would be implied rather than unambiguously sought.

Women interviewed, such as Alyssa, explained that they were made aware of the responsibility placed on women to guard against unwanted sexual encounters by men. Alyssa described feeling impacted by hearing her partner's friends normalise and excuse their own coercive sexual behaviour, especially when alcohol was used.

> Hearing the way that they talk about it, it's disgusting. I don't think they ever think anything's wrong with a girl being trashed [drunk] though. They still think like, "oh, she still was out hooking up with him in the club", and "oh, and she was dressed like such and such" or "she still came in the taxi anyway". I think that they don't see anything wrong with it, whereas it makes my guts churn. (Alyssa)

In Alyssa's experience, women were held responsible for determining and explicitly rejecting all acts that could be coded as 'implied consent', even when inebriated. This was

consistent with men's efforts to shift responsibility for potential sexual violence, discussed previously in Chapter Four and in the following findings chapters. In particular, alcohol use was consistently discussed by women as an excuse men used for misunderstanding sexual consent, escalating sexual situations, and dismissing their own responsibility. This process of using alcohol to shift blame for sexual violence to women was important because several women interviewed had internalised blame for sexual violence when alcohol was involved, discussed in Chapter Six.

A lack of consent literacy and subscription to misunderstandings about what constitutes consent impacted women and their peers. Women consistently argued that all genders had a poor understanding of consent and offered their own reflections on how their understanding of consent had developed over time and with experience. Some misunderstandings of consent could be characterised as generational but significantly, several women explained that they developed a more comprehensive understanding of sexual consent only after experiencing sexual violence. For Courtney, one of the older women in the participant group aged approximately in her late 40s, consent meant "mutuality" or an agreement that all parties want whatever sexual act is occurring. She discussed how sex had been "mechanical" in the relationship with a male footballer that she described. This relationship took place while Courtney was in her 20s, she said at the time that she was unaware of the potential for her own pleasure and instead engaged in sex to please her partner. Vanessa, a mother in her 30s, discussed how her understanding of consent had developed as she reflected on her multiple experiences of violence. She explained that violent experiences are a likely barrier to self-motivated consent literacy because people might conclude that they had perpetrated or experienced sexual violence. Alyssa's experiences supported Vanessa's assertions since she had realised that many of her sexual experiences were violent after reflecting on how alcohol use impacts the ability to consent to sex. Vanessa argued that consent was a vague concept and therefore a limited conceptual tool for understanding sex and instead suggested a shift in focus on the violation of sexual boundaries. This conceptual shift encouraged active engagement in sex through a focus on boundaries which would need to be explicitly set but could be flexible and individualised, while 'violation' implied a lack of respect if these boundaries were crossed. Importantly, a shift towards respect-based models could counteract the impact of entrenched assumptions on the viability of consent as a measure for ethical sexual behaviour.

The juxtaposition between women's experiences and reflections on the development of their understanding of consent highlighted that misunderstandings about what constitutes consent are enduring. Women problematised popular understandings of consent based on the prevalence of implied consent, blurriness, and the impact of alcohol use on sexual encounters. This suggests a broader issue with the construction and communication of consent, that perhaps the relatively new popularisation of the term 'consent' means that although consent is communicated about more frequently, it could be oversimplified or misunderstood (Banet-Weiser 2018; Beres and MacDonald 2015). Based on women's assertions, 'implied consent' could be better characterised as 'misunderstandings' of consent, since assumptions were routine in many of the women's experiences in ways that were perceived to be rooted in ignorance.

Men's constructions of consent

Men demonstrated a basic understanding of consent, particularly the 'right answer' to questions about what constitutes consent but lacked comprehension for employing consent. This was especially clear in complicated or nuanced hypothetical scenarios, such as those involving alcohol use. The inconsistency in men's knowledge and use of consent highlighted that consent may be conceptually difficult. This finding mirrored women's misgivings about consent, including suggestions for a renewed focus on cultivating respect and care for sexual partners. However, men's persistent lack of awareness of the constructions of sex, and masculinity as previously discussed, that women identified highlighted a clear disconnect between men and women's experiences of sex.

Men's understanding of consent was clear in basic questions about what constitutes consent. Most men agreed that informed consent to sexual relations can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and is given when your partner says or does something to communicate that they give consent. A few men thought consent constituted an absence of a "no" (see Table 5.3.). However, a closer analysis of these responses suggested some confusion about sexual consent and alcohol use, since fewer men indicated that consent cannot be given if someone is too drunk to know what they are saying. Men were able to select as many responses as they deemed appropriate for both questions but response rates to what constitutes informed consent were lower than those that indicated what is required for a person to give consent. Most men agreed with all statements of what was necessary to give consent but prioritised the legal age for consent over whether a person

was conscious or actively engaged in sexual activity (see Table 5.3.). Men chose responses that prioritised legal interpretations of consent over those that promoted an ethics of care, such as being "actively engaged". This interpretation of consent was consistent with men's earlier responses that emphasised individual responsibility, discussed in the context of women's construction of individual 'good men' in opposition to groups of 'bad men'.

Table 5.3.

Informed consent to sexual relations	
Is given when your partner says or does something to communicate that they give consent	76%
Is given as long as your partner doesn't say no	6%
Can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity	84%
Cannot be given if someone is too drunk to know what they are saying	66%
To give consent a person must be	
The legal age of consent for sex	92%
Conscious	89%
Actively engaged in what's happening	87%
Sober enough to understand what's happening	90%

Men demonstrated significant inconsistency in some responses which suggested misunderstandings or misinterpretations in questions that covered the same concept in slightly different contexts. Men were less likely to agree that consent was not present in a scenario, consistent with women's argument that sex was more likely assumed consensual in situations where consent was 'blurred'. For instance, men were much more likely to agree that a person needs to be sober enough to understand what is happening to consent to sex, than someone being unable to consent if they are too drunk to communicate (see Table 5.3.), and responses were split overall on whether a person could consent while drunk (see Table 5.4.). Most men selected a neutral response to this question, perhaps indicating a 'grey area' or disagreed that a person can give consent while drunk, and a quarter of responses indicated broad agreement with the statement

(see Table 5.4.). The disconnect between these responses, despite the similarity of many questions, suggest significant variability in understandings of sexual consent and the influence of alcohol and other drugs. Additionally, the inconsistency in responses to questions such as these further supports men's subscription to legalised frameworks of consent because men were less willing to indicate that someone was unable to consent unless there was a clear legal precedent.

Table 5.4.

Can a person give consent if they are drunk?	Broad agreement: 25%				
	Broad disagreement: 37%				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
	19%	18%	38%	20%	5%

Notes: SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, N: Neutral, A: Agreement, SA: Strongly Agree

The variability in men's understanding of capacity to consent while intoxicated showed up further in answers to scenarios. Men indicated that there was no universal standard for deciding if someone was too drunk to consent to sex, in part because there was not a standard for assessing what 'drunk' means to different individuals. For example, in answers to a scenario that asked how men would respond if their friends were being chatted up by a woman who was "pretty drunk" and they were concerned that their friends were "too drunk to act responsibly" (see Table 5.5.), each of the six qualitative responses to this scenario acknowledged the complexity of intoxication in different ways. Some men argued that the intoxication of both parties indicated a shared responsibility, and one man said that his actions would depend on each individual's intoxication and any other factors not indicated in the scenario. Another respondent, Participant no. 66, focused solely on the woman's intoxication and said he would act as a mediator to assess if the woman was comfortable. The other respondent took issue with perceived connotations in the scenario, based on 'trouble' and 'responsibility' which could indicate frustration with men being positioned as responsible for ascertaining sexual consent, and expected to act as sexual aggressors. Taken together, these responses seem to question the responsibility placed on men for deciphering if consent was present in somewhat complex scenarios. The potential frustration or anxiety indicated by responses such as these could explain why men were more likely to choose responses that stipulated legal directives, since these would alleviate some of the burden for sexual responsibility that men might feel.

Table 5.5

You are in a pub with a group of mates celebrating after a game. Two of your friends have had quite a bit to drink and are being chatted up by a girl who seems pretty drunk. You think maybe your friends are too drunk to act responsibly, and you're worried that they might get into some trouble.				
Be a good mate and try to steer them away from the situation	Talk to others in the group about the best way to resolve the situation	Talk to the most senior player there about what to do	I'd leave them alone. It looks like they're having fun, so good luck to them!	I would probably just follow what my teammates do
47%	14%	3%	35%	2%

Qualitative comments:

Both parties are drunk, they are all adults and responsible for their own behaviour. (Participant no. 7)

I don't understand the connotations of (not) act(ing) responsibly and 'trouble' in this question: unclear, no comment. (Participant no. 15)

Do nothing. If both parties are intoxicated there is a responsibility on both parties not just the guy. Sexist much? (Participant no. 54)

Mediate the conversation, acknowledge the intoxication of, gauge the response of the woman in terms of the extent to which she is dissatisfied with their state, allow the woman to kindly walk away if she feels necessary. (Participant no. 66)

Depends how drunk 'pretty drunk' is. (Participant no. 68)

I would probably do nothing, but it depends on how intoxicated each person was and other factors. (Participant no. 119)

The assumption that men would actively gain consent from women, even when they were inebriated, was particularly clear in a scenario that described a woman who "had a lot to drink" and was "unsteady on her feet". Responses suggested the woman might still be able to consent to sex after further assessment. Over half of quantitative responses indicated that men would not pursue sex with a woman in the state of intoxication described in the scenario but close to half said that they would continue to attempt to gain consent for sex. In this instance, men appeared to frame their actions through whether or not they should pursue sex, rather than whether consent was able to be freely given in such an intoxicated state. Men's qualitative responses offered further context for the stark

variation in responses. Some men showed concern for the women and recognition that she was too intoxicated to consent to sex,

> Consider taking her somewhere safe and respecting her rights, as if I leave her somebody else might get involved and take advantage when I'm gone. (Participant no. 25)

> Walk her home, Be a gentleman! (Participant no. 62)

Other responses specified that a decision to pursue sex was dependent on other factors, specifically whether she would regret having sex or if they were too drunk to responsibly ascertain if the woman could consent.

> I would ask consent, but if I truly thought she would regret or was not in the state to do so, I would leave it for another time. (Participant no. 65)

> Probably do it if I'm drunk too. If I'm sober, I'd make sure she's safe for the night and see how she feels in the morning/another time. (Participant no. 134)

These responses further emphasised men's perceived responsibility to drive sexual situations that other men had problematised. Men seemed to recognise the expectation that they initiate sex but were frustrated by the associated responsibility or burden of recognising when sexual scenarios were consensual and ethical. The responses were consistent with the persistent centring of men's sexual desires and autonomy that women had identified but offered a more nuanced reading, specifically that individual men might be uncomfortable with this dynamic.

Table 5.6.

You are in a bar with a girl who has been flirting with you all night. She has had a lot to drink. You think she wants to have sex with you and you're up for it too, but she is pretty unsteady on her feet.		
She seems to want it so it's OK to go ahead	I need to get her consent even though she seems to be up for it	If she's drunk, then she can't give consent. Best to leave it for another time
5%	39%	56%

Qualitative comments:

If she's that drunk, I'd leave it. I don't agree with a blanket statement of ' if she's drunk, she can't give consent' everyone has different degrees of self-control. (Participant no. 3)

As above, not a situation I'd find myself in. (Participant no. 17)

Consider taking her somewhere safe and respecting her rights, as if I leave her somebody else might get involved and take advantage when I'm gone. (Participant no. 25)

I think judgment is impaired on both sides and each situation is different (Participant no. 26)

Walk her home, Be a gentleman! (Participant no. 62)

I would ask consent, but if I truly thought she would regret or was not in the state to do so, I would leave it for another time. (Participant no. 65)

Why are all these questions hypothetically pointing towards male footballers sleeping around? I know plenty of great footballers who would not relate to this as they are either married or in a very strong relationship. (Participant no. 83)

Probably do it if I'm drunk too. If I'm sober, I'd make sure she's safe for the night and see how she feels in the morning/another time. (Participant no. 134)

Men were most able to respond definitively in situations that were clear and simple. For example, in a scenario where a woman changed her mind about engaging in sex, most men said they would respect her decision. Several men added caveats that suggested simply letting the woman leave was not an adequate option for them because they wanted to ensure her comfort or valued spending non-sexual time with her.

"I'd apologise for being presumptuous" (Participant no. 14)

"Understand that, then if she wants to just stay over, just sleep, or watch TV, or talk" (Participant no. 80)

"Talk to her as to why no. Ensure she is comfortable." (Participant no. 90)

However, this scenario was one of few that attracted a majority broad agreement. In part, this could be because each possible response implies a decisive effort to disrespect the woman involved. This scenario described the necessity for a decisive response, rather than interpreting a social situation and deciding if action is appropriate.

Table 5.7.

You meet a girl at a party while you are away, and at the end of the night, you invite her back to your hotel room for some privacy. You are pretty sure she wants to have sex as much as you do. Things get serious in the bedroom and you are just about to put on a condom when she says no, she doesn't want to continue, and starts to get dressed.			
She wanted it, I'd keep going	No means no, I'd stop and let her go	Sweet talk her - some girls just need to feel loved to follow through	Tell her she's a tease and kick her out
1%	87%	7%	2%
Qualitative comments:			
I'd apologise for being presumptuous. (Participant no. 14) I personally would not engage in casual sex. (Participant no. 17 I would try the sweet talking and ask what's wrong, but if she means no, then there's nothing I can do. (Participant no. 65) Understand that, then if she wants to stay just over just sleep or watch TV or talk. (Participant no. 80) Talk to her as to why no. Ensure she is comfortable. (Participant no. 90)			

These results suggested that basic understandings of consent are common among men but that a deeper comprehension is lacking. There was significant confusion surrounding employing sexual consent and responded to varied or complex scenarios, especially when alcohol was present. These responses suggested that a basic benchmark, like a legal

definition of consent, was not a robust enough tool to help people understand their mutual responsibility in sexual practices. Men's responses suggest that their misunderstandings of consent were not based in a sexual entitlement or 'implied consent' as women argued that men were confused or resistant to being positioned as sexual aggressors. The contention and confusion present in men's responses seemed to be a barrier for men in gaining a deeper understanding of consent. Men seemed to prefer legal definitions and definitive answers that were clear and simple. However, the primacy of legal frameworks for consent could be used to avoid liability, rather than ensure ethical and respectful sex for all parties.

The importance of pleasure and respect

Women emphasised pleasure and respect as important potential avenues for challenging concepts like 'implied consent'. A renewed focus on mutual pleasure was used as an antonym to combat the dehumanising and disrespectful sexual experiences that many of the women interviewed had. Men argued that respect was present in many of their football clubs because they were spaces women frequented or worked closely alongside men. In both participant groups, 'respect' was fraught but integral for understanding how sex was constructed.

Women's constructions of pleasure and respect

Eight of the 10 women interviewed discussed respect, also related to respecting boundaries, an investment in women as human beings, and acknowledging that sex encapsulated more than penetration. Respect was also used as an antonym to coercion and dehumanisation, in the context of discussions about 'bad sex'. Conversely, only half of the women discussed pleasure as part of discussion of sex and this most often related to centring men's pleasure in their sexual experiences. Several women juxtaposed their experiences with men who did not place expectations on the potential for sex, compared with men who assumed sex would occur as soon as the possible or subscribed to 'implied consent'. Men who respected women or acknowledged mutual sexual pleasure were described in opposition to men who dehumanised women during sex. These men either focused on women as people, or as sexual objects.

The dichotomy between pleasure and respect and dehumanisation was a common feature in women's experiences. Alyssa specifically detailed what constituted 'good' and 'bad' sex in her experience, and the space between respectful and disrespectful sex. For Alyssa, good sex involved pleasure and respect showed to her by her partner in stark comparison to several instances of casual sex, usually involving alcohol, where men had shown a lack of care and respect for her.

> I remember him kissing me on the forehead while we were having sex and I was like, "oh my God, it's actually nice." It was a bizarre feeling. I could have cried I was so happy. Every other experience I had was pretty shit. (Alyssa)

Alyssa explained that the care, respect, and intimacy in her first sexual encounters with her partner were shocking in comparison to her other sexual experiences. Her previous experience meant she associated sex with dehumanisation, where she felt she was "just a hole". In these instances, sex was centred around men's pleasure, a common thread for other women interviewed. Alyssa described several scenarios that illustrated how sex had been centred on men's pleasure, at the expense of respect and care for her.

> No guy ever used a franga [condom]. One time someone asked me if I was on the pill and I was like "nah", and he just pulled out and shoved it [his penis] in my mouth [and ejaculated there] instead. That was just like, thanks for that. It's all been about them. (Alyssa)

A shift from sex centred on men's enjoyment to a mutual pleasure and fulfilment transformed Alyssa's relationship to sex. She said, "I didn't ever know what I wanted. It's only been until the last year or so that I realised that I can reclaim my sexuality and actually enjoy it". She credited her most recent partner's focus on showing respect and care towards her for helping her completely refocus her understanding of sex.

Other women described engaging in 'half-hearted' sex that were not dehumanising but were unsatisfying, occupying a middle ground between respect and dehumanisation. Several of these women explained that they had low expectations for their own sexual enjoyment or, like Alyssa, did not realise that sex could be enjoyable for them until finding a partner who centred their pleasure. Sasha had slightly different reflections to the other women, particularly that "you shouldn't really feel bad about sex after it happens." Her reflections highlighted how sex was typically focused on men's desires and reinforced a need to shift towards mutual pleasure, as linked to respect.

Why do I feel like, "I'll just let it happen for their sake." What about my sake? Just stop it now for my sake. That's also a nice, respectful thing to do for the other person involved. There's two people involved. (Sasha)

Sasha's reflections contextualised other women's experiences where men helped them reconceptualise sex as positive and pleasurable or conversely that women centred their desires after experiencing violence. She explained that it is unusual for women's comfort and desires to be prioritised during sex but that this is enabled, likely unconsciously, by both men and women. Women's experiences of learning to assert their needs during sex, consistently centred men and credited their influence. In these cases, men were inadvertently positioned as sexual aggressors, a point of contention in men's survey responses. Taken together, women and men's experiences suggest a need to centre mutual pleasure and respect and simultaneously decentring the primacy of men's perceived or real desires and expectations.

Men's construction of pleasure and respect

As outlined above, in terms of consent, men seemed to base decision making on liability or social expectations rather than respect and care for sexual partners. Additionally, men indicated that respect was conditional for some women and not others, consistent with women's discussion of gendered sexual reputations, including a hierarchy among women. Men overwhelmingly showed respect for players' wives and girlfriends, valued the role that they play in clubs, wanted to include partners in social events immediately following games, and also indicated respect for women athletes and other women working in clubs. However, there was a marked difference in responses about wives and girlfriends, and less serious sexual relationships, such as one-night stands or friends with benefits (see Table 5.8.). For instance, "women who sleep around" were seen as less deserving of respect as they were not "girlfriend material", demonstrated by the significant difference in responses to questions about female romantic partners in Table 5.8. These findings suggested that men construct respect for women as a hierarchy in which some women are more deserving of respect than others.

Table 5.8.

Players' wives and girlfriends are important to the running of my club	Broad agreement: 72%				
	Broad disagreement: 10%				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
	3%	7%	19%	38%	34%
A woman who has a reputation for sleeping around is not good girlfriend material	Broad agreement: 42				
	Broad disagreement: 22				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
	7%	15%	36%	25%	17%

Notes: SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, N: Neutral, A: Agreement, SA: Strongly Agree

Men's construction of consent overlapped with respect, "decency", and "common sense", in addition to legal frameworks. However, men's understanding of these concepts as illustrated in responses were vague. For example, Participant no. 83 seemed to determine respect for women as automatic when women were present in clubs, particularly in positions of power.

> My club President is a woman. We have many great female volunteers at the club. Immature stuff gets mentioned sometime [but] our club's culture indirectly excludes people who clearly don't show respect for women or men. (Participant no.83)

This vague definition of respect as inherent or assumed was consistent with the use of other terms, especially "common sense". For example, several men designated 'common sense' as a primary influence of their idea of consent.

> Common sense. (Participant no. 25, 86, 87, 106, 122)

> Common decency and sense. (Participant no. 117)

> Common sense? But perhaps it isn't as common as it should be. (Participant no. 4)

Common sense was never explicitly defined by these men, although Participant no. 117 linked the concept to "decency". Some participants expanded to include "My own set of morals/values" (Participant no. 3), "my beliefs" (participant no. 83), "Innate sense of right and wrong" (Participant no. 12) as definitive influences on how they conceptualised

consent. In each instance, these responses assumed that respect for women, including respecting women's sexual autonomy, were inherent and common.

Men constructed respect as 'common sense', inherent or obvious and did not elaborate on what respect constitutes. Women differed significantly in their responses, where themes of respect, through pleasure and active engagement and communication in sex was key for them. This finding suggests that a cultivation of respect is essential in conceptualising consent and examining misunderstandings of consent, particularly women's identification of 'implied consent'.

Conclusion

Sex was constructed primarily through desirability and sexual consent. Women discussed how male footballers were positioned as sexually desirable subjects and problematised this because of the prevalence of competitive sex practices and sexual entitlement, and a double standard in how sexual reputations functioned for men and women. The entitlement associated with sexual desirability was seen to foster a belief in 'implied consent' -- arbitrary markers used to assume willingness to engage in sex. Men's construction of reputation confirmed that women's sexual reputations function as a disadvantage. However, these constructions also highlighted that men do not necessarily perceive themselves as sexually powerful or desirable, or place importance on the role of football in determining their importance or reputation.

Implied consent was identified by women as a defining cultural problem, rather than specific to Australian footballers. The concept meant men assumed women wanted to engage in sex because of their proximity to them, alcohol use, or other cues that could be implied as sexual but did not universally indicate sex would occur, such as sharing a taxi with someone. Women problematised implied consent because it was presumptuous and perpetuated misunderstandings about sexual consent. Men's construction of consent supported women's assertions, with caveats. Men demonstrated a basic understanding of consent but were less able to employ the concept, especially when alcohol was involved. Additionally, some men rejected assumptions that they drive sexual situations and be held solely responsible for ascertaining consent. While these responses indicated defensiveness, it highlighted that common constructions of consent positioned women as passive and men as sexually aggressive and dominant.

For women, the prevalence of 'implied consent' undermined the usefulness of consent for encouraging ethical sexual behaviour. Instead, women talked about violation of boundaries and the difference between 'bad sex', and sex with men who did not dehumanise them. Women emphasised that the defining difference between 'good' and 'bad' sexual encounters was an awareness of and commitment to pleasure and respect. However, respect could be a fraught term for communicating about sexual consent and ethical sex to broader populations, since men constructed it in loose and inconsistent terms. For instance, some men assumed clubs would be respectful places because of the involvement as employees or leaders, rather than because clubs were an environment where women were safe, and their contributions celebrated.

CHAPTER SIX: CONSTRUCTING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Introduction

Constructions of sexual violence became an important aspect of this research because of women's experiences of masculinities and sex, rather than deliberate attempts to uncover instances of violence. Half of the women interviewed directly discussed their experiences of sexual violence by footballers, while all other women discussed sexual violence as a problem associated with footballers or football. In these instances, women problematised community constructions of sexual violence, specifically misunderstandings about what constitutes sexual violence, including who perpetrates or experiences it. Communities perpetuated myths about sexual violence that reduced accountability for perpetrators and instead blamed victims, consistent with the findings presented in Chapters Four and Five. These myths constructed a dichotomy between deviant, monstrous men who commit rape and other men, especially male footballers who were respected by community members. This dichotomy informed a reluctance to recognise that footballers who are respected by their communities could also perpetrate sexual violence, emphasised in conjunction with the construction of male footballers as community heroes and particularly sexually desirable. The reluctance to believe male footballers might commit sexual violence linked to findings discussed in earlier chapters, specifically the use of the male peer group to justify men's use of sexual violence to maintain their sexual desirability, relationship to male peers, and masculine dominance.

Football communities' construction of sexual violence, and associated construction of masculinity and sex, impacted women's recognition of their experiences as violent and discouraged them from speaking about violence. The dichotomous view of violence that absolved male footballers of accountability for sexual violence denigrated women who alleged sexual violence against these men. These women were viewed as liars, regretful, or otherwise mistaken if they made allegations of sexual violence against male footballers because these men were constructed as desirable and respectable. This finding mirrored the differential sexual reputations for men and women and effects of this on women, discussed in Chapter Five. Women explained that these assumptions meant that communities, including family members, responded dismissively if they alleged sexual violence by male footballers. Instead, women internalised blame for sexual violence and diminished their experiences as 'not that bad'. Women explained that they were effectively

conditioned to accept sexual violence by male footballers as normal because they would be blamed for their experiences or ostracised if they advocated for themselves. The blame that women bore for sexual violence was a consequence of the lack of recognition and accountability when male footballers used sexual violence and the persistent shift in responsibility for sexual violence noted in previous findings chapters.

Male footballers' survey responses supported the view that the burden of responsibility for sexual violence was placed on women. Men's construction of sexual violence relied on legal definitions, including subscription to similar rape myths that communities used, and supported women's assertion that communities dismissed most forms of sexual violence. The reliance on narrow legal constructions of sexual violence in conjunction with community refusal to accept that male footballers could be violent meant that men were not encouraged to examine how their sexual behaviour might have been violent. The presumption that male footballers were sexually desirable to all women and men's competitive maintenance of their sexual desirability, discussed in the previous chapter, legitimised men's use of 'minor' sexual violence, such as harassment and coercion, because women's consent was 'implied' and men's desires were privileged. The findings discussed in Chapter Four bolstered this process, specifically that men's use of sexual violence in peer groups was accepted, and even *expected*. The persistent trend of 'low expectations' for male footballers' sexual behaviour took place within the context of their perceived intrinsic goodness, linked here to the presumption that deviant men uniquely perpetrate sexual violence.

Women's construction of sexual violence

Most interviews with women discussed sexual violence. Women were aware that sexual violence is a common and serious social problem, and especially that sexual violence categorised as 'minor', such as sexual harassment, was common and impactful. Despite recognition of the severity and breadth of sexual violence, women minimised their experiences to mirror how they perceived that their communities constructed violence. Women were reluctant to seek support after experiencing sexual violence and internalised blame for sexual violence, in response to anticipating a lack of support from their communities. These constructions of sexual violence were consistent with women's experiences of sex and observations of masculinity, discussed in Chapters Four and Five. These findings outlined how male footballers were constructed as sexually desirable and

linked to maintaining men's dominance among male peers and the broader community. The need to maintain the appearance of sexual desirability to belong in male peer groups meant that men engaged in competitive sex practices, including sexual harassment and coercing women into sex. However, football communities often accepted this behaviour as normal, especially when perpetrated by groups of men. The acceptance of male footballers' use of 'minor' forms of sexual violence, like harassment and coercion, provided context for women's minimisation of their own experiences of sexual violence.

Women linked the proliferation of sexual violence in football communities to the construction of male footballers as sexually desirable and as community heroes. The construction of male footballers as particularly desirable meant that women wanted to partner romantically with footballers and men had subsequent increased sexual access to women. Courtney discussed how footballers are constructed as community 'heroes' or 'Gods' and that this construction affects the ability of football communities to recognise that footballers might make mistakes, including commit sexual violence.

> [F]ootball clubs are community. They are the stars in that community because everyone's life revolves around what's going to happen on Saturday from March to September. So they [male footballers] are the Gods of that. You can do anything you like. My mind is in tangents now about how that operates in so many other areas. You just don't want to believe that this person that you've put up on a pedestal could [commit sexual violence], you want them to be a hero. You don't actually want to believe they might actually be human and fuck up like the rest of us. (Courtney)

Courtney explained that male footballers were likely to be impacted by the sexual attention and community adoration they received, as they were less likely than other men to realise that their sexual advances might be unwanted and attract consequences. Women explained that this lack of awareness occurred in part because the construction of footballers as community heroes was at odds with the construction of sexual violence as inherently violent and forceful and exclusively perpetrated by 'monstrous' men. Heightened sexual desirability when combined with the construction of footballers as inherently valuable and therefore 'untouchable' meant that communities were less likely to believe that male footballers would commit sexual violence. Communities were then less likely to hold male footballers accountable for sexual violence. Instead, communities assumed that women who alleged sexual violence were lying or exaggerating. Women's experiences of witnessing or experiencing these attitudes were consistent with high profile media stories about alleged 'predatory groupies' and false sexual violence claims that

circulated in Australian media throughout the 2000s, as well as their own descriptions of the reputational disadvantage women experienced if they were perceived sexually available to male footballers, discussed in Chapter Five (Toffoletti 2007; Waterhouse-Watson 2012a, 2013a).

Some women connected their tendency to normalise violence to how their family, friends and community responded to sexual violence involving male footballers. Women said that they were more likely to internalise blame and less likely to seek support if their communities were dismissive or unresponsive when male footballers committed sexual violence. These women were reluctant to identify their experiences as violent because of a heightened denial of the prevalence of sexual violence due to disbelief that local footballers could be responsible for such violence. This approach coloured women's, and communities, understanding of the range of experiences that constitute sexual violence, victimisation patterns, and perpetrators.

Vanessa had experienced multiple instances of sexual violence by male footballers who lived in the same regional community as her when community members had responded with nonchalance or derision. In an instance where a long-term casual sex partner raped her in her bed, Vanessa talked about the disapproving reactions of those around her, including her mother. The man who raped Vanessa was eventually charged with sexual assault in a case that went to trial. In discussions with community members, Vanessa learned that this man was suspected of raping several women in their community and had a pattern of sexual violence that some of his friends were aware of. Following an unsuccessful criminal trial, Vanessa reflected on the role the community played excusing his behaviour.

> He got away with everything he did to everybody, ever. Because of his status, *we* let him get away with it, because it's too hard. It would be too hard for me in that town to say. This makes me feel really gross, and my Mum is an amazing person, and this was the only time that I thought she was not. When his rape case was going on, we had gone away as a family for the weekend. We had a few wines and my brother was talking about it [the sexual assault case] and then I said to Mum… "he absolutely would have done it, he did it to me" and she just said "I don't want to hear about it." I think, over time the things that happened and how much mum would always be like, just don't, he's horrible. And I would keep going back. I mean, maybe given the history, then you don't [believe it]. But that's my own Mum. My own Mum even [was dismissive]. (Vanessa)

Vanessa was disappointed that members of her community, including her family, would not support her even after the man who raped her was charged with sexual assault, since legal cases gave women's experiences legitimacy. In this instance, Vanessa said that she thought her mother was dismissive because she thought the man was a "jerk". However, her mother's attitude was emblematic of the dismissiveness, and sometimes derision, that Vanessa said was directed at women who had negative sexual experiences with male footballers. Instead, these women were denigrated for being "promiscuous" and were blamed for any negative experiences, including sexual violence. Vanessa's experiences highlighted how constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence overlapped in ways that negatively affected women, first by constructing women's desires and autonomy as inferior to male footballers', and second by diminishing their status in communities as believable and deserving of care and respect.

Women explained that the lack of accountability for male footballers or recognition of the scope and commonality of sexual violence resulted in the invalidation of women's experiences of sexual violence. Vanessa explained that these factors encapsulated common myths about sexual violence, especially assumptions that sexual violence is forceful and perpetrated by strangers, known as the 'monster myth'. The monster myth posits that sexual violence is committed by one or more strangers and usually occurs in public with such violent force that it is fatal (Livholts 2008; Marks 2018). It is informed by highly visible sexual violence cases that attracted widespread media coverage and were prosecuted in a criminal trial, such as the rape and murder of Jill Meagher (Livholts 2008; Marks 2018; Powell et al. 2017). In cases like these, the victim is often a white middle to upper class woman and the perpetrator is either a person of colour or assumed to be mentally ill (Davis 1983; Hart and Gilbertson 2018; Livholts 2008; Marks 2018). These details help to reinforce that sexual violence is committed by monstrous men through association with some sort of deviance assigned through class, race, or ability (Davis 1983; Livholts 2008). Additionally, the association of race and class in the construction of sympathetic victims impacts the visibility of women of colour who experience sexual violence (Davis 1983; Hart and Gilbertson 2018; Marks 2018). Vanessa identified the 'monster myth' in constructions of sexual violence and explained that this myth hindered a broader understanding of what constitutes sexual violence.

> When you think of rape, you think of a woman walking down the street late at night by herself and a stranger jumps out of the shadows and violently rapes her. You don't think about the reality, what actually happens to people every day. It's going to

be someone you know. Calling it rape makes it scary because then you do think of that monster in the alleyway. Maybe, [we can] talk about it in a way that isn't so confronting for people. Like, have you ever had unwanted sex? Of course you have. (Vanessa)

The narrow construction of sexual violence through the 'monster myth' that Vanessa described meant that women were unable to seek support from their communities, including their families, because their experiences were not seen as valid unless they matched this construction of sexual violence. Women's experiences were further dismissed if they experienced sexual violence by male footballers because the construction of male footballers as community heroes was incompatible with the image of 'monstrous rapists'. Communities were less likely to believe and support women who experienced sexual violence committed by male footballers for two key reasons that could be contextualised by the 'monster myth'. First, most forms of sexual violence were normalised and considered 'not that bad'. Second, male footballers were respected and seen as desirable in communities, therefore unable to commit sexual violence. These factors constructed a dichotomy that constructed women who experienced sexual violence committed by male footballers as lying or disrespectful, consistent with relevant academic research (Mewett and Toffoletti 2008; Waterhouse-Watson 2007, 2012a, 2013a). This dichotomy meant that women, and their recollections of their experiences, were considered untrustworthy or unworthy of respect, in direct contrast with male footballers. This context developed from the construction of masculinity and sex, as they overlap with sexual violence, discussed in Chapters Four and Five. In this context, women were therefore discouraged from naming their experiences as violent or sharing their recollections with others in the community.

Women minimised their experiences of sexual violence, saying that they struggled to conceptualise themselves as "victims of a crime" (Alyssa). This construction was informed by a reluctance to view many 'minor' instances of sexual violence as serious or criminal, supplemented by the construction of male footballers as desirable and respectable. Women explained that communities constructed sexual violence in narrow ways, likely informed by high profile sexual violence cases in line with the 'monster myth'. These cases aided in constructing sexual violence as a rare occurrence perpetuated by particular, deviant individual men. However, because deviancy was shifted to women who accused male footballers of sexual violence, their experiences were not recognised as violent. The lack of recognition of the continuum of women's experiences, including harassment and

coercion, likely further compounded the distrust for women who experienced violence, considering that sexually available women were already perceived as lesser, as discussed in Chapter Five.

Women said that they had internalised community constructions of sexual violence and viewed their own experiences as "not that bad", minimising the severity and impact of their experiences. The internalised dismissal of sexual violence was present in women's own recollections, including their responses during and after violence occurred. In particular, some women explained that they did not want to "make a fuss" or seem rude during unwanted sexual interactions with male footballers, such as in Alyssa's experience. Alyssa described a situation when she felt that she could not say no to a group of male footballers who intimidated her in going home with them. She explained that initially the group of men coerced her into kissing one of them.

> They approached me and I'm usually pretty cool when strangers approach me. I can talk to them because I don't like to seem rude. Someone was like "it's his birthday, hook up with him", and I was like "oh, I don't really want to", and they kept pestering me. I kind of felt like, I didn't know how to end it, I couldn't have just walked off because I felt like they would have followed me. I ended up hooking up with this guy whose birthday it was just to kind of shut them up. It was a bizarre situation. I felt really intimidated and I [didn't] know how to get out of it because there was three of them. (Alyssa)

She said that her attempts to appear polite later worked against her because she felt that if she did not continue to comply, she would be stuck in the unfamiliar house they were in.

> I was drunk and I don't know, I found it really hard to say no. I was approached by three guys and one guy came and sat next to me and I couldn't say no. I ended up in the car going to this guy's house. I had gone in there and I kind of [felt] like, "oh no, I can't get out of the house now, I'm just going to have to do it [have sex with him] because if I kick up a fuss there's no way of me getting home. (Alyssa)

This group intimidation continued despite Alyssa communicating clearly that she did not want to have sex.

> I remember saying to one of the other boys that was there "I don't really want to do this" and then they just kind of like closed the door and that was it. Then we started having sex and I was not into it, and then the guy that was having sex with me, I

don't even know a nice way to say, basically shoves his dick in my bum. I just remember saying "no", and he just kept going anyway and then when he was finished, I needed to go to the bathroom. I remember saying "oh, I need to go to the bathroom", and he was like "oh, be quick" and then I went there, and I was bleeding and stuff. It was just really bad. (Alyssa)

Alyssa communicated that she had tried to 'do the right thing', in this case be polite and compliant, and clearly communicated that she did not consent to sex, and that this did not matter because she experienced sexual violence regardless. However, despite her awareness that her experience was degrading and horrific, she downplayed the violence she experienced because she said that her experience did not feel like a serious crime, particularly because she felt she shared some blame. This instance and response was consistent with the demarcation between men's and women's sexual pleasure and desire, positioning women's sexual autonomy as defunct, and the resultant hierarchy that constructed women who were seen as sexually available as less deserving of care or respect. This context was not clear to Alyssa and meant that she internalised blame for her experience, despite recognising that she had met gendered expectations by being compliant.

> I think it's something that I struggled to say [that the act wasn't consensual], because years later I've looked more into it like, well, I said "yes", I went into the car, all of that. But then even once I was during the act, if you're not feeling it, and you still have said "no". It's kind of a blurred line [in] that I shouldn't blame him but really, I'm not happy about it. (Alyssa)

The internalised blame that women like Alyssa expressed was a double-edged sword because women were blamed for violence whether they were polite and compliant, in Alyssa's case, or actively advocated for themselves, such as in Kim's experience.
Some women, like Kim, explained that they did not advocate for themselves during these interactions because of the influence that male footballers held in their community or because groups of male footballers were particularly intimidating. This explanation inferred that women were under pressure to downplay their experiences or else face significant social consequences.

Women, like Kim, detailed attempts to advocate for themselves or deescalate situations involving unwanted sexual attention from male footballers. Kim explained that she had experienced several instances of group sexual harassment by male footballers who attended the same secondary school as her. Kim said that at her school, sexist comments

made by footballers were commonplace by groups of young men who played football. During these incidences, she said that these men would "…egg each other on, carry on and outdo each other with sexist comments and those sort of things". Kim said that these instances combined with footballers treating sex with women as "a game" to accumulate as many sexual conquests as possible, and "squash[ing] anyone that got in their way", discussed in-depth in Chapter Five. Kim said she became a target for sexist comments when she argued they were offensive, often challenged boys who made sexist statements, and refused to have sex with one of the young men. She said her efforts to resist resulted in "other really insulting [comments] about your appearance. You get called a slut, you get called a fat whore, a bitch, and all these sort of things, simply because you tried to defend yourself". In Kim's experiences, advocating for herself, or 'making a fuss', meant that she experienced *more* violence. She said that these experiences made her feel fearful of football communities and men who play football. The sentiment in Kim's interview was that advocating for herself was fruitless as it only intensified the violence that she experienced, so instead she avoided footballers, or groups of men who looked like they might be footballers, altogether to avoid a situation where she might feel powerless. She explained that the powerlessness that she felt occurred because she knew that male footballers would not be held accountable for their actions and were instead bolstered, since these were her experiences in secondary school and later as an adult. Kim's assertions were repeatedly supported by other women in the context of the acceptance of men's use of sexual violence in groups, discussed in Chapter Four.

Women who experienced sexual violence frequently discussed how their own experiences and other violence was excused by themselves, people around them, and communities, and constructed as a normal pattern – part of sex or merely 'bad sex'. These constructions were consistent with women's explanation of sex, outlined in Chapter Five, particularly that their pleasures and desires were rarely considered and instead dehumanisation was common. Women also framed their experiences through mediatised sexual violence cases and commented that their experiences did not seem significant because they were not 'serious' enough to be reported to police. However, women recognised the impact of all forms of sexual violence, as part of a culture that continued to perpetuate sexual violence. This culture included acceptance of men's use of competitive sex practices and sexual harassment, such as those that Kim described, as a way of relating to each other and establishing belonging.

During interviews with women, it was common for them to share reluctance to blame men who perpetrated sexual violence against them. Instead, women were more likely to internalise blame if they felt their behaviour could have been misconstrued as consent, particularly if alcohol was involved. This internalised blame sometimes manifested as a burden to hold the male offender to account and to educate and rehabilitate other men; or meant that women avoided their communities, footballers, and sex. The responsibility that women bore for preventing sexual violence was linked to the acceptance of men's behaviour, including their use of sexual violence, by communities. This was in turn linked to the construction of male footballers as sexually desirable and denigration of women who exercised their own desirability. Vanessa explained that she felt she shouldered some responsibility for her experience of sexual violence despite knowing that the man who raped her had also raped several other women. The assumption that women's consent to sex with male footballers was implied complicated her ability to tell her experiences to others.

> Now I feel angry. Like I'm angry at myself, that I let that happen. When you're young everything is different and in hindsight, hindsight is lovely. But that [I] allow[ed] that to happen and, if that happened to me and I was one of five or six girls that he had to call to make amends with. It's too hard to [fight] particularly because normally you had been drinking and just because you've said "yes" to somebody once before doesn't mean that "yes" they can have sex with you whenever they want to. (Vanessa)

The tendency for women to feel powerless and internalise blame was a common theme in interviews with women. Kim explained that her friends who had experienced sexual violence perpetrated by male footballers shouldered responsibility for what happened and explained this meant that women did not actively respond to what had happened.

> None of the girls felt that they could ask for help, or stand up for themselves, or stand up for somebody else. None of the girls were happy about it when they were telling me about these instances, but nobody was willing to do anything about it. It's just the way that it was. Instead of trying to address it, the girls would just shamefully take it on. (Kim)

However, Kim's rationale implies that her friends ideally should have taken action against men who were violent to them which inadvertently, and likely unintentionally, positions them as somewhat responsible for any future sexual violence that these men may commit. Despite Kim's insistence that sexual violence was wrong, she inadvertently mirrored

community patterns of holding women at least somewhat responsible for violence. This suggests that blaming women for violence is an entrenched response, even among people who are otherwise supportive of women who have experienced violence. This pattern was also clear in Sasha's experience. Sasha was staunch in describing her experience as violence, even when questioned by others including close friends. However, despite her conviction she still communicated some responsibility for what had occurred and a need to "be more careful" about who she has sex with. She said she felt that she had been punished for having a one-night stand, especially as she had not had sex in these circumstances previously. This experience overlapped with constructions of sex, specifically that nobody cared about 'promiscuous women' and that these women surrendered their rights to consent to sex. This context, and women's experiences of sexual violence, reinforced that violence occurs to women 'for a reason' and ultimately implying that women are inherently to blame for violence.

The perception that women are ultimately always responsible for sexual violence was most clear in Alyssa, Sasha, and Vanessa's assertions that they were responsible for ensuring that the men who were violent to them were held accountable. These women explained that they felt burdened to report their experiences of violence to the police to ensure that other women were not victimised by these men, or at least to help support any further criminal action. In this way, women held themselves accountable for sexual violence through their insistence that they should hold violent men accountable. For instance, Sasha actively tried to ensure that the man who was violent to her held himself accountable for his actions and did not continue 'unwittingly' perpetrating sexual violence. She considered reporting her experience to the police to 'flag' him in case he committed further sexual violence in the future, particularly because he had ignored her concerns in their correspondence.

> If a few years down the track his line of consent is way off and he rapes someone and gets like reported for that then they'll have a record that he's done things before you know what I mean? That at least it's been reported before? If that's something to help that case, I'd be kicking myself if I didn't do it. (Sasha)

In this instance, Sasha exclaimed a sense of personal responsibility for mitigating any further instances of sexual violence and filtered this responsibility through police reporting and the justice system. Other women were more sceptical of the efficacy of the justice system but felt guilt at not utilising police reporting regardless. Vanessa

communicated some guilt for not testifying against the man who raped her when he was on trial for sexual assault against another woman. She said that she anticipated reporting to police would not have eventuated in a conviction and instead would have resulted in consequences for her.

> You don't have to go to the police because then that opens a whole other thing. And you're probably not going to win. That's the reality of it, it's going to just make you feel bad. In my situation, if women felt like they could, almost anonymously, report something and say something, I don't know how that would have changed [the outcome of the case]. (Vanessa)

However, Vanessa still questioned why she did not make a police report to help the other woman's criminal case and shouldered some responsibility as the criminal trial was ultimately unsuccessful. Vanessa said that participating in the trial would have ruined her reputation in the small community where she had grown up and potentially impacted her parents who still live in the community. Alyssa similarly said that she felt a burden of responsibility for holding men who had raped her accountable and felt guilt for not reporting them to their coaches. Alyssa did not advocate using the criminal justice system to pursue accountability and instead suggested that the man's coach should have been made aware and applied playing sanctions. In part, Alyssa wanted the man's coach to administer some sort of sanction because she was not confident that he would be motivated to examine and potentially change his behaviour without the intervention of someone he respected. The underlying presumption was that these men did not respect women, especially not women who they were violent towards, and that therefore women's attempts to ensure accountability would be fraught. However, Alyssa still indicated that she internalised some blame and responsibility for her experience of sexual violence.

> Obviously, I feel terrible for saying it because I know that people have gone through far worse than what I have but I still struggle with not putting the blame entirely on them because I was drunk. It is really hard because he drove me [and] I didn't let him take me to my house, I got him to drop me off at another person's house because I was scared. That's how he made me feel and I've never felt that way before. But I still struggle with [thinking] "oh, I'm a victim of a crime?" (Alyssa)

Alyssa demonstrated that she was aware that her experience of sexual violence was unpleasant but continued to harbour some sense of responsibility, particularly because she did not view her experience as 'criminal'. For example, she suggested playing sanctions as a potential consequence for male footballers who commit sexual violence

because experiences like hers were not 'serious' enough to warrant jail time or representative of a 'worst-case scenario'. This was despite the brutality of her experience and ability to recognise that she was intimidated and her attempts to assert herself were ignored.

Overall, women were cognisant that they were harsher on themselves than they would have been on other people who had similar experiences. The expectation that women shoulder at least some responsibility for violence done to them proliferated in their interviews and in their interactions with others, such as friends, family, and community members. These experiences impacted on women's ability to talk about their experiences without feeling judged, further reinforcing the guilt and shame that they felt, and ultimately excusing their experiences of violence. The responsibility placed on women for sexual violence was directly linked to the construction of male footballers as desirable and respected in football communities. This construction meant that women who challenged male footballers or alleged sexual violence were automatically distrusted and labelled deviant. Women therefore did not share their experiences or internalised dismissive responses. In context, this dichotomy likely reinforced the 'monster myth' view of sexual violence as the continuum of women's sexual experiences were not represented.

Men's construction of sexual violence

Men's responses to quantitative and qualitative survey questions suggested that men had a basic understanding of sexual violence, similar to their construction of consent. Reliance on a legal framework for understanding sexual violence mirrored community constructions, especially subscription to rape myths. Men returned particularly high rates of subscription to myths about who commits sexual violence and women who experience it. These myths demonstrated significant misunderstandings about what constitutes sexual violence and anxieties about criminal liability for violence. Men's subscription to rape myths was consistent with their constructions of masculinity and sex that denied their power and influence, and emphasised individual responsibility to eschew negative generalisations for men while applying similar generalisations to women, often ultimately shifting responsibility for sexual decisions and sexual violence to women. In the context of men's defensiveness and dismissal of sexual violence, a legal framework could be popular because it emphasises a narrower range of violence and provides clear directives that might help men conceptualise their responsibility for sexual violence.

Men demonstrated a basic understanding of what constitutes consent, as discussed in Chapter Five, in response in a series of questions that mirrored common legal constructions. Men's qualitative responses indicated that most men were aware of what constitutes consent but that informed consent to sex was present in most situations that could be coded as sexual. Although high percentages were recorded for all options for what informed consent was, men were more likely to select an answer that specified legal directives when considering what constitutes sexual violence. These responses, discussed at length in Chapter Five, indicated a basic understanding of sexual violence that prioritised legal constructions of sexual violence rather than ensuring partners were actively engaged in sex and sexual decision making.

Several survey questions measured subscription rates to common rape myths to measure men's likelihood of supporting or justifying sexual violence (Pease and Flood 2008). Rape myths are commonly held beliefs that are not based in fact but inform constructions of sexual violence. Questions containing rape myths were used to assess men's attitudes towards sexual violence. Men's responses indicated subscription to several common rape myths, particularly questions about attitudes to false allegations of sexual violence and about who perpetrates sexual violence (see Table 6.2.).

Men demonstrated high levels of agreement with questions about false claims of sexual violence and women's reasons for alleging sexual violence. Specifically, 46% of men agreed that women are more likely to accuse a man of sexual violence if she regrets having sex, 34% gave a neutral response, and 19% disagreed (see Table 6.2.). This statement implied that women make false reports of sexual violence to protect their sexual reputation or for revenge, consistent with the construction of women who appear sexually available, discussed in Chapter Five. Assumptions about false allegations draw on constructions of women as predatory to depict sexual violence allegations as a weapon and imply that sexual violence rates are overblown. These assumptions allowed the responsibility placed on women for avoiding and preventing sexual violence to appear normal. Additionally, statements such as "A woman is more likely to accuse a man of rape if she regrets having sex" construct sex as something that women 'give' to men, rather than a mutually beneficial shared experience. This question was consistent with women's earlier assertions in Chapter Five that men commonly ignored their pleasure and desires in favour of centring their own. Answers to a similar question, "women often make false claims of being raped" which was less imbued with assumptions returned less responses

that agreed with the statement and higher neutral responses (see Table 6.1.). These responses suggested that men lack understanding of how common women's experiences of sexual violence are and how rare allegations, including false allegations, are.

Men's survey responses indicated that a significant portion of respondents believe that sexual violence is perpetrated by out-of-control men. This finding was consistent with myths that constructs sexual violence as specific to individual men. This pattern does not recognise that sexual violence is a common social problem, repeating the patterns women described. Most men agreed that women were more likely to be sexually assaulted by someone they knew, rather than a stranger. However, more than half of the responses to this question were neutral, perhaps indicating confusion. A large portion of responses constructed sexual violence as an act perpetrated by out-of-control men. Almost half of all male respondents agreed that rape occurs because men are unable to control their need for sex (see Table 6.1.). Men's responses were almost equally split between agreement and disagreement with this statement. The construction of sexual violence as an attack committed by out-of-control strangers relieves 'ordinary' men of culpability for preventing or perpetrating sexual violence. This sentiment, combined with constructions of male footballers' masculinity as 'intrinsically good' individuals or part of an 'acceptably bad' group highlighted a pattern of associating deviance with sexual violence, 'hiding' the ultimate cause for violence.

Table 6.1.

	Broad agreement: 43%				
Rape results from men not being able to control their need for sex	Broad disagreement: 40%				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
	26%	14%	17%	29%	13%
	Broad agreement: 38%				
Women are more likely to be raped by someone they know, than by a stranger	Broad disagreement: 10%				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
	4%	5%	53%	22%	16%
	Broad agreement: 24%				
Women often make false claims of being raped	Broad disagreement: 33%				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
	9%	24%	43%	18%	6%
	Broad agreement: 46%				
A woman is more likely to accuse a man of rape if she regrets having sex	Broad disagreement: 19%				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
	7%	13%	34%	36%	10%

Notes: SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, N: Neutral, A: Agreement, SA: Strongly Agree

Responses to some scenarios indicated that men constructed sexual violence through a legal framework, similar to their construction of sex. In particular, men's responses to a scenario about a friend bragging about having sex with an 'underage girl' suggested that men used inferences of potential legal consequences to dictate whether sexual violence was 'serious' enough to intervene (see Table 6.2.). In quantitative responses to this scenario, 72% of men indicated that they would intervene in some way, either telling their friend that their behaviour "is not on" or advising him that he could be reported to police for sexual violence (see Table 6.2.). Men were more likely to intervene in this scenario than others, such as those involving alcohol. This question was the only scenario that explicitly mentioned legal consequences which suggested that men might be more likely to intervene when there are potential legal repercussions for sexual violence. In this scenario, potential legal consequences could be used to indicate severity and compel men to actively intervene. Additionally, responses to this question suggested that men relied on the law to provide a clear idea of what constitutes proper sexual behaviour. Despite the

'severity' of the behaviour specified in this scenario, an additional 20% of respondents indicated that they would not intervene. Participant no. 65 offered an explanation to contextualise these responses, "…if the girl was okay with it and the age wasn't extremely horrific it would not bother me." This response was discussed in more depth in Chapter Five but is relevant here as a complication to the dominance of the legal framework that men used to construct sex and sexual violence. Participant 65 indicates that the threat of legal consequences was not a cue to intervene for *all* male respondents and that other indicators might be more compelling, such as whether the girl was comfortable with the act. This indicates a lack of awareness of the complexity of women's experiences of sexual violence and the social norms that influence women's responses to violence, explained further in Chapter Seven.

Table 6.2.

Your friend brags to you that he had sex with an underage girl who he has been pursuing for quite some time. You are concerned that your friend might have broken the law and could get into trouble with the police. What do you say to him?				
Do nothing, it's none of my business	Tell him that kind of behaviour is not on	Tell him that she could report him to the police for rape	Ask him if he made sure that she wasn't going to tell anyone	Say nothing and seek advice from someone you trust
20%	34%	38%	2%	6%
Qualitative comments:				
B and C (behaviour not on, she can report to police) (Participant no. 37) I'm a schoolteacher so I would report what has happened, I would talk about that situation with the person also. (Participant no. 51) Sounds bad, but if the girl was okay with it and the age wasn't extremely horrific it would not bother me, and I wouldn't let it ruin my day. (Participant no. 65) I don't mix with the type of person that would do such a stupid thing. (Participant no. 83) I'd tell him that he might get in trouble with the police and that he should be careful and know the consequences of doing so. (Participant no. 105)				

Conclusion

Women explained that myths about sexual violence permeated how communities, men and themselves understood sexual violence. The popularity of these myths meant that communities were less likely to believe that male footballers could commit sexual violence or show concern for women who alleged that male footballers had committed sexual violence against them. Instead, communities were suspicious or dismissive of these women. Male footballers also showed high levels of subscription to rape myths, similar to those that women discussed. This finding was notable because women explained that sexual violence was dismissed by their communities and internalised by women. In both men and women's constructions, responsibility for sexual violence was overwhelmingly shifted to women. Women held themselves responsible for preventing and actively opposing violence, although they knew that active opposition might make them a target. Men assumed that women would communicate if violence was significant but otherwise were unwilling to intervene unless violence was considered 'severe', for instance if it would attract legal consequences. The primacy of legal consequences was problematic in this context, since women were actively deterred from reporting violence to police or pressing charges and men and communities dismissed violence that was not considered 'criminal'. The lack of accountability for men who commit sexual violence was further entrenched because communities were reluctant to view male footballers as potentially sexually violent. This perception combined with subscription to a legal framework for understanding sexual violence meant that there was little incentive for male footballers to examine their sexual behaviour or willingness to intervene in instances of sexual violence. These findings showed how constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence overlapped in ways that made sexual violence difficult to recognise, much less prevent.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONSTRUCTING VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Introduction

In the previous finding chapters, the connection between constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence have been made clear. These findings detailed the relationship between gender, sexual relationships, and violence, and how each series of constructions maintained the conditions that made male footballers' use of sexual violence appear normal. The role that communities played in normalising sexual violence means that efforts to prevent violence in these communities would encounter significant barriers. Women explained that there was no incentive for men to actively shift the culture in football communities since these communities, and male footballers themselves, were invested in maintaining a culture that valued masculine dominance, including men's sexual superiority over women. Efforts to maintain male footballers' dominance were clear in constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence that diminished use of sexual violence and shifted responsibility to women. The process of diminishing and shifting responsibility for sexual violence was made clear through acceptance of 'bad behaviour' during end-of-season celebrations through 'pack mentality' and men's belonging in the context of male peer groups, prevalence of implied consent and related assumption that all women want to have sex with male footballers, and adherence to narrow definitions of sexual violence that diminished most common forms of violence.

All women interviewed discussed strategies to prevent sexual violence but there was a distinct lack of optimism present in these suggestions. This lack of optimism was made clear through women's suggestions that male footballers would need to be deceived, or otherwise incentivised, into participating in education or awareness-raising programs and that these programs would need to cultivate an investment in women and their right to bodily autonomy, suggesting that this investment was not already present. Men's survey responses rejected associations between male footballers, Australian football and sexual violence, and the potential influence that male footballers could use to prevent violence from occurring. Men's rejection of accountability for sexual violence was consistent with women's concerns and findings discussed in earlier chapters that outlined men's investment in individual responsibility. The insistence on individual male footballers' respectability and denial of their power in communities reinforced community

constructions of these men as desirable and respected and absolved these men of responsibility for sexual violence.

Women proposed two major strategies for preventing sexual violence, specifically fostering accountability and raising awareness and understanding. Nine of 10 women discussed education and the influence that respected figures such as coaches, senior players, and officials could use to legitimise violence prevention strategies. Seven of the 10 women discussed education and respected figures, and 6 discussed accountability, consequences, and men's investment in women. The violence prevention strategies that women discussed most commonly were punitive measures meant to simultaneously communicate to male footballers that sexual violence is unacceptable and encourage clubs and organisations to respond to sexual violence. Some women suggested legal consequences to foster accountability for sexual violence while others suggested playing sanctions or reputational damage. These concerns were consistent with men's survey responses that suggested men were not invested in preventing or intervening in sexual violence. Awareness raising or education efforts were suggested to foster cultural change in football communities so that men would become invested in preventing violence. Respected men, such as coaches or senior players, were suggested as potential peer educators to deliver violence prevention messaging that might otherwise be ignored by players.

Accountability

Accountability measures were prominent points of discussion in conversations about who was responsible for preventing sexual violence committed by male Australian footballers. Some women argued that individual male footballers were most responsible while others blamed communities or clubs and organising bodies, like the national Australian Football League (AFL). Despite this discrepancy, all women who had experienced sexual violence said that accountability was very important to them. In women's experiences, male footballers were rarely encouraged to take responsibility for the impact of their sexual decisions, including sexual violence. Instead, women were encouraged to be hyper vigilant and were subsequently blamed or disbelieved when they experienced sexual violence. Women proposed accountability measures for individual players, clubs, and representative bodies as part of a broader argument for instigating cultural change. Cultural change could disrupt the perception of footballers as inherently 'good' or

community heroes as this perception was linked to a lack of accountability. Women explained that the perception of male footballers as intrinsically valuable to communities in conjunction with sexual violence being committed exclusively by 'monstrous' men constructed a dichotomy that hindered efforts to hold male footballers accountable for sexual violence.

Women explained that most men, including male footballers, were not held accountable for sexual violence. In these instances, women were referring to methods such as criminal charges or community-based justice, aimed at dissuading sexual violence or providing retribution. This meant that male footballers were even less likely to be held accountable for their actions because of the community importance of footballers and their importance to team dynamics. The entitlement and lack of accountability that some men had exhibited, in women's experiences, seemed to indicate that these men were aware that there would not be any penalty for their actions. For example, Sasha explained that the man who raped her was indifferent until she explained that his actions could have attracted a criminal penalty. Sasha said that she did not want to punish him and instead wanted the man to take responsibility for his actions, realise that they were wrong, and commit to changing his behaviour. Her account of the messages they exchanged show that accountability is important because it highlights unequal gender relations, specifically that men are able to leave their harmful actions in the past, while women are left to deal with the consequences. This power dynamic was detailed by other women throughout constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence, showing how men's perceived dominance was a constant barrier to prevention efforts.

> I wrote to him and said [the symptoms] I was going through with the morning after pill. I said "you can leave this on the night but here's all the things I need to do now. I've got these three dates in my diary that I have to worry about and I had all these awful symptoms and I have to deal with them because of what you did" and I didn't get any response. Then when I was looking up the legislation, it [her experience of non-consensual condom removal] was sexual assault and reckless indifference and can actually be rape so I decided to send him this article I had read. (Sasha)

In this instance, Sasha had to explain that removing a condom during sex without the other person's knowledge could have legal repercussions before she received a response. She said that this was frustrating as she had to motivate the man's accountability instead of him responding to the harm that he had caused and taking responsibility by himself. Once

she finally received a response, which she read to me in the interview and is included below, the man blamed his actions on alcohol use.

I'm so sorry. You need to realise I was really drunk I'm not normally like that. I'm sorry, you need to realise I'm a hardworking guy who had a few too many and cannot even remember anything. (Sasha)

Sasha explained that the above response was insufficient because it did not acknowledge the impact of his behaviour on her or take responsibility for what he had done. Instead, Sasha interpreted the reference to being "hardworking" as dismissive and entitled. Sasha said that she was disappointed to only receive a response after referencing potential legal action because she wanted the man to hold himself accountable and change his behaviour. She specifically said to him, "You need to be more accountable for your actions and not do this to other people, I mean, that's really all I want out of this is for you to stop doing that and realise". The simultaneous desire for men to be accountable for sexual violence and disappointment that self-motivated accountability was unlikely was a common sentiment expressed by other women interviewed.

Women linked a lack of accountability to the cultural context surrounding footballers, particularly in communities that valued Australian football. In these communities, the relative importance of footballers to the team was used as a rationale for avoiding consequences for male footballers. Women said that communities, clubs, and organisations who did not actively hold violent male footballers accountable should also be held responsible in some way. In this way, lack of accountability for sexual violence was directly linked to community resistance to recognising sexual violence as an entrenched social problem, especially when perpetrated by male footballers. Women recognised that culpability for male footballers who committed sexual violence *and* those who effectively enabled their behaviour was essential for instituting cultural change in football communities. A range of potential consequences that could motivate accountability were discussed, including legal ramifications, playing sanctions, and reputational damage. These strategies were meant to ensure that men understood the severity of their actions and send a wider message that everyone should be held accountable when they perpetrate sexual violence *and* that everyone is responsible for preventing violence. Each strategy could involve the cooperation the different participants that make up football communities, including individual footballers, teams, clubs, organising bodies, and community members. Legal consequences were most applicable

to individual male footballers who committed sexual violence, while reputational damage would be applied to individual men and teams, relying on the cooperation of teams and communities to be effective. Finally, playing sanctions would be applied to individuals and affect teams and clubs but would need to be instituted at a club or organisational level. This strategy would require support from communities to be effective.

Potential legal ramifications for male footballers who committed sexual violence were considered appropriate, given the severity of sexual violence. Some women, like Kim, said that legal consequences were necessary to demonstrate to male footballers that they were just as accountable for their sexual violence as other men and allow clubs to send a strong message that they condemn violence. However, she explained that male footballers were often considered to be exempt from legal consequences by clubs and communities because of their perceived importance to team dynamics.

> [F]or some reason, we allow football to remain on this pedestal and be excused from those kind of punishments. Not all the time but a lot of the time. There are all these excuses made. There has to be the same level across society for these kinds of behaviour. There has to be the same level of judgment, ramification and consequences. If we keep placing football on a pedestal and saying, "we need him for the team," or "it's good for the team," that's not on. That's got to change, that's got to be called out legally. (Kim)

Kim discussed legal consequences as the strongest possible response to sexual violence in discussing the potential for legal consequences to supersede the importance of individual footballers. Other women argued that legal consequences were unrealistic and unattainable in most cases but wanted some consequences for men who were sexually violent. In particular, Vanessa discussed limitations to legal justice including heightened trauma, reputational damage for women, and low conviction rates. Significantly, Vanessa also explained that punitive measures like criminal charges were not necessarily appropriate responses to sexual violence. This point was linked to the construction of sexual violence through dichotomies to decide which violence was 'serious' or legitimate'. These dichotomies informed who could be considered a punishable perpetrator.

> Should he be in jail or what do we do? It does kind of does seem, almost pointless to share that information sometimes because what do we even want the outcome to be? Like, someone else to know how awful that person is? It doesn't actually make you feel any better at the end of the day. (Vanessa)

Vanessa's assertions showed that criminal charges may not be appropriate, in part due to constructions of sexual violence that discouraged women from pursuing legal justice. Women like Vanessa also explained that legal justice responses to sexual violence were costly for women, in part because women's experiences would be scrutinised. Avoiding scrutiny was consistent with difficulty determining if violence was 'severe' enough to warrant legal consequences and miscategorising of sexual violence as merely 'bad sex', discussed in previous chapters. Ultimately, women identified that legal justice would not benefit them or result in accountability because they would be unfairly criticised by their communities and male footballers were likely to be granted "special privileges". The valorisation of male footballers in this context undermined the efficacy of legal consequences and potential for cultural change, since women viewed the criminal system as upholding the unequal conditions that allowed sexual violence to persist.

Playing sanctions were then a logical potential accountability measure, especially for women who said that legal ramifications were ill fitting. Sanctions were proposed as a less severe penalty than potential legal consequences that could potentially disrupt the 'hero worship' of footballers and require clubs to actively recognise and discourage sexual violence. Alyssa explained that playing sanctions could send a strong message, even in situations where legal ramifications seemed illogical or improbable.

> …[I]f you, within your contract or whatever, stepped out of line or you've done something like that [commit sexual violence] I think it definitely should be seen as punishable, maybe not by jail or whatever, but if you enjoy playing footy, you should suffer the consequences by not being able to play. I know that it's something that is hard to police but even just an attempt to discourage people from doing it would be brilliant. (Alyssa)

Alyssa highlighted that playing sanctions could be a useful consequence in situations where players had disobeyed a code of social conduct set out by clubs and communities. Several women discussed the role of clubs in facilitating accountability for individual players because of the potential influence in taking a stand against sexual violence. Alyssa highlighted above that the "attempt" to discourage sexual violence was important, even if these attempts were ultimately unsuccessful or difficult to enforce. Playing sanctions could be a more useful consequence due to its relevance and to male footballers and the potential impact it could have on individuals, teams, and communities. An effort to enforce playing sanctions as consequences for sexual

violence could reinforce that football communities are committed to cultural change. For instance, Nina argued that club officials needed to consider penalties for male footballers who used sexual violence that might be more relevant or undesirable for these men. She said these should be communicated beforehand in formal rules and regulations and that penalties should be related to playing, i.e. two game suspensions. These penalties would be more relevant than potential legal consequences since male footballers, and perpetrators in general, were unlikely to be successfully charged for sexual violence. Playing sanctions would require broad support from teams, clubs, and to a lesser extent, communities to be effective, meaning that potential influence of this form of consequence was wide-reaching.

Some women suggested that the football team could be utilised to encourage individual accountability because of the influence of male peer groups on men's behaviour. For instance, Monique explained that elite and semi-elite footballers are vulnerable and easily influenced by their male peers as they are often young and live far away from their families and other potential positive influences. She argued that sexual violence might occur, in part, due to a lack of support and guidance and in the case of elite footballers, due to high incomes, drug and alcohol abuse, limited support, and limited responsibilities, in the following passage:

> I find it interesting that [for] illicit drugs, they [footballers] get two warnings and then the third time they're out. It's like, hang on a minute, I think that has a lot to do with violence against women. These young men they have so much money, they get paid so much to play and they don't have much responsibility, so I think it's a little bit of chance. You've got your money; they're going to get drunk because they can afford to. I'm not saying they're totally not to blame but I just think it's so easy and accessible to do all those things and what comes next? There's a woman standing there, I'm going to give her a pass. I suppose what I'm saying is I think the leadership have a lot to say because people do follow. I think if they act respectfully to women the men will because maybe they're not with their families. Maybe they don't have that influence from them. (Monique)

Monique argued that footballers needed leadership groups in teams to model respectful behaviour towards women. Similarly, Naomi said men in peer groups were influenced by each other, albeit in a negative context. Naomi explained that groups of men think of themselves as invincible and that their actions will not attract consequences. This assertion was based on her experience of managing licensed venues and observing how male footballers on end-of-season trips behaved, discussed at length in Chapter Four.

I feel like it very much is a pack mentality. One of them starts misbehaving and even though they all know it's wrong, they'll all start doing the same thing to egg that person on. Smaller groups of guys won't necessarily do that. There will usually be one voice of the reason [who] you can try and discuss things with, who will try and get everyone else in line with them. I mean, everyone is there to have a good time, for sure, and that's the whole premise of hospitality but you still do need to respect the rules of the house. You can't walk into somewhere and trash the place entirely. There are standards on how you behave in society and they just tend to throw them out the window when they're all together like that. (Naomi)

Naomi placed significant emphasis on the male peer group and argued that a group or team accountability was necessary to discourage men's use of sexual violence. The emphasis on men's peer relationships was consistent with the earlier emphasis that women placed on peer groups, discussed in Chapter Four. The role of male footballers' peer groups in encouraging sexual violence was consistently stated, including potentially motivating individual men's investment in preventing violence. Given this context, strategies that engaged both individual perpetrators and male peer groups could be more effective for encouraging accountability.

This dual approach for engaging individual and groups of men was most present in suggestions that advocated for reputational damage. Women suggested that men's accountability could be tied to their reputation to encourage men to consider the impact their approach to sex could have on others. This strategy would highlight impact on others by threatening some sort of social consequence for men, specifically reputational damage. Reputational damage was suggested because it could affect men's relationship with other men and the community, potentially undoing some of the benefits of the social status afforded to male footballers. For instance, Vanessa suggested that men address sexual violence allegations in informal ways, such as on-field banter or 'sledging'. She explained that this could disrupt the "high fiving, congratulatory kind of mentality they [male footballers] have about it [sexual violence]." This attitude was linked to women's experiences of sexual violence where sexual entitlement and competitive sexual practices had encouraged male footballers to use violence. The role of reputation in facilitating sexual violence was considered especially useful for potentially discouraging the use of sexual violence, if the factors that contributed to male footballers' reputations could be disrupted. Courtney used an example of an SANFL player, Adam Heuskes, to demonstrate how withdrawing male footballers' reputational benefits could be used as a form of accountability and justice for sexual violence. Heuskes was ostracised within the

football community following a highly publicised incident in which he and 2 other elite footballers raped a woman outside of a nightclub. This incident and another gang rape involving Heuskes were the subject of a documentary on a national public broadcasting station aimed at highlighting a subculture of sexual violence. After this documentary aired, Hueskes was suspended from his team and returned to South Australia to play football in the state league. Courtney reflected that Hueskes became an "outcast" following his return, not necessarily because of his actions but "because everyone knew what he did" and that this disrupted the 'hero myth'. In this instance dispelling the hero myth negatively affected Hueskes' reputation, constituting a form of accountability. Some of the women in this study such as Courtney saw value in this approach. Vanessa and Courtney's suggestions highlighted the role that male peer groups and communities played in perpetuating sexual violence by specifically identifying how communities and peers could disrupt the idea that men gain power from sexual violence.

The role of communities and organising in facilitating accountability was considered important were instrumental in reducing culpability for male footballers. In this way, communities and organisations were seen as the source of the lack of accountability for male footballers which women argued meant that communities and organisations should exercise some accountability for male footballers use of sexual violence. Some women argued that men who play football may have unintentionally committed sexual violence and that clubs and organisations should play a role in educating players and raising awareness as part of broader moves to condemn violence against women. This suggestion placed some responsibility on clubs and organising bodies to shift the culture within Australian football that positioned footballers as community heroes and subsequently reduced their culpability for sexual violence. Sasha explained that clubs and organisational bodies are already responsible for players' wellbeing and development and should be responsible for facilitating accountability in this context. Similarly, Alyssa wanted clubs and officials to be more aware of complications that she saw accompanied aspects of football culture, such as a 'pack or gang mentality' and heavy drinking. Kim contextualised the inaction Australian football clubs and organisations showed towards sexual violence, stating that the success of the team was dependent on inclusion of individual players and their importance to the group, meaning that including men who used sexual violence was considered more important than any sense of social responsibility for discouraging sexual violence. Most women agreed that clubs and larger organising bodies could influence cultural change, although the exact specifications of this approach and the benefit to organisations was difficult to describe.

Women argued that cultural change required a whole-of-organisation approach but differed on whether efforts should be led from a club level or top-down, from the organising body for the elite league. The organising body for elite Australian football, the Australian Football League (AFL), was considered to be influential in its ability to affect change through a 'trickle down' model, while clubs could utilise individuals to create change within clubs or the collective power of coaches, team members, and the status of clubs to influence the broader community.

The AFL, including its high-profile leadership figures, was considered the most visible and therefore effective potential driver of cultural change. The AFL's influence on communities was emphasised by several women, specifically that inaction on sexual violence ultimately legitimated men's use of violence. Kim explained that the AFL and individual elite clubs send strong messages based on their response, or lack of, to allegations of violence against women. Sasha connected community responses to violent male footballers to a broader valorising of athletes and sport in conjunction with sexism. She saw these issues as connected to organisational failings by the AFL and other large bodies that did not challenge footballers and other respected figures or issue consequences for their actions. Naomi reiterated the issues that Sasha and Kim raised and suggested that trickle down change could be achieved if the AFL made high-level decisions and introduced policies that communicated a strong stance on sexual violence. The importance of the AFL was indicated through the different kinds of actions that the organisation could take and subsequent influence of these actions. These would include clear anti-violence messaging within organisations, cooperation of key high-level public facing figures and influential club level figures, player education, and appropriate action when incidents occurred. The influence of the elite league meant that these changes might be more likely to 'trickle down' to community and semi-elite leagues.

However, the strategies that women suggested mirrored some of the actual initiatives that had been implemented by the AFL. Women seemed unaware of existing efforts to address sexual violence, indicating that a 'trickle down' effect had *not* occurred.

Other women focused on the potential influence that clubs could have, focusing on individual and interpersonal ways to affect cultural change. Nina, Courtney, and Monique discussed how coaches and leadership groups could encourage other male footballers to behave differently. Nina specifically described how coaches could set standards for behaviour by enforcing rules and sanctions.

I think that the culture comes from what the clubs accepts or what it expects of its players. The clubs set rules - we will not accept this sort of behaviour and you will not play if you do not behave. I think that would have a huge effect. Even if people mess up and they get kicked off for the next two games or something. I think [they need to be] penalising the players when they're not behaving to a certain level. (Nina)

Nina explained that expectations set at a club level were a driving factor in determining Australian football culture. Setting expectations for players was important for ensuring accountability as women had previously discussed how low expectations for male footballers' social responsibility were normalised. Given the context, there would need to be some intervention to facilitate accountability, such as the sanctions Nina described. This approach was focused on the influence coaches had within clubs which differed from other women who wanted to utilise coaches to influence the broader community. For instance, Kim described the responsibility of coaches and other role models within clubs to address sexual violence, in acknowledgment of the broader influence they hold.

I really think there needs to be some really explicit, active trainings from the leaderships in clubs. They need to actually address behaviour and sexual harassment, explicitly, before events happen. Proactively, so that it's not ignored, it doesn't end up being like, "boys will be boys, turn a blind eye." The coaches, the trainers, anybody that has a role model position, I think it's their responsibility not only to train these guys in their sporting skills, but also if they're a club, they have a duty to each other, to the club, to the fans, to uphold their code of ethics and conduct beyond just the sports field. I've heard that argument time and time again, in the media particularly, about football players denying that they're role models, "it's not their fault that people look up to them", and I think that's absolute crap. That's a complete disregard for your responsibility as a civil member of society. [S]porting professionals have an influence in their communities. If you try and erase that that's actually happening, I think that's completely irresponsible. (Kim)

Kim supported Naomi's assertions and said that the culture around football impedes 'good men' from intervening in sexist behaviour due to group norms that emphasise silence and a lack of follow up by coaches and clubs. She further emphasised that clubs have some responsibility for sexual violence if they do not actively condemn violence and argued that addressing sexual violence should involve a combination of strong public statements, a community response, and potential legal ramifications.

In comparison, other women advocated for a two-pronged approach that would use clubs as a site for delivering messaging that had been legitimised through support from national and state organisations. This approach was considered useful for instituting change at interpersonal, institutional, and community levels. Bianca explained that clubs were an ideal site for engaging players, especially given the importance of the peer group in this space, and that support for engagement could come from state or national organising bodies.

> I think there should be a strong emphasis on [violence prevention] in clubs because men in that age group tend to respond best to their peers. If they're in an environment where their peers are acting a certain way and their behaviour is highly influenced by their peers targeting them in a group, that is probably the best way to go about it. Especially with a football culture at an elite level, they spend a lot of time together by virtue of the fact that they are literally paid to spend a lot of time together but then also again that breeds smaller friendship groups that are based on that. At a SANFL level, a lot of those boys who train together grew up together and its more region based. They tend to socialise in packs, there are a lot of them who are friends with each other. That's definitely the best way to go about it, is target it at a club level. If coaches are not getting the training and support, I think that's definitely something that needs to be improved. (Bianca)

The influence of male peers that Bianca described highlighted how male footballers were integrated into the broader community and could be used to engage others outside of football in violence prevention. This sentiment was consistent with earlier findings that described how male peer groups influenced each other and affected the broader community. However, given the context that other women had described, interventions aimed at men's peer groups would likely meet resistance and would require the support of communities and organisations to be successful.

The suggestions described above show that women wanted men to recognise that what their behaviour was wrong, acknowledge this, and commit to change but were reticent to say men needed to be motivated to hold themselves accountable for their actions. A broader context made holding male footballers accountable difficult and women anticipated that men would reject any attempts. Women argued that accountability measures could lead to cultural change by fostering investment in preventing violence for individuals, teams, clubs, and broader communities. However, women commonly suggested 'consequences' aimed at individuals or that relied on using the influence of individual men. By using individuals as a catalyst for cultural change, women inadvertently reinforced the individualised importance of male footballers that they had previously

problematised and linked to reduced culpability for sexual violence. This showed that encapsulating prevention strategies took place in a difficult context, as there were many barriers to motivating accountability at an individual, organisational, or community level.

Men rejection of accountability

Men's survey responses suggested that they felt that questions about sexual violence cast them as sexually aggressive, women as vulnerable to men, and men as solely responsible for preventing sexual violence. The frustration men displayed about prevention was linked to who men perceived as responsible for navigating sex and preventing sexual violence, discussed in earlier findings chapters. Specifically, men took issue with being held responsible for sexual violence and said that women should be responsible for ensuring they acted ethically and responsibly while navigating sex and alcohol to avoid sexual violence. Several men remarked that survey questions that focused on men's accountability were "sexist". Participant no. 77 expanded on this point, explaining that he viewed a focus on men as sexual aggressors as fundamentally unfair and downgrading women's responsibility for potentially causing harm to men.

> Pretty annoying and [it was] sexist that all the questions were about how women are raped, assaulted, harassed etc and men are always the aggressor when I'm sure a netball team or something of that kind can do just as much harm to a man and be as much of an aggressor too! (Participant no. 77)

These responses suggested that men were frustrated with being cast as potential sexual predators and instead wanted some focus to be on women's potentially harmful behaviour. This frustration might be a barrier to accountability efforts, including prevention efforts that would motivate social responsibility for mitigating sexual violence. This finding was consistent with men's construction of sexual violence as an individual and criminal issue, rather than a social problem, discussed in Chapter Six. The construction of sexual violence, and subsequently violence prevention, in this way was consistent with male footballers being constructed as desirable and respected, in contrast with both women who were sexually available to footballers, and men who commit sexual violence. Taken together, these constructions show how overlap between constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence impact perceptions of responsibility for preventing sexual violence.

These overlapping constructions shift responsibility for sexual violence to women, evident in men's insistence that we focus on women's responsibility and potential to cause harm *to* men. Men rejecting accountability for sexual violence is consistent then with community constructions of male footballers and allow men to distance themselves from responsibility for violence. This occurred because more common 'minor' sexual violence was normalised and men's use of violence was accepted, especially in the context of celebration, maintenance of men's physical and sexual dominance, or efforts to negotiate belonging in male peer groups.

Some of men's responses minimised instances of sexual violence and applied a similar logic to women, that most sexual encounters could be considered 'bad sex' rather than sexual violence. Male footballers normalising sexual violence was consistent with earlier findings that emphasised definitions of consent that privileged avoiding legal consequences for sexual violence. This sentiment was most visible in a qualitative response to a question about a friend bragging about "sex with an underage girl". Participant no. 65 said, "Sounds bad, but if the girl was okay with it and the age wasn't extremely horrific, it would not bother me, and I wouldn't let it ruin my day." In this instance, as explained in Chapter Six, Participant no. 65 indicated that they would avoid intervening in their friend's behaviour unless it was clear that the situation was extremely serious. This suggested that men constructed 'legitimate' sexual violence as a worst-case scenario, such as 'sex' with very young girls. Understanding how male footballers construct and respond to sexual violence has important implications for violence prevention. Men's construction of sexual violence provided by this example placed the burden for accountability onto the girl in the scenario, deflecting accountability from the man for his actions or his friends for not intervening. Simultaneously diminishing sexual violence and shifting responsibility to women shows how constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence overlap, posing barriers to violence prevention efforts.

Awareness Raising and Education

Women suggested using awareness raising and education programs as a primary prevention effort, with a caveat that players might not think these interventions were worth participating in. Men's disinterest and resistance towards participating in violence prevention was linked to the perception of men as respected community heroes, as discussed in Chapter Four. This context meant that men were unlikely to challenge their

behaviour, since they were already perceived as 'good'. Women suggested utilising 'respected figures' to support and deliver violence prevention messaging to counteract men's resistance. Similarly, the content of programs or campaigns could appeal to men's investment in women, as sisters, partners, and friends and educate men to change their own behaviour and challenge other men. This content was meant to counteract entrenched misunderstandings relevant to sex and sexual violence, particularly where men had been encouraged to believe their use of sexual violence was normal or acceptable. Women wanted men to be challenged on their beliefs about appropriate sexual behaviour, understandings of sexual violence, and encouraged to confront their misunderstandings but had different ideas about how to achieve this. This section outlines women's major suggestions for the content in education programs, clubs' role as a site for delivering educational content, and using key 'respected figures' to deliver content and motivate men's investment.

Education programs

There were differing suggestions for potential content for formal education initiatives, with concern that content choices could impact the efficacy of prevention messaging. Women suggested that education initiatives could serve several purposes, to cultivate men's motivation to prevent sexual violence, highlight their existing personal connections to violence against women, and correct misinformation.

Women suggested that education initiatives could appeal to men's existing investment in women they had personal relationships with, such as relatives or romantic partners. In women's experiences, men showed care towards women once they had a girlfriend, daughter, or sister. Personal investment in individual women was seen as a potential strategy because women said it was a requirement for changing attitudes to women to prevent sexual violence. Another suggestion was using women's testimonials of their experiences of violence to encourage men to connect with the human cost of sexual violence. These ideas relied on women to drive men's behavioural change by focusing on men as 'protectors' rather than potential perpetrators, or at least complicit in perpetuating sexual violence. Persistent deflection of men's role in sexual violence was a common theme discussed throughout each of the findings chapters.

The women interviewed anticipated that male footballers would be reluctant to participate in violence prevention efforts and suggested that men would need to be convinced to engage. This assertion was supported by men's survey responses, where men perceived prevention initiatives as irrelevant to them. Women who had experienced sexual violence wanted men to hear from women like them to understand both what sexual violence looked like in practice and the impact of this violence. However, women said that male footballers would not willingly engage in programs that focused on the risk sexual violence posed for others. Instead, women said that players would only be motivated to participate if the risk sexual violence posed to *themselves* was highlighted. Sasha said that players should be educated on how committing sexual violence, intentionally or not, could have repercussions, particularly negative media attention or legal charges, for the players themselves. This approach would need to be carefully navigated so that men did not use the sessions as 'public relations' training, by learning how to respond to sexual violence allegations in ways that allowed them to deflect blame or avoid liability. Alyssa stated similar concerns to the other women and suggested using deception to get men to attend training sessions where high-profile players or coaches would educate players on sexual violence. She explained that deception was necessary because "there would definitely some guys that would be like "no, I don't need to fucking go to that"". Similarly, Brooke was concerned that education efforts would be treated like a "massive joke" due to the awkwardness of discussing issues related to sexual violence prevention. These strategies assumed that male footballers would be uninterested in learning about sex and consent or how to prevent sexual violence unless they could gain something by attending programs.

Efforts to demonstrate the relevance of sexual violence prevention to male footballers were linked to the construction of sexual violence through a legal framework, discussed in the previous chapter. Vanessa said that educators would face challenges in getting male footballers to consider how their past behaviour might have constituted violence, that they may have caused harm to others and how other people might feel about their behaviour. She said that education efforts would need to be delivered:

> …in a way that is not going to make men get defensive, shut down and not want to listen. I think that if things are done too aggressively then that's how they will probably react. Anyone does. If you know inside you've done something wrong, well then, you know you don't want to hear about that stuff. (Vanessa)

Vanessa argued that men, and women, needed to develop a broader understanding of sexual violence. She problematised reliance on representations of sexual violence as a criminal issue because people assumed that being implicated in sexual violence made them 'bad' or 'criminal'. Vanessa's assertions further contextualised Sasha and Alyssa's arguments that male footballers did not understand how sexual violence was relevant to them since these men, and their friends and teammates, were encouraged to believe that they were intrinsically good. Vanessa explained that constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence that proliferated within the culture of Australian football perpetuated sexual violence, connecting findings discussed in previous chapters as potential barriers to violence prevention. The context that Vanessa described showed that *all* members of football communities were implicated in sexual violence and should be responsible for violence prevention but were resistant.

The role of clubs

Women advocated for formal education programs alongside using key sites, such as homes and clubs, to advocate for cultural change. This perception linked the proliferation of sexual violence in Australian football to a broader social context. The club was particularly identified because of the influence this site held for football players and the responsibility clubs were seen to have for their development and wellbeing. Clubs were seen as a site for role modelling positive behaviour to male footballers which could then, in turn, positively influence the broader community. This relationship was linked to the relative social status of all Australian footballers, regardless of playing level, derived from the construction of male footballers' masculinity. Kim said that harnessing the influence male footballers had was a necessary civic duty that could be used to counteract some of the negative effects of football culture, described earlier.

> In Australia, everybody knows that sport holds quite a looked up to position. Sporting professionals have an influence in their communities. If you try and erase that that's actually happening, I think that's completely irresponsible. (Kim)

Kim framed male footballers' and football clubs' influence through the lens of 'responsibility' because she said this would create awareness around the impact of inaction towards sexual violence. Emphasis on responsibility was meant to motivate clubs to become involved in violence prevention efforts by positively framing the relationship between Australian football culture and broader society.

The influence football clubs held was positioned as important on a broader cultural levels and localised community level because of the capacity for influencing individual male footballers. Bianca and other women emphasised football clubs as a site for disseminating violence prevention messaging due to the influence of the male peer group in clubs and the primacy of football clubs in male footballers' lives. Women had problematised the influence of male peer groups for encouraging sexual violence, see Chapter Four, but saw that men's relationships to each other could be utilised to positively influence men. However, women were also cognisant of a 'boys club' mentality present in clubs that could impede violence prevention efforts.

Women argued that the 'boys' club' encouraged sexist attitudes, related to sexual violence, that shamed men for not being 'masculine enough', using an association with femininity to denigrate some men. The 'boys' club' celebrated particular displays of masculine and sexual prowess while simultaneously denigrating women's sexuality, reinforcing similar constructions to those described in earlier findings chapters. Some women, like Bianca and Brooke, said that this culture was able to proliferate when there was a lack of women working in football clubs in "roles as equals" (Bianca). Brooke said that men were not encouraged to have respect for women if they did not often interact with women in non-sexual ways. She credited country communities where netball and football clubs worked side-by-side as a potential space to disrupt ingrained gender differences. The 'boys club' culture was therefore seen as fragile since it could be disrupted by the presence of women leaders. Other women saw the 'boys' club' culture as a significant impediment to violence prevention efforts but also a key indicator of cultural change. For instance, Naomi proposed that football clubs could be a site where norms about masculinity that she had witnessed, such as "boys will be boys", "man up", and "only pussies cry", could be disrupted. She saw these concepts as interconnected to sexual violence and other issues such as homophobia, mental health, and excessive drinking. Naomi said that education could address these interconnected issues to help men see how preventing sexual violence could benefit them in different ways.

The role of key figures

Women explained that key respected figures, such as top players, coaches, or officials, were influential in determining and shifting club culture. Most women emphasised the role

of coaches but other women, such as Monique who was very involved in her husband's semi-elite club, placed particular emphasis on leadership. Other women discussed high profile executives and media personalities, such as Collingwood President Eddie McGuire. These kinds of figures were considered 'key' because of their influence and the respect that they commanded. Their respected position among male footballers and the broader football community meant that their support could help legitimise violence prevention messaging and influence others to take action.

Coaches were important, in part, as the face of clubs, and consequently its culture. This 'face' came from responsibility for executive decisions, particularly which players had the most game time and occupied senior leadership roles. This power was significant to women, since several had suggested that coaches weaponise playing time to motivate footballers to behave appropriately. The influence of coaches on determining club culture was discussed at length by Courtney. She discussed how the coaches for each of the two semi-elite clubs that her partner had played for had approached gender, resulting in two very different club cultures. One coach advocated for men to "blow off steam" by partying and encouraged a culture of silence around these events, particularly when romantic infidelity occurred. At this club, Courtney explained that partners were not permitted to attend social events, including regular events where high levels of alcohol was consumed and served by women, and that men often competed with each other for dominance. In particular, she described a high-profile player who would ejaculate on the club room mirrors after each game, an act that she assumed was meant to intimidate the other men as no one challenged him on this behaviour. In stark comparison, the other coach advocated for a family-friendly environment and specifically acknowledged the contributions of female partners in the success of the club. Courtney explained that coaches were key to defining the culture of clubs because "you could just tell that whoever was heading up the team influence[d] the boys club." Kim and Alyssa did not have the extensive insider knowledge of club dynamics that Courtney had but similarly acknowledged coaches as primary influences on club culture. Kim said that coaches had an intrinsic duty to use their influence to educate players. Alyssa similarly said that coaches and respected athletes could be utilised to help men understand the impact of women's experiences of sexual violence because players may be dismissive of women's experiences if they delivered them directly. The authority and respect attached to coaches reinforced a hierarchy within football clubs and communities. Women had observed that this hierarchy could be utilised to counteract some of the negative aspects of football culture that they had observed.

Women emphasised the importance of leaders by explaining the existing negative impact that notable respected figures had on encouraging sexist attitudes. Eddie McGuire, a television personality and CEO of the Collingwood Football Club in the elite national league, was used as a frequent example of an influential respected figure with power to affect cultural change who made frequent sexist remarks that others in the football community rarely challenged. Women were disheartened that figures such as McGuire were able to make "outrageous sexist comments" (Sasha) that contributed to normalising violence without being held accountable by others in the Australian football community. The observation that sexism was able to persist without significant resistance was a common concern expressed by women. Women explained that sexist and violent behaviour or attitudes legitimated by those at the top of Australian football, such as coaches, players, and officials in the elite league would filter down to grassroots community football, affecting the broad communities that formed around Australian football. Examples like McGuire were used to highlight the potential for positive influence that respected leaders could have while acknowledging their limitations. Sasha used Eddie McGuire as an example of a respected figure who she said was unlikely and unmotivated to change his behaviour. Other women similarly said that someone like McGuire could never be convinced to change their behaviour, despite his potential influence in normalising violence. The influence of figures like McGuire who had not been challenged posed another problem, that his statements were potentially representative of broader attitudes among football leaders. Some women seemed to reluctantly suggest using high profile figures for this reason, as Sasha highlighted "[y]ou don't want someone who doesn't actually believe it to be spruiking it or be promoting it". She explained that ideally, respected figures could be utilised in collaboration with passionate and knowledgeable staff who may be external to Australian football organisations.

The suggestion to use respected key figures was at odds with women's consistent assertion that all community members were responsible for perpetuating sexual violence. Despite this awareness, women rarely posed violence prevention strategies that would engage the communities that formed around football. Instead, women advocated several solutions for preventing sexual violence aimed at engaging individual male footballers and emphasised the role of individual respected men who could influence other men. These suggestions suggested that women constructed sexual violence prevention as an individual pursuit, despite constructing sexual violence as a social problem. This

disconnect was representative of potential barriers to the efficacy of violence prevention initiatives.

Conclusion

Women explained that preventing sexual violence required cultural change and advocated for a two-pronged strategy to achieve this. Many women explained that male footballers were exempt from consequences or accountability for sexual violence due to their privileged status in communities and social value. For these reasons, accountability strategies were considered at individual, team, and community levels. These suggestions aimed to increase recognition of culpability for sexual violence and enforce accountability for individual male footballers. The second strategy involved formal education programs for male footballers and awareness raising by utilising clubs and key figures to increase men's understanding of sexual violence and investment in women and violence prevention.

Sexual violence prevention was constructed by both men and women through a lens of responsibility. Women considered who was responsible for holding male footballers accountable for sexual violence and who could most effectively drive cultural change. Clubs, organisations, and communities were considered culpable for sexual violence due to the persistent sexist norms that women observed. Women wanted all members of football communities to understand the prevalence of sexual violence and their role in preventing it. However, women focused on educating individual male footballers and fostering accountability for these men. Women were concerned that male footballers would not be motivated to take part in education initiatives and were unwilling to recognise that they may have committed sexual violence or perpetuated sexist norms that could encourage violence. Male footballers' survey responses supported the women's assertions - they demonstrated strong resistance to connections between Australian football, masculinity, and sexual violence and argued that such claims were sexist and discriminatory. This resistance shows how difficult accountability and violence prevention messages were to raise, let alone enact.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONTESTED CONSTRUCTIONS OF MASCULINITY, SEX, AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

This thesis has explored women's experiences of sexual relationships and sexual violence within amateur football settings to further our understanding of how sexual violence proliferates in society more broadly and inform anti-violence and sexual violence prevention work. It has identified social constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence within Australian football culture through women's stories and men's survey responses. The nuances identified in the interviews and survey data reveal how gender is remade or reinforced in constructions of sex and sexual violence, showing how gendered power is made invisible and sexual violence is normalised. It was found that Australian football culture is accepted as a highly gendered site and that the gendered norms that proliferate there are often taken for granted. By problematising binary models of gender, sexual politics allows the continuum of sexual intimacy and sexual violence to become visible, including how Australian football can be viewed as an 'extension' or 'acceleration' of broader gendered norms and knowledges that perpetuate sexual violence (O'Neill 2018).

The theoretical frame of sexual politics has been deployed to contextualise the construction of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence in the context of broader and longstanding debates about gender, sex, and sexual violence in Australian football. Sexual politics highlights the *process* through which gender relations are *contested*, meaning that gender is continually remade and reinforced, making power dynamics visible. A sexual politics lens is not only a diagnostic or explanatory tool; it also allows us to imagine how gendered knowledges might shift and therefore how gendered power is able to be resisted and subverted.

Sexual politics can serve a purpose of transforming knowledge about gender by interrogating norms with a view to transforming society (Tuana 2006). This theoretical perspective allows for consideration of how gendered knowledges become dominant, what gets silenced, and how silence develops ignorance in particular contexts, such as the amateur football setting. For instance, the relevance of gendered norms about sex and sexual violence is that 'everyday' sexual violence is diminished or denied. This chapter uses sexual politics to contextualise taken-for-granted constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence and considers the nuanced and overlapping ways in which these

constructions minimise or de-emphasise the prevalence of sexual violence, a key example of how gender is contested. The theoretical basis for analysing these constructions is informed by a methodological commitment to centring women's stories and experiences. This approach structures the following chapter through discussion of the themes presented in the findings chapters.

MASCULINITY

The importance of sports such as Australian football to the formation and maintenance of masculinity makes this site useful for examining how masculinity is constructed, including which masculinities are valued (Bartholomaeus 2011; Boucher 2015; Burgess et al. 2003; Drummond 2020; Hess 2000; Nicholson and Hess 2007; Spaaij et al. 2014; Waitt and Clifton 2015). In locating Australian football as a space for reinforcing idealised masculinity, the thesis generates certain implications for how we understand gender and sexuality. The research has found that the Australian football space, specifically the communities that form around football, idealise masculinities that privilege heterosexual male dominance by celebrating male footballers for their perceived sexual and physical superiority (over women) and grant them social privileges, such as the assumption of 'goodness', community admiration, and increased sexual access to women. Everyday football supporters and communities, and the broader Australian society, hold male footballers, including local, amateur players, in high regard, using these as standards of idealised masculinity which reinforce expectations for masculinity in general (Waterhouse-Watson 2009, 2013a; Wedgwood 2008). The admiration afforded to male footballers creates a celebrity status that is linked to sexual entitlement and lack of accountability (Safai 2002). Community admiration, lack of accountability, and sexual entitlement culminate to normalise sexual violence committed by male footballers. These factors were most observable through the analogy of the 'footy trip'.

Footy boys, footy trips, and the pack mentality

This research confirmed existing scholarship that identified the 'footy trip' as a key site for understanding male footballers' use of sexual violence (Waterhouse-Watson 2012a, 2013a). Footy trip' is a colloquial term used to describe an organised vacation that many football teams embark on to celebrate their achievements throughout the football season. These trips are an opportunity to 'blow off steam' in ways that are rowdy and sometimes

destructive. One function of the footy trip is that it normalises male footballers' 'bad behaviour' as an expected component of the recreation they have earned through submitting to the physical and mental demands of the football season. Women's experiences of male footballers on footy trips showed how masculinity, sex, and sexual violence overlapped. Through the footy trip analogy sexual violence was positioned as inevitable, a product of alcohol consumption, men's bonding practices, and community admiration of male footballers.

Sexual politics allows us to see how vying and positioning of masculinity through bonding exercises such as the footy trip, normalises sexual violence. Male footballers' 'bad behaviour' on footy trips was accepted by communities and constructed as earned. The behaviours that men exhibited included sexual violence, especially violence committed as a group such as sexual harassment and intimidating or otherwise coercing women into 'sex'. This context meant that sexual violence appeared justified or excusable, especially as footy trips were considered necessary to facilitate the bonding that ensured teams' success. The footy trip shows how sexual violence was constructed as a way for men to relate to each other, privileging men's peer relationships above women's sexual autonomy. This meant that sexual violence served a function which men *used*, consciously or otherwise, to connect with other.

Sexual violence was positioned as inevitable in the context of the footy trip and men's sexual violence against women was either blamed on women or dismissed entirely. The inevitability of sexual violence in the context of the 'footy trip' was cited to explain how generalisations about male footballers reinforced low community expectations for their behaviour. While communities were aware that male footballers were disorderly and routinely sexually harassed women on these trips, this behaviour was normalised. The acceptance of male footballers' use of sexual violence in the context of 'footy trips' was connected to a broader culture that normalised or dismissed sexual violence committed by male footballers and was consistent with the status male footballers hold as local heroes. Male footballers are considered above reproach as they are perceived to be intrinsically 'good' because of their role in facilitating social cohesion through football and upholding idealised forms of masculinity. Sexual politics allows us to see such examples as multiple contestations of gender at play; and provides context for understanding how problematic group behaviour is excused and accepted. This contestation can be seen in the site of the footy trip, as it shows slippages between constructions of masculinity and sexual violence to uncover what is perceived as 'normal'.

Sexual violence against women was normalised through a logic that upheld low expectations of footballers' capacity for social responsibility alongside the presumption of their intrinsic 'goodness' due to their role in community social cohesion as participants in sport. Male footballers' 'goodness' required active maintenance at the expense of others, especially women who experienced sexual violence by male footballers, representing a key contestation of sexual politics. The relevance of Australian football then is not a unique space where sexual violence proliferates, rather it is a significant space in Australian culture that projects a certain kind of idealised 'heroic' masculinity based on physical superiority and sexual desirability (Bryson 1987; Burgess et al. 2003; Drummond 2011; Kearney 2012; Keddie 2003; Nelson 1994; Wedgwood 2008). The cultural 'love' of Australian football means that men who participate in football become desired and respected community heroes (Agnew and Drummond 2015; Drummond 2020; Klugman 2015; Waitt and Clifton 2015; Wedgwood 2008). As the bearers of an idealised masculinity, footballers are positioned as intrinsically 'good' and therefore 'untouchable' when they cause harm, which allows violence perpetrated against women to be excused.

The 'footy trip' also showed that the perception of individual male footballers as 'good' can remain intact while groups of male footballers can be seen as intrinsically, and acceptably, 'behaving badly. The disconnect between individual and homogeneous constructions of male footballers was confirmed in survey responses where male footballers expressed discontent and defensiveness about generalisations applied to male footballers. Men insisted that in the context of sexual violence, collectivised constructions of male footballers were irrelevant to them. Instead, men consistently reinforced the importance of individual responsibility, including as a rationale for not challenging other men or male peers who perpetrated sexual violence. In this way, men demonstrated an awareness of expectations that male footballers 'behaved badly' in groups and simultaneously rejected notions of group responsibility. Inaction on sexual violence was justified and violence considered an issue based in class and social demographics or specific to *other* individuals (not themselves). Some men acknowledged the relevance of sexual violence in Australian football settings but in doing so did not acknowledge their potential role in contributing to perpetuating sexual violence. Overall, men were reluctant to view sexual violence as a structural issue and ultimately distanced themselves from culpability for sexual violence or responsibility to challenge other men. It is unsurprising, then, that men did not see themselves or their behaviour as problematic when communities normalised certain forms of sexual violence, particularly in the context of male peer groups and

celebration. Community acceptance of male footballers' use of sexual violence meant that challenging violence threatened to destabilise male footballers' privileged position, specifically their intrinsic goodness and physical and sexual superiority. Men's construction of responsibility showed that the narrative that male footballers are community heroes, in conjunction with the primacy of male peer groups, reinforced male footballers' dominance in ways that were largely invisible, even to footballers themselves.

Bonding and belonging

'Bonding' in sport is a practice that can perpetuate sexual violence through competition among men for female attention (Benedict 1998; Boeringer 1999; Curry 1991; Frintner and Rubinson 1993; Foubert and Perry 2007; Humphrey and Kahn 2000; Koss and Cleveland 1996; McMahon 2007; Messner 1990; Messner and Sabo 1994; Moynihan et al. 2010; Young, Desmarais et al. 2017). Sport and masculinity researchers discuss needing to challenge problematic constructions of masculinity and sexuality in male peer groups through bonding practices as bonding can positively influence men (Bird 1996; Cover 2013; Hall 2011; Lusher et al. 2005). There is an overreliance in academic scholarship on the role of bonding as an explanation for male athletes objectifying women and perpetrating sexual violence which relies on early sport and masculinity literature that argued men bond through devaluing women to prove their masculinity and heterosexuality (Bird 1996; Curry 1991; Messner and Sabo 1994). This argument mimics the construction of sport as a 'special' space for the proliferation of sexual violence, relies too heavily on bonding practices as an explanation for why sexual violence occurs and ignores that sexual violence is a structural and systemic social problem. Bonding represents an extension of broader culture that is not new or unique to sport but is problematic when connected to maintaining masculine and heterosexual ideals that marginalise women (Messner and Sabo 1994; Waitt and Clifton 2015).

Bonding and belonging were concepts discussed by women in the study to explain the importance of male peer groups with reference to men's use of sexual violence. The distinction between bonding and belonging was a key conceptual difference found in the women's stories. Bonding focused on maintaining a hierarchy between men and men's overall dominance. The use of power and dominance was used to describe footballers as a group and benefits that individuals may or may not enjoy from being in this group. Belonging, while related, referred to a broader context that described how men's bonds

were able to be privileged. Belonging was described through a process of maintaining social dynamics that benefitted the whole group while focusing on the benefit of social cohesion to individuals. Women used belonging to explain men's peer relationships to account for intimacy between men. The need to belong was linked to the social benefits men received from participating in football but was more complex and personal than bonding practices described. Belonging was used to encapsulate *both* how men related to each other *and* benefited from participation in respected male peer groups, like football teams. This explanation of men's peer group relations highlighted that male dominance could be enforced without the use of rigid hierarchies or specific bonding practices as men were driven by a need to belong in the group. This approach maintained the separation and dominance of men over women but promoted intimacy and egalitarianism among men.

Male footballers use of sexual violence, especially on footy trips, as a way to relate to each other was explained both through the desire to belong within a powerful male peer group and the prevalence of a 'pack mentality'. Women explained that individual male footballers, especially men with whom they had personal connections, such as their romantic partners and friends, could behave respectfully towards women outside of the football context but were subject to 'pack mentality' group dynamic when they were with other footballers, such as during footy trips. The 'pack mentality' referred to a process where ideas expressed in the context of the male peer groups could garner support even if the individual men would otherwise oppose them in another context. Men were afraid to challenge the 'pack' in case they lost their position within the group and dissent was deincentivised as groups of male footballers were expected to behave badly. In these situations, women suggested, men would follow the actions and decisions of other men, even if they were unethical or violent. Other researchers have similarly described how men's group dynamics can privilege a 'mutual ethic' over individual ethics and decision making (Cover 2013, 2014, 2015). In the context of the present research, pack mentality was used to describe how challenging male peers was difficult. This was expressed sympathetically by women as individual men, whom women believed were 'good', needed to challenge their peers to generate cultural change but risked threatening their position within the peer group. Pack mentality was another example of how men's peer relationships were privileged, and sexual violence was normalised; the difficulty and potential social ostracisation from challenging male peers was positioned as equal to or worse than the violence women experienced.

Men in this study offered alternative explanations that deemphasised the importance of bonding and belonging in male peer groups compared to women. Although men prioritised a need to belong to male peer groups and maintain social cohesion, they displayed this in more nuanced ways than women described. Men's responses suggested that they were resistant to challenging other men, but this showed up as trepidation rather than an overt commitment to belonging in their peer group. Men were willing to upset the fragile balance present in their peer groups if behaviour was particularly sexually violent or if they were personally implicated or affected. However, men did challenge their male peers in some ways, such as through light-hearted 'banter', but prioritised the comfort of other men. This suggests that dissent was inherently difficult as men's comfort needed to take priority above a commitment to challenging sexual violence. These insights from men showed that performances of masculinity are fluid, nuanced, and contested among men and that gender is contested in the frame of sexual politics by both women and men. The connection between constructions of masculinity and sexual violence in the context of men's peer relationships was hidden by consistently problematising individual men who did not challenge their peers. Persistent individualist approaches to understanding and addressing sexual violence further entrenched the violence that women faced, as the role of male peer groups went unacknowledged.

Men also confirmed that bonding practices that centred around competition, such as sexual competitiveness, were linked to wanting to belong to the peer group, rather than to an inherent competitiveness in sport. This is an important distinction because it makes clear that sexual violence is not inherent or unique to sport, rather it is connected to conditions present in broader society, which are amplified in sport. The construction of idealised masculinity through Australian football shows which aspects of masculinity are valued and how these are continually reinforced, often at women's expense. Masculinity and sexual violence were connected through men's accepted use of sexual violence to relate to their male peers. This interplay highlighted that male footballers, and idealised masculinity by extension, are valued for their perceived sexual superiority over women and their ability to bond with other men. This means that community acceptance of sexual violence *and* men's desire to belong in their peer groups are crucial for understanding why sexual violence proliferates in Australian football and other spaces. The desire to belong requires greater scholarly attention and might help to progress narratives in scholarship around male peer groups by focusing on the nuances in men's peer relationships, such as the role of intimacy, and how practices associated with sexual violence like sexual competition emerged from a desire to belong.

This thesis shows that sexual violence is a considerable issue in Australian football communities linked to the valorisation of certain forms of masculinity. A sexual politics approach to sexual violence in Australian football enables focus to shift beyond identifying violence to the *process* that enables violence. Specifically, the communities that form around Australian football accept, and therefore enable, male footballers use of sexual violence to relate to their male peers. The interplay between men's peer relationships and community investment in maintaining connection between masculinity and sexual violence are key areas for subverting a culture of violence present in Australian football, and by extension broader Australian culture. Men's reluctance to challenge male peers, viewed sympathetically by women and communities, shows that men's domination is celebrated in some contexts but not in others as men were not encouraged to dominate their male peers as they did to women. The differential cultural acceptance of male dominance highlighted that community efforts to protect men's intimacy between peers and men's ability to relate in this way were key areas for subverting acceptance of men's use of sexual violence as a way to relate to peers and ensure community respect.

Understanding how men relate to their peers and might challenge them has important implications of violence prevention in the Australian football and broader contexts. Male Peer Support Theory has explored how positive leadership can shift support for sexual violence, leading to broader cultural change (DeKeseredy and Schwartz 2013; Godenzi et al. 2001; Schwartz et al. 2001). Perspectives aimed at encouraging positive cultural change through support for leaders, including coaches, are valuable efforts to explore the role sport can have in violence prevention work through engaging men and communities (Corboz et al. 2016 ; Dyson and Flood 2008; Grzelinska et al. 2014; Lusher et al. 2005; Sherry et al. 2015; Spaaij et al. 2014). While these efforts are useful, overemphasising individual male leaders reproduces the individualist narrative that men in the present study used to justify inaction on sexual violence. Since individual male footballers are already seen as intrinsically 'good' by communities, violence prevention efforts need to shift towards fostering community investment in anti-violence, rather than on individual 'prevention' agents, since communities actively maintain the conditions that perpetuate sexual violence.

Sex

Women's experiences of sex with male footballers intersected with the construction of footballers' masculinity and the importance of male peer groups. The category 'sexual experiences' was used to capture the range of women's experiences, including those which may or may not have been recognised as sexual violence. Women's sexual experiences showed that sex was primarily constructed through the lenses of sexual desirability and consent.

Community perception of male footballers constructed them as particularly sexually desirable which was reinforced in men's peer group relations. Men's reputation for being desirable was connected to the construction of male footballers as community heroes, an extension of the broader value placed on sport and athletes by Australian communities. This perception formed a reputation which male footballers maintained to retain their social status, peer relationships, and sexual access to women. The sexual desirability associated with male footballers facilitated men's sexual access to women which in turn benefitted their reputation within their communities.

Men maintained their sexual desirability, and connection to male peers, through sexual competition. This constructed women as vehicles for men to relate to each other and given the relationship between male peer groups and sexual violence further normalised men's use of violence. Male footballers' perceived sexual desirability and competitive approach to sex encouraged sexual entitlement, since men presumed their unfettered sexual access to women. Sexual entitlement was explained as an annoying arrogance which became more sinister when sexual consent was assumed or implied.

'Implied consent' highlighted popular ways that sex, and conversely sexual violence, were understood in the amateur football context. Men's responses exposed the limits of rhetoric around sexual consent, which for them involved avoiding liability for sexual violence, rather than ensuring that their sexual partners were fully engaging in sex. Women explained that men's approach to sex was focused on gaining sexual access to women which they linked to their dehumanising sexual experiences. The limits of men's approach to sexual consent was a lack of focus on pleasure and respect. The rhetoric around male footballers as sexually desirable showed that men's sexual desires and reputations were centred by their

peers, communities, and women. It can be argued that this active centring of men's sexual desire and desirability would need to be disrupted to ensure mutual pleasure and respect.

Sexual desirability

Communities positioned male footballers' sexual desirability as inherent in response to the significant sexual attention that they received from women. Women explained that male footballers could be considered desirable without being conventionally physically attractive as their desirability was linked to their elevated social status. This explanation undermined the assumption that male footballers were naturally considered more desirable, and highlighted that communities *actively* constructed male footballers as desirable romantic partners. In his work, Klugman (2015) links the sexual desirability of footballers to the eroticisation of Australian football, through strict heteronormativity, emphasis on passion, and the use of sexual violence metaphors to describe sport. The erotics of Australian football, and footballers, are part of a broader cultural context that idealises white heteromasculine dominance and physical and sexual superiority (Kearney 2012). This cultural context persists through *maintenance*, by fans and other members of the football community (Klugman 2015).

Male footballers' sexual desirability bolstered their status in communities and meant that they were seen as physically and sexually superior to other men and especially women. The sense of superiority inherent in this view of desirability informed an assumption that 'all women' wanted to have sex with male footballers which footballers were expected to maintain to uphold their social status. If men's social status was reduced, their sexual access to women and presumption that were especially sexually desirable was also diminished. These findings disrupt common narratives that use celebrity status, particularly for elite players, to diminish or justify male footballers' use of sexual violence (Mewett and Toffoletti 2008, 2012; Toffoletti 2007; Waterhouse-Watson 2009, 2013a, 2019b; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011; Wedgwood 2008).

Male footballers survey responses indicated a lack of awareness of their sexual desirability and influence in communities, consistent with popular assumptions that male footballers' desirability is natural. In particular, this study found that men who were surveyed did not seem to be conscious of their reputation except when they were negatively impacted. Men recognised a set of homogeneous stereotypes associated with 'football culture' and were

careful to construct themselves as separate from these stereotypes. Most men disagreed that women have sexual preferences for men who play football, that playing football meant they had greater sexual access to women, and that they are important to their communities. Men expressed that they were unfairly tarnished by assumptions about their sexual reputations and applied negative assumptions about women's sexual reputations. Men were concerned about reputation insofar as it resulted in negative generalisations that were applied to them in descriptions of male footballers as sexually aggressive, promiscuous, and unfaithful in relationships. Several men decried these generalisations, said they were unfair and untrue, and labelled them stereotypes, driven by media.

Men's rejection of negative generalisations was at odds with women's observations that male footballers commonly maintain their sexual reputations through their male peer relationships. The invisibility of male footballers' sexual desirability highlighted how the active maintenance of men's desirability was hidden and taken-for-granted as normal or natural. By constructing male footballers as naturally sexually desirable, these men were considered sexually superior and women's sexual autonomy was dismissed. The dichotomy between sexual desirability for men and women reinforced a connection between social status and sexual desirability, as men's reputations were bolstered, and women were punished.

Focusing on amateur and state level, 'pre-elite', players highlights how male footballers' sexual desirability is constructed to maintain men's dominance, specifically sexual superiority, over women. This finding challenges assumptions in media discourse that argues male footballers are vulnerable to women who actively pursue them for sex because of their inherent desirability, presumed high incomes, and celebrity status (Lorentzen 2012; Mewett and Toffoletti 2008; Waterhouse-Watson 2007, 2012a, 2013a; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011; Wedgwood 2008). This narrative positions women who have sex with male footballers, or experience sexual violence by them, as 'social climbers', 'gold diggers', or otherwise predatory (Waterhouse-Watson 2013). The shift in sexual responsibility from male footballers to women who have sex with them highlights how sexual violence is hidden through the construction of gender in Australian football. The disruption or clarification of key narratives surrounding male footballers' presumed sexual desirability are important for understanding how male footballers' masculinity and peer group relations overlap with approaches to sex, particularly women's dehumanising and often violent sexual experiences.

Reputation and competition

Women recounted negative sexual experiences with male footballers involving sexual competitiveness and entitlement, connected to presumed sexual desirability and privileging men's peer relationships. Sexual desirability was connected to sexual competitiveness as the social status that came from sexual access to women formed a reputation that needed to be maintained to preserve relevance to male peers. Men's peer groups were positioned as sites of intense scrutiny where sexual competitiveness was used to maintain relevance to the group. Competitive sex practices included forms of sexual violence such as group sexual harassment, coercion, and objectification. The competitive maintenance of men's sexual desirability was taken-for-granted as normal, in turn normalising men's use of sexual violence. The active maintenance of masculinity and sex shows how gender is contested in this accepted, and even essential, way, an example of how sexual politics functions to normalise sexual violence.

Sexual competition was positioned as an extension of a modern dating culture which normalised competitive approaches to sex, for instance finding multiple and frequent sexual partners via apps like Tinder. Competitive approaches to sex privileged men's reputations and relationships with male peers above their relationships to the women they engaged in sex with. This approach promoted 'winning' sexual access to women at any cost and explains why competitive sex practices could also include groups of men harassing, intimidating, or coercing women into sex with one or multiple men. The active competitive maintenance of men's sexual desirability in this way was an example of sexual politics because it revealed how men's dominance was upheld. The process of upholding male dominance involved whole communities as women explained male footballers' sexual competitiveness was common and accepted by football communities. Communities used sexual desirability to explain this behaviour, invalidating women's sexual consent by blaming them for not avoiding groups of male footballers.

Men's reputation, and subsequent position within their male peer groups, was contingent on their sexual desirability; yet these same communities chastised and sometimes ostracised women who had sex with male footballers. Women in romantic relationships with male footballers enjoyed some social benefits, including the perception that they were more attractive than other women, due to their proximity to male footballers, although these benefits were conditional. Reputation could be bolstered or hindered by sexual

desirability due to narrow and often unattainable parameters but was more likely to affect women adversely. Within the sexual politics of reputation, male footballers benefited on individual and interpersonal levels from the appearance that they were sexually active, while women were maligned. This research shows that sexual reputations function as a form of gendered control that ultimately work to maintain men's sexual and broader dominance in the football community.

The conditional yet differential nature of social status for women who have sex with male footballers highlights a gendered dichotomy and within that, a hierarchy among women. Women explained that 'serious' romantic partners are treated differently to 'groupies' in part due to the perceived legitimacy of their connection to male footballers. This study and others have argued that this sense of legitimacy comes from the public status of their relationships and the conditions attached to this that uphold men's heterosexual prowess without undermining their masculine dominance (Marks 2019, Toffoletti 2007). The treatment of wives and girlfriends reveals a gendered hierarchy present in the organisation and perception of female romantic and sexual partners, observed in the present study. This hierarchy is visible through the conditions attached to wives and girlfriends' legitimacy and subsequent social status. For instance, it was explained that women in committed relationships with male footballers are used to set up a dichotomy between 'legitimate' wives and girlfriends and 'illegitimate groupies'. The dichotomy between these two groups of women reveals sexual politics as gendered expectations are individualised in a way that assumes sexual agency is deviant. This association with deviancy is an example of sexual politics as men's sexual reputations are taken-for-granted as normal, even when sexual violence is used, and deviancy is instead ascribed to individual women.

Women who are specifically sexually attracted and sexually available to male Australian footballers are denigrated by communities, as demonstrated in the findings of this research and observable in public discourse (Lorentzen 2012; Mewett and Toffoletti 2008; Waterhouse-Watson 2007, 2012a, 2013a; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011). Female sexual promiscuity was raised to dismiss women who alleged sexual violence and to position them within hierarchies of feminine virtue. This was viewed as a form of sexual control by communities who demonstrated a belief that women who were 'half as promiscuous as footballers' (Vanessa) were less deserving of care and respect. Female sexual desire in this instance is commonly denigrated even though it is, in fact, crucial to the maintenance of footballers' masculine dominance, where desirability attests to masculine virility. The specific gendered differences relevant to reputation are consistent

with the historical exclusion and denigration of women in the Australian football sphere (Bruce 2015; Churchill 2008; Hess 1996, 2000; Hindley 2006; Klugman 2012; Marks 2019; McLachlan 2019; Mewett and Toffoletti 2008, 2010; Thompson 1992; Toffoletti 2016, 2017; Toffoletti and Mewett 2012; Toffoletti and Palmer 2019; Waterhouse-Watson 2007). This contestation between sexualised reputations for different genders reveals how reputations function to maintain men's sexual and broader dominance.

Yet the disdain that purportedly surrounds these women is contested in the scholarship. Some researchers argue that the sexual agency women display by clearly stating their sexual desire for male footballers contradicts the expectation that women's sexual availability is passive (Mewett and Toffoletti 2008, 2012; Toffoletti and Mewett 2012; Wedgwood 2008). The disdain communities aimed at women who exercise sexual agency could be explained by the disruption sexual agency poses to men's sexual superiority. Other studies have explained that the presumption that 'groupies' competitively chase male footballers for sex therefore positions them as 'up for anything' and therefore essentially 'unrapeable' (Waterhouse-Watson 2012a, 2013a; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011). The presumption that these women are 'up for anything' was related to the construction of women labelled 'groupies' as simultaneously naïve and predatory, which other researchers have identified as core to the distrust and dismissal of these women (Marks 2018; Mewett and Toffoletti 2008; Waterhouse-Watson 2009, 2012a, 2013a, 2016; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011). The idea that women who are sexually involved with male footballers are 'up for anything' functions as part of a framework that sets up a hierarchy among male footballers' female sexual and romantic partners and, importantly, ultimately relieves male footballers of any sexual responsibility.

The reputation associated with women who pursued male footballers for sex and the relative social status of male footballers meant that women were less likely to pursue justice when male footballers committed sexual violence, as their communities, and justice systems, would not support them. Men's discussion of reputation also confirmed that women were constructed according to hierarchies and that women who actively presented themselves as sexually available and desirable were seen as undesirable romantic partners. This culture of denigrating women based on men's perceived physical and sexual superiority can explain how women have been positioned as simultaneously preying on male footballers for sex and vulnerable to sexual violence by male footballers, while men's sexual violence has been excused and normalised (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). The taken-for-granted nature of male footballers' behaviour highlights the social

value placed on men's physical and sexual dominance. However, the inconsistent demonisation of women who challenge male footballers' sexual desirability or sexual dominance highlights its fragility. If women reject male footballers, including by alleging sexual violence, they threaten their sexual superiority by revealing how it is actively constructed. Here, the function of reputation, specifically sexual reputations, is a contested, gendered power struggle to reaffirm men's dominance over women and make sexual superiority and access to women appear normal. The primacy of efforts to affirm male footballers' dominance over women contextualises how their female romantic and sexual partners have consistently been positioned in rhetoric about Australian football, masculinity, sex, and sexual violence. This process highlights how men's dominance is both invisible and actively constructed. The insidiousness of patriarchal gender relations is that men's dominance can appear natural and taken-for-granted, and therefore difficult to challenge. Given this explanation, women's participation in maintaining the appearance of male footballers as sexually desirable, despite potential consequences, makes sense contextually.

The function of sexual reputations, including male footballers' presumed sexual desirability, was significant because of the dichotomy it constructed between men's sexual superiority and women's inferiority, and the hierarchy constructed between women which inferred that women who were more sexually active were less deserving of care, pleasure, and respect. Constructing male footballers as sexually desirable privileged men's peer relationships over women's safety, impacting their capacity for fulfilling, safe, and sexually satisfying experiences. This process privileges men's relationships with each other over their relationships with women, as part of a broader trend of valuing men's experiences over women's, particularly in relation to sex, desire, pleasure, and respect. Constructing women as vehicles to maintain men's reputations reinforced the lack of sexual pleasure and respect shown to most women, as part of a culture that privileged men's sexual pleasure. This hierarchy, when examined in the context of disdain for 'groupies', showed that women who are constructed as less deserving of respect are also considered more likely to consent to sex, in fact that their consent can be 'implied'.

Entitlement and implied consent

Women interviewed consistently connected male footballers' reputation for being desired by all women to the belief that consent could be, and often was, implied. The assumptions that informed 'implied consent' inferred men's sexual superiority and access to women facilitated sexual entitlement but were positioned as an extension of heteromasculine dating norms. 'Implied consent' justified the disrespectful treatment of certain women and reinforced men's perceived sexual superiority but was positioned as a normal part of dating. This complex contestation shows how men's use of some forms of sexual violence are positioned as a normal display of their natural dominance.

The women explained that the assumptions that informed 'implied consent' inferred men's sexual superiority and access to women. Through such constructions, men were required to maintain the appearance that they were desired by women to maintain their sense of belonging in the male peer group. Women explained that men's attempts to maintain their position among male peers manifested as sexual competitiveness and entitlement to sex with women. Several women described a relationship between sexual entitlement, competitive maintenance of sexual desirability, and currency among male peers.

This relationship created sexual anxieties that women described manifested as arrogance when men made assumptions about women's willingness to have sex and were rejected. Some women explained rejection was difficult for men to understand due to the dominance of the assumption that all women wanted to have sex with male footballers. Women explained that some male footballers might be more likely than others to display sexual entitlement if they held less social currency, such as more junior amateur and semi-elite players. In women's experiences, these men were more likely to become arrogant or irate if they were rejected by women. This observation directly contradicts common media narratives which argued that male footballers were 'vulnerable' to 'predatory groupies' who sought to chase them for sex. The narrative that 'all women' want to have sex with male footballers was intrinsically connected to the 'groupie' narrative used to malign women who seek sex with male footballers and blame women who experienced sexual violence by these men. The groupie narrative was specifically used by media outlets, including news media reporters, to blame women for fuelling the idea of the sexual entitlement that could be perceived among some male footballers (Waterhouse-Watson 2012a). This narrative subverted the concept of sexual entitlement and instead held women responsible

for discouraging male footballers who expected sex with women and assumed all women were sexually available to them.

Men's reluctance to accept sexual rejection was linked to their purposeful or inadvertent misunderstandings about how to navigate and negotiate sexual consent. Male footballers, and other men, regularly misinterpret social cues as sexual indicators (Powell 2007, 2010). The social cues that women described as indicative of 'implied consent' included agreeing to a date, drinking alcohol, flirting, or sharing a taxi with someone. If a woman agreed to something that could be coded as sexual, this was considered an indication that she would also agree to all other sexual activities: that is, sexual consent was 'implied'. The prevalence of implied consent highlighted how cultural signifiers of sexual availability have been normalised (Beres 2007), especially in the context of Australian football. In this context, women connected the prevalence of subscription to implied consent among male footballers to both their elevated social status and their sexual desirability. The heightened prevalence of implied consent in this space functioned to normalise men's sexual access to women, reinforcing the footballers perceived 'natural' sexual desirability.

By contrast, men interpreted consent as ambiguous, and they relied on a legal framework for understanding consent. Men responded defensively to being positioned as sexual aggressors and held responsible for sexual violence. Men's defensiveness in this context highlighted that their positioning as presumably naturally sexually aggressive was a conflict for some men. This defensiveness was a barrier to employing sexual consent in practice as men's responses interpreted consent as a way to avoid criminal liability, for example, in 'blurry situations' or when alcohol was used. In scenarios where alcohol was present, men said that there was no universal standard for deciding if someone was too drunk to have sex and seemed to frame their responses through deciding if they should pursue sex, rather than if consent was able to be freely given. Alcohol use was consistently discussed as an excuse for misunderstanding sexual consent, escalating sexual situations, and dismissing responsibility for ensuring sex was consensual, consistent with findings from other research (Boyle and Walker 2016; Carline et al. 2017). Alcohol use was perceived as 'blurring the line' between dichotomies of consensual and non-consensual sex. The 'blurry line' was used to dismiss situations where sexual consent might have been complicated by assumptions, which is consistent with other research (Fileborn and Phillips 2019). The construction of consent using dichotomies, specifically whether men were liable for legal consequences or not, ignored most forms of sexual violence by focusing only on 'extreme' examples. In this context, there was no awareness

of the continuum of sexual violence, instead most forms of sexual violence were considered 'bad sex'. The dominance of legal definitions and outcomes in this construction of consent highlighted how men's use of common forms of sexual violence were hidden at an institutional level. Women explained that a dichotomous view of consent was not limited to men and all genders did not necessarily question 'implied consent' or reflect on their experiences, as they might conclude that they had either experienced or perpetrated sexual violence. In this way, men's defensiveness could be linked to a refusal to recognise how they may have perpetrated or perpetuated sexual violence. Lack of recognition of the continuum of sexual violence in common constructions of consent represented a significant limitation of consent as a prevalent concept in sex education.

'Implied consent' perpetuated misunderstandings about sexual consent that were linked to sexual violence and highlighted the limits of consent as a conceptual framework for advocating ethical sexual decision making. Women's experiences of sex with male footballers, the prevalence of 'implied consent', and their own conceptualisation of consent highlighted that misunderstandings about what constitutes sexual consent are enduring. This finding confirmed other research which found that misunderstandings about consent are embedded in dating culture (Beres 2007; Burkett and Hamilton 2012; Powell 2007). In particular, non-consent had been interpreted by women and men in this study as predominantly an explicit and verbal 'no', which did not encourage participants in sex to consider non-verbal cues or signals that a person was no longer willing to have sex. Lack of recognition of sexual consent as more dynamic than explicit verbal communication has been explored by other researchers as a significant barrier to consent education (Beres 2007, 2010, 2014). In this study, some women posited that sexual boundaries and how these are respected or violated could serve as an alternative of the concept of 'consent' as a verbal contract. For these women, consent posed conceptual barriers to the development of sexual ethics and decision-making skills. Women in this study introduced the concepts of mutual pleasure and respect as a way to actively resist and undo the effects of 'implied consent'. These suggestions offer possibilities as to how we might think about sexual intimacy, violence, and consent in different ways.

Pleasure and respect

Pleasure and respect were emphasised by women in the study as an antidote to competitive sex practices and the presumption of sexual access. Pleasure and respect were suggested to subvert and counteract the dehumanising, coercive, and unsatisfying sexual experiences women had with male footballers. Sexual frameworks based on pleasure and respect could counteract common misunderstandings that consent could be implied and shift men's engagement with sex to focus on how their sexual partners responded to sexual cues or acts.

The women's stories showed that sex was often centred around men's pleasure and desires and women did not realise that sex could also be enjoyable for them. This meant that women often had unsatisfying sexual experiences, in particular when they engaged in sex for the sake of men's pleasure or due to expectations about women's sexual availability to men, similar to findings in other research (Fileborn and Phillips 2019; Loofbourow 2018). Women described feeling 'changed' by male partners who showed them sex could be pleasurable for them and paid attention to their desires. Men's focus on women's active engagement in sex could potentially counteract sexual objectification and dehumanisation during sex that women had experienced. Women explained that these men treated them like people, rather than sex objects, and used this distinction to advocate for an emphasis on mutual pleasure and respect to improve sexual relations and prevent sexual violence. However, crediting male partners for sexual fulfilment was an extension of the unfulfilling sex that women had because both situations centred men. This process highlighted how attributing successful subversion of longstanding gender norms could be attributed to individual men, thus making the conditions for women's diminished sexual pleasure appear normal. Ultimately, men's sexual desires and pleasure needed to be decentred in favour of mutual pleasure and respect to shift the unequal gender relations present in women's sexual experiences. This process would be difficult as both men and women actively enabled the idea that sex should be centred around men's needs and desires, consistent with other research (Meenagh 2020). In this way, pleasure and respect was a key area of contestation and provided opportunity for the subversion of phallocentrism.

The link between pleasure and respect was particularly clear in the present study, as respect was interpreted inconsistently by male footballers. Men constructed respect as

'common sense' and did not elaborate on what respect, or pleasure, meant to them. For instance, men assumed that their football clubs would be respectful spaces because of the presence of women in leadership but were more likely to regard female colleagues as deserving of respect than female sexual partners. Men constructed respect as a hierarchy, available to some women and not others. They inadvertently positioned some women, specifically female colleagues and romantic partners, as more deserving of respect than casual sex partners. Men's responses highlighted that the presence of women as leaders or athletes did not mean that those women would be safe or celebrated, as sexual violence, and by extension sexism and misogyny, were viewed as individual issues rather than structural problems.

A focus on pleasure and respect has potential to encourage more ethical sexual decision making by recentring sex as a mutually beneficial experience rather than a way to reaffirm men's social position. These approaches would need to decentre men's pleasure, and address structural reasons that men's desires were centred, as part of an egalitarian approach to sexual pleasure in which women are constructed as deserving of respect, desire, and pleasure. This finding echoed earlier work by academics and journalists alike that men's sexual pleasure often comes at the expense of women's (Fileborn and Phillips 2019; Loofbourow 2018). However, these terms have potential to be misunderstood, similar to consent, as men individualised both concepts and distanced themselves from calls to action. This interpretation of respect had similar functions to constructions of consent and sexual violence as women's common experiences of dehumanisation, objectification, and violence were hidden or deemphasised.

Sexual violence

This study found that women's experiences of sexual violence were influenced by community responses. Communities were overwhelming unsupportive of women who experienced sexual violence, especially involving male footballers. Women explained that these responses normalised most forms of sexual violence and only a narrow range of experiences were seen as legitimate violence. This process was explained through subscription to rape myths, in particular the monster myth. This myth constructs sexual violence perpetrators as deviant individuals, ignoring 'everyday' forms of violence and violence committed by beloved or familiar men (Messner 2015; Waterhouse-Watson 2019c). The monster myth was specifically relevant to Australian football communities as

male footballers were perceived as inherently good, inconsistent with the mythology of the monstrous rapist. The primacy of the monster myth was important because it was used to diminish women's experiences while simultaneously blaming women for them. In both instances, this construction of sexual violence meant that violence was an individual problem and community members could distance themselves from recognising their role in perpetuating sexual violence. This meant that communities were less likely to recognise when individual male footballers perpetrated harm and diminished sexual violence.

The monster myth

In women's experiences, communities were reluctant to recognise their role in perpetuating sexual violence when they dismissed women's accounts or treated it as a problem of the individual, rather than the culture. The responses of community members to women's experiences meant that women were unable to access support or seek justice. The women interviewed for the present study were acutely aware that they would not be believed if they shared their experiences of sexual violence due to male footballers being automatically granted respectability and believability as community heroes. Women who spoke out against male footballers were considered deviant and subsequently blamed for their experiences of sexual violence. Sexual involvement with male footballers meant that they would be dismissed, as male footballers were constructed as both sexually desirable and community heroes, while women who were seen to be sexually available to male footballers, including women who experienced sexual violence, were considered undesirable and unworthy of respect and care. Constructing male footballers in this way upheld the idea that 'all women' wanted to have sex with footballers. Inherent sexual access to women dismissed potential for sexual violence, since women's consent was assumed. The shift in responsibility to the 'deviant' individual obscures community responsibility for violence prevention as well as the role that communities play in perpetuating violence. The complex interplay between desirability, respectability, and believability are present in how victimhood and criminality are construed in the broader community since both are socially constructed through gender, sexuality, race, class, and ability (Fileborn and Phillips 2019; Hart and Gilbertson 2018). In the present study, believability was granted to the more 'respectable' party, and the other was seen as 'responsible', regardless of who had caused harm to whom. The problem of who is granted believability or burdened with responsibility is then compounded by the problem of

differential access to the criminal justice system, which is less available to marginalised communities.

Communities constructed sexual violence using myths that diminished sexual violence by limiting it to individuals, either deviant male perpetrators or predatory or vindictive women. These myths are usually linked to highly visible criminal sexual assault cases where women were brutally raped and murdered by men who were strangers to them and perceived as having deranged backgrounds (Hart and Gilbertson 2018; Marks 2018). The incorrect assumption that sexual violence is specifically committed by deviant individuals meant that male footballers were less likely to be recognised as potentially sexually violent, consistent with their status as community heroes and efforts to maintain male footballers' sexual and masculine superiority. Sexual violence was constructed using highly mediatised, dichotomous sexual violence cases, where violence was legitimate only if it was extremely physically violent and perpetrators were deviant. This meant that examples of violence that did not fit into this narrow framework were dismissed, in particular women's experiences of 'minor' sexual violence which were comparatively 'not that bad'. Communities assumed that women were lying about sexual violence that did not fit into this narrow and extreme framework, and therefore failed to hold male footballers accountable when sexual violence was alleged. In both instances, a dichotomy exists to communicate who is believable versus who is responsible for sexual violence. This dichotomy obscures the continuum of sexual violence and the ultimate cause for violence. Instead communities focus on extreme examples of sexual violence and use these examples to diminish the prevalence of sexual violence and its established link to inequalities. In these instances, women's gender inequality is reframed as a marker of deviance rather than a cause of sexual violence.

Bad sex or sexual violence?

Women in this study largely downplayed their experiences of sexual violence as 'bad sex', especially if they were considered 'minor', such as sexual harassment, despite awareness that 'minor sexual violence' was common and impactful. The women explained that 'minor sexual violence' contributed to a culture where men related to each other through sexual competitiveness, including sexual harassment, humiliation, and coercion. These examples showed how constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence overlapped

and consumed each other to create a context where most forms of sexual violence were made to appear normal, especially when linked to maintaining men's dominance.

The awareness women showed of the interconnectedness of sexual violence reinforced that sexual violence is best encapsulated as a continuum (Kelly 1988). Although women recognised the severity of sexual violence, they minimised their own experiences as merely 'bad sex' or 'not that bad'. Women discussed renewed focus on pleasure and respect as an antonym to the dehumanising and unfulfilling experiences of sex that women often had, part of a continuum of 'bad sex'. However, the experiences that women described were often violent rather than merely unsatisfying. Denoting these experiences as 'bad sex' further deepened the responsibility for sexual violence placed on women and subsequently internalised blame that women described.

Persistent depictions of 'legitimate sexual violence' that involved force meant that women struggled to conceptualise their experiences as sexual violence, if they had not forcefully resisted 'extreme' physical violence. The prevalence of narrow depictions of sexual violence, such as those that led to criminal convictions, impeded women's access to community support and validation that their experiences were indeed violent. In part, women downplayed their experiences of sexual violence because they did not feel that they matched typical understandings of sexual violence as brutally physically aggressive. The persistent depiction that 'legitimate sexual violence' involved force meant that women struggled to conceptualise their experiences as sexual violence, particularly if they had not exerted forceful resistance. These narrow constructions of sexual violence were dominant in the experiences of women who struggled to relate to being a "victim of a crime" (Alyssa) and women's reluctance to view their experiences of sexual violence as legitimate. Women's reluctance to view their experiences of sexual violence as legitimate functioned similarly to how their communities constructed and responded to sexual violence. The reliance on the criminal justice system to designate the meaning of 'legitimate' sexual violence meant that women were dismissed if they tried to discuss their experiences with others who were invested in constructions of sexual violence that relied on these myths.

The delegitimisation of women's experiences was directly connected to the expectations placed on their behaviour – specifically, the requirement that they be polite to men. Women said that they did not want to appear impolite or rude and that this impeded attempts to advocate for themselves in situations when they had been sexually harassed by groups of male footballers. The politeness expected of women with regard to sexual violence was

common and was linked to the gendered sympathy and low expectations for social responsibility that women held for male footballers. Scholars have used the term 'himpathy' to describe a type of gendered sympathy for men accused of sexual violence that accompanies victim blaming tactics and actively silences women victims (Kay and Banet-Weiser 2019; Manne 2017). The greater importance placed on women being 'polite' highlighted that women were held accountable for sexual violence if they did not actively resist and were pressured to downplay their experiences of sexual violence. Notably, the expectation that women be polite to men, even when being harassed, did not protect them from sexual violence and, in some cases, made them targets for increased harassment. The pressure on women to be polite meant that they were more likely to be viewed as consenting, and that footballers would not be held to account because women were expected to tolerate their sexual attention. Women were likely to downplay sexual violence in this demonstration of politeness as toleration, which shifted the accountability for the men's behaviour to the women, who became the 'gatekeepers' of unruly male desires. The responsibility on women was evident in decisions to avoid male footballers and football communities altogether, even if this meant that women were unable to visit their families or frequent certain venues or towns. In this way, women were *expected* to internalise blame and were disconnected from social support in seeking justice. This phenomenon is connected to 'himpathy' as it facilitates the conditions that prohibit women's anger about experiencing sexual violence and subsequently keeps women from accessing accountability methods or other forms of justice (Kay and Banet-Weiser 2019).

Women's over-accountability

Efforts to make sexual violence appear normal meant that women who experienced sexual violence internalised blame for violence, especially if their experiences involved 'grey areas'. Minimising sexual violence as 'bad sex' implied that women had contributed to the experience and should shoulder some or all responsibility. The lack of serious consideration for women's experiences of sexual violence that could be considered 'murky' or 'grey' is common, providing further evidence of efforts to obscure the continuum of sexual violence (Fileborn and Phillips 2019). In the present study, this occurred when women's experiences were not recognised as violent by their networks and communities. This lack of recognition meant women questioned the legitimacy of their experiences as violence, instead locating the cause for sexual violence in their own actions, such as a lack of active, forceful resistance or 'excessive' alcohol consumption. Women also took

on responsibility for any future instances of sexual violence that men who had been violent to them might commit. This meant that women took steps to educate violent men, consistent with common victim-blaming responses that held women responsible for preventing sexual violence.

Sexual violence by male footballers has commonly been diminished as 'bad sex' and attributed to alcohol use, celebrity culture, predatory groupies and 'normal masculinity', as exemplified by the 'boys will be boys' adage (Hindley 2005; Lonie and Toffoletti 2012; Mewett and Toffoletti 2008; Toffoletti 2007; Waterhouse-Watson 2009, 2011, 2012b, 2013b; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011). The 'groupie' narrative also pushes responsibility onto women who alleged sexual violence by male footballers, in painting women who seek sex with male footballers as predatory and 'inviting' sexual violence. Some researchers have suggested that the disdain for groupies occurs because these women upset conventions which dictate that women should be simultaneously sexually available and passive to uphold men's sexual superiority (Toffoletti 2007). This narrative, then, has the dual effect of holding women accountable for sexual violence done to them and feigning that the violence never occurred (Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011).

Internalised blame meant that women felt burdened to hold sexually violent men accountable or to educate and rehabilitate men, or it meant that they avoided factors that they perceived had contributed to their experiences of violence, such as casual sex, alcohol, footballers, or their communities. Women were cognisant that they were harsher on themselves than others who may have had similar experiences but had internalised the guilt and shame that their communities had directed at them, including through subtle messaging about gender and sexual violence. Most women were aware, or became aware, that their experiences constituted sexual violence or were wrong because of how these experiences made them feel but lacked methods for addressing their experiences to feel safe from future violence. There was acute awareness that sexual violence is most commonly addressed through the criminal justice system but that most women who pursued criminal charges for sexual violence were unsuccessful. Despite this knowledge, women described feeling guilty or irresponsible for not reporting sexual violence to police. In this way, women held themselves, and other women, accountable for any future violence that men might commit. In reflecting on the concept of 'taking responsibility', women referred to the onus on them to report to police but were also acutely aware that seeking criminal justice could adversely affect them and their loved ones. Some women explained that communities assume women who alleged sexual violence are lying about

their experiences and ostracise these women and their associates. In this way, communities use the legal system as a framework for understanding what constitutes sexual violence and simultaneously punish women who pursue criminal justice for sexual violence. The dominance of individual, criminal, and masculinised views of sexual violence (see Nicholas and Agius 2018) was difficult for women to see or subvert. Women's disenchantment with the legal system made sense in this context but constituted a double-bind since this system was used to legitimate sexual violence.

Men's construction of sexual violence

It is interesting to note that women in the study largely mistrusted the capacity of the legal system to provide adequate redress when they experienced sexual violence, whereas men in this study relied heavily on legal frameworks to construct their understandings of sexual violence. This was also seen in the men's understandings of consent. Men were more likely to choose survey responses that defined sexual violence through a legal framework, such as the legal age of consent, rather than options that prioritised active engagement in sex, such as being conscious. These responses highlighted that men constructed sexual consent as a tool to help them avoid criminal liability, rather than engage in ethical sexual decision making. This finding is consistent with women's assertions that communities construct sexual violence through the monster myth. In particular, men constructed instances of sexual violence that were unlikely to attract significant legal consequences as less severe than other cases or less worthy of intervention. Men's reliance on legal consequences to stipulate what constitutes sexual violence individualised and minimised sexual violence in similar ways to communities' reliance on the monster myth. These responses are unsurprising given the context that women described where male footballers are presumed to be 'good' unlike 'monstrous rapists'. The dominance of examples of masculinity that privileged men's dominance over women meant that there was little incentive for male footballers to question or subvert the dominant legal framework used to construct sexual violence.

Similar to communities, men used a range of common rape myths to construct sexual violence and demonstrated particularly high rates of subscription to myths about false allegations and who commits sexual violence. Myths about false allegations constructed sex as something that women 'gift' to men rather than a mutually beneficial shared experience, and sexual violence allegations as a tool for revenge that women use to

protect their reputations. Constructing sexual violence allegations in this way allows men to diminish sexual violence and view violence as an individual problem. In this context violence is attributed to women, preserving the appearance of men's sexual superiority. The assumptions connected to these myths imply that sexual violence is rare and requires the use of physical force, which occludes many of the common forms of sexual violence that women experience (Fileborn and Phillips 2019; Kelly 1988; Larcombe et al. 2016). The second group of myths were concerned with who commits sexual violence and implied that men who commit sexual violence are 'out-of-control' and strangers to women victims. These constructions implied that 'ordinary men' do not commit sexual violence, which relieves these men of culpability for perpetrating, perpetuating, or preventing sexual violence. This view of violence highlights the limitations of legal frameworks for determining sexual violence and informing sexual decision making. Overreliance on legal directives, specifically rape myths, diminishes most common forms of sexual violence and allows men to distance themselves from their potential stake in sexual violence, consistent with persistent efforts to shift responsibility for sexual violence to women.

Male culpability is further excused within the judicial system. Overreliance on the law in determining whether sexual violence has occurred is particularly problematic in the context of Australian football, where the limits of the criminal justice system have been made clear through analysis of legal proceedings involving male footballers Stephen Milne and Andrew Lovett. In both instances the complainant was assumed to be a dishonest, predatory, and vindictive groupie. These narratives shift responsibility for sexual violence from footballers, their organisations, and communities to individual women. The national organising body for Australian football, the Australian Football League, have been criticised for refusing to sanction players until they were convicted for sexual violence offences (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). Due to low conviction rates for sexual assault, the criminal justice system reinforces that women are responsible and accountable for sexual violence (Heath 2007). These legal frameworks uphold dominant understandings of masculinity and men's perceived sexual superiority over women. They additionally highlight that potential legal consequences are an ineffective, and perhaps irrelevant, framework for motivating ethical sexual decision making. Taken together, the findings discussed in the previous three sections have important implications for violence prevention work, and in particular, the efficacy of using Australian football as a site for preventing violence against women.

Violence prevention

Sexual violence is normalised in a variety of ways by communities, especially when male footballers are involved. The women in the present study explained how sex and sexual violence are gendered, linking the valorisation of men's physical and sexual superiority to the normalisation of sexual violence. The present study utilises sport, specifically amateur and semi-professional Australian football, to examine sexual violence through sexual politics. The study set out to understand the investment by communities in maintaining male domination through sport. Although male domination is not unique to sporting contexts, sport is an ideal space for the investigation of constant reformations and processes that reinforce gendered power through sexual politics, as it privileges men's relationships with each other, emphasises male 'difference' as natural and superior to women, and simultaneously normalises and demonises women's sexual desire and availability to male footballers (Bird 1996; Dyson and Flood 2008; Flood and Dyson 2007; Palmer 2011; Waterhouse-Watson 2013a; Wedgwood 2008). As women have explained, these norms are perpetuated by footballers, football organisations, and football communities.

Positioning sport as a vehicle for sexual violence prevention comes from a broader 'sport for social change' movement and responses to sport 'scandals', including sexual violence (Cover 2012, 2015; Hamilton et al. 2019; Sherry et al. 2015; Waterhouse-Watson 2007, 2013a, 2014; Waterhouse-Watson and Brown 2011). After receiving significant media attention, both professional Australian football leagues – the National Rugby League (NRL) and Australian Football League (AFL) – developed responses in consultation with experts (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). Both codes developed policies and sex education programs for players (Albury et al. 2011; Corboz et al. 2016). The NRL developed a comprehensive response involving research and evidence-based approaches, specifically Moira Carmody's work on sexual ethics, and engaged players at elite and amateur levels (Albury et al. 2011). The AFL developed a *Respect and Responsibility* policy based on a working group consisting of a broad range of experts and commissioned research by Sue Dyson and Michael Flood (Dyson and Flood 2008; Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). The *Respect and Responsibility* policy has been critiqued because it is inconsistent, opaque, reliant on punitive legal measures, and does not adequately foster accountability (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). Most notably, the policy requires that players are charged and convicted for sexual violence before the organisation will act (Waterhouse-Watson

2013a). This places the onus for responsibility onto the criminal justice system, effectively bypassing organisational accountability. These critiques of a lack of accountability in the *Respect and Responsibility* policy are relevant to the present study, in particular because this approach is consistent with men's resistance to accountability for sexual violence, which allowed them to distance themselves from any potential culpability. This approach does not recognise sexual violence as a social issue or examine how the football community, including male footballers, might perpetrate and perpetuate sexual violence.

The connection between sport and sexual violence is a contentious issue in academic scholarship on masculinity and sport. This scholarship has historically shifted between explanations for perceived higher rates of sexual violence perpetration among male athletes specific to sport culture, institutional culture, or a rape culture (McCray 2015). Each of these explanations have tended to treat sport as a 'special' environment where sexual violence is more likely to occur, rather than an extension of broader culture where the prevalence of sexual violence is perhaps more visible. Several factors that can encourage or perpetuate gendered violence have been linked to sport, in particular male bonding, entitlement, the sexualisation and subordination of women and femininity, valorisation of men and masculinity based on perceived physical superiority and dominance, and a 'groupie' culture (Crosset 1999; Dyson 2007; Dyson and Flood 2008; Flood and Palmer 2011). The present study focuses on amateur and semi-professional Australian football to examine sexual violence in sport as a specific, or localised, materialisation of sexual politics. A sexual politics lens allows for a nuanced exploration of claims that sport has a 'special' relationship to sexual violence or that athletes are inherently more violent than other men. Rather, Australian football is examined as an extension of a broader culture, in which the dominance of certain masculinities is consistently reinforced in ways that normalise sexual violence.

In examining the struggles in meaning between 'masculine' and 'feminine' sexuality, this thesis makes visible the ways in which this gender binary reinforces normative understandings of masculinity and sex, which work to conceal or obscure instances of male sexual violence against women. The complex ways that communities contribute to normalising sexual violence are important for approaches to violence prevention that seek to involve sport organisations. Sport has been positioned as a potential influence for social norms about gender, sex, and sexual violence and has been linked in some ways to the proliferation of sexist and misogynist norms (Dyson and Grzelinkska 2010; Flood and Dyson 2007; Spaaij et al. 2014; Toffoletti 2007). However, this thesis suggests that the

capacity for sport to influence community attitudes to sexual violence comes from the fact that sport is an extension of the community. This perspective necessitates a shift in assumptions that sexism and misogyny is unique to, or heightened in, sport cultures like Australian football. Instead, sexism and misogyny are visible in community responses, highlighting that sexist norms are perpetuated within and without football communities.

Accountability in Australian football communities

Women recognised that communities and clubs needed to be invested in preventing sexual violence and hold male footballers accountable when they commit violence if cultural change is to occur. They argued that accountability strategies would only be effective if clubs and communities were included since they enabled male footballers' behaviour. Strategies associated with clubs included clear anti-violence messaging from organisations and their leaders and appropriate action, as set out in policies, when sexual violence occurred. Appropriate action could include playing sanctions which would require the support of clubs and communities to send a strong anti-violence message to players. Football teams were also proposed as a potentially useful site for encouraging individual men's accountability due to the primacy of peer groups for male footballers. Critically, peers, clubs, and communities could assist in legitimising messaging about violence prevention, including accountability. However, women were most often focused on strategies using individual men, including footballers, coaches, and other leaders. The reliance on individual men to motivate other men and institute cultural change mirrored the individualist framework that men applied to sexual violence, where violence was imagined as a problem specific to individual men, rather than a social problem located within structural disadvantage. The process of individualising sexual violence was an example of sexual politics as most 'everyday' forms of sexual violence were hidden. The process of 'hiding' sexual violence through a dichotomous contestation between 'deviant' and 'respected' individuals meant that communities' role in perpetuating sexual violence was also hidden. In this way, an insistence on individual responsibility absolved the broader community of responsibility to interrogate their role in violence prevention.

A resistance to collective accountability was present in men's survey responses, where men communicated frustration and defensiveness. They were frustrated with being cast as potential sexual aggressors and solely responsible for preventing sexual violence and instead advocated for shared responsibility for ascertaining consent. Men also responded

defensively to any insinuation that they, men they knew, or male footballers in general, might be sexually violent and deflected accountability for intervening in sexual violence. Consistent with the women's responses, men constructed most instances of sexual violence as 'bad sex' or 'bad behaviour' and placed responsibility for these 'less severe' acts on individuals who might commit them. Men explained that they would not intervene except for very 'serious' sexual violence or if women victims specifically requested it, placing burden for ensuring accountability onto women survivors. Taken together, these findings suggest that male respondents are not open to being held accountable for their potential role in perpetuating sexual violence, nor in facilitating accountability for others. This unwillingness to facilitate accountability for themselves or others seemed located in fundamental misunderstandings about the nature and cause of sexual violence. These responses show that accountability for sexual violence was considered an individual issue, consistent with sexual politics that obscured sexual violence as a social problem entrenched in structural inequality.

Men's unwillingness to facilitate accountability for themselves or others seemed located in fundamental misunderstandings about the nature and cause of sexual violence, influenced by the construction of male footballers as intrinsically 'good'. The construction of sexual violence as an individual issue, unrelated to football culture or broader Australian culture, allowed men to distance themselves and their communities from the prevalence of sexual violence, rather than recognise sexual violence as a significant social problem that they might negatively contribute to. The defensiveness that men displayed represents a key barrier to violence prevention efforts as it reflects fundamental misunderstandings about what constitutes sexual violence and a subsequent lack of investment in accountability or responsibility for violence. Men's defensiveness highlights the dominance of narratives that present male footballers as 'good' and associate 'legitimate' sexual violence with deviancy. This meant that men were unable to see their potential role in preventing sexual violence as they were encouraged to think of themselves as 'good', different to men who perpetrate sexual violence, and challenging male peers was discouraged. These barriers show that prevention efforts would need to disrupt the intrinsic goodness associated with male footballers, perhaps by bringing men's attention to the positioning of them as community heroes, anticipating some resistance.

Accountability measures were commonly suggested in the context of criminal justice or punishment, despite the lack of faith several women had in the criminal justice system. Women explained that male footballers were unlikely to be prosecuted following criminal

charges and instead, women who brought charges would be adversely affected. Additionally, reliance on legal frameworks meant that women's experiences might not be categorised as severe enough to warrant legal action and therefore not actually violent. However, women framed accountability through potential consequences rather than potential actions. In this way, women were also influenced by a legal framework of sexual violence, similar to male footballers and football communities. Strategies that did not rely on legal consequences still existed within a lens of retribution rather than restitution or rehabilitation. This influence highlighted how extreme legal constructions of sexual violence had become taken-for-granted, influencing women's inability to imagine ideal responses to sexual violence outside of legal consequences. Women's suggestions framed responses to sexual violence through retribution rather than restitution or rehabilitation, despite women's desire to avoid 'punishing' men, instead aiming to motivate behaviour change. There was no space for accountability strategies that involved the entire community being invested in the behaviour of its members, likely because this investment already existed but in reverse. The lack of motivation to hold male footballers accountable is unsurprising within the context that women had described, as communities were invested in dismissing men's behaviour, rather than challenging the status quo. Women's experiences of community responses to sexual violence showed that accountability for male footballers who were sexually violent would be a substantial act of subversion, since this would challenge so many taken-for-granted ideas about male footballers, linked to constructions of masculinity, sex and sexual violence.

Top-down cultural change

The necessity to subvert dominant ideals related to constructions of masculinity, sex and sexual violence was described by women as 'cultural change'. Women emphasised that cultural change would be necessary to prevent sexual violence and support the implementation of accountability measures, suggesting two key strategies. First, they suggested education initiatives to help men correct misunderstandings about what constitutes sexual consent and violence, in addition to encouraging men's to be invested in ensuring women's safety and autonomy. Women explained that some male footballers may have inadvertently committed sexual violence because they lacked education, or the culture surrounding Australian football legitimised many forms of violence. These suggestions were not meant to infantilise male footballers, instead they demonstrated awareness of the impact of dominant constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual

violence. Women underscored that a culture of sexual violence was not specific to Australian football and was instead an extension of broader Australian culture. The second initiative involved using respected figures within Australian football clubs and organisations, such as coaches, CEOs, and senior players, to engage in awareness raising activities and send a message that sexual violence would not be tolerated in their communities. These suggestions were similar to actual organisational responses to sexual violence allegations throughout the 2000s. In particular, organisations introduced policies and sex education programs for players, and some reviews were conducted into women's safety and organisational culture (Corboz et al. 2016 ; Dyson 2009; Dyson and Grzelinkska 2010; Dyson et al. 2011; Grzelinska et al. 2014; Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). However, these changes were motivated by media attention and relied on the legal system to direct organisational responses (Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). The latter suggestion, while well intentioned, has seemingly not yet resulted in considerable lasting cultural change (Hamilton et al. 2019; Marks 2019; McLachlan 2019; Pavlidis 2020). The lack of observable cultural change in Australian football despite significant effort further emphasises that this culture is entrenched, and cultural change would need to be accompanied by accountability measures.

The dominance of overlapping constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence meant that women repeated some community responses that they had critiqued, including the notion that women were responsible for men's use of sexual violence. This is unsurprising given women's internalised blame for sexual violence. Women suggested that men's engagement with women as equal partners was a potential way to encourage men to be invested in women, and by extension, gendered issues such as sexual violence. These suggestions were based on women's observations but inadvertently placed burden for men's behaviour onto women and assumed that exposure to women reduces men's adherence to sexism and misogyny. Women's observations overlapped with men's survey answers that showed some male footballers assumed that their football clubs were inherently respectful based on the presence of women leaders and employees. This approach was similar to thoroughly critiqued notions that the presence of women in male-dominated institutions results in less sexist and misogynist institutional cultures (Hall 2002; Kane 1995; McKay 1994).

The sexual politics of Australian football is especially relevant here due to the recent introduction of professional women's Australian Football League (AFLW) and subsequent debates about gendered expectations for women players and prospective players (Marks

2019; McLachlan 2019; Toffoletti 2017; Toffoletti and Palmer 2019). The recent 'progressive wave' of opportunities for women's professional participation in sport has been touted as a benefit to the sporting sphere in helping to reduce sexism by allowing organisations to appear more 'female-friendly'; yet increased female participation does not, in itself, produce cultural change without the organisational will to do so. In fact, some researchers have found that women's inclusion as professional athletes does not eventuate in cultural change unless its gendered 'logic' is disrupted (Pape 2020). Women interviewed for this research identified significant disdain towards women who upset the status quo necessary for maintaining the dominance of male footballers in football communities. It seems consistent that this narrative would, and does, apply to women athletes whose presence might necessitate the reformation of sport participation by potentially unsettling men's physical dominance. The threat women athletes pose to men's dominance could explain the backlash towards women's inclusion in football as elite athletes, in particular the sexual harassment some women footballers, like Tayla Harris and Erin Phillips, and the transphobic backlash against the inclusion of transwoman footballer Hannah Mouncey (Marks 2019).

Similar to pushes to include more women in sport, football clubs and communities were identified as key sites for violence prevention because of the wider cultural influence Australian football has. Some women viewed this influence as a responsibility to act. However, women struggled to conceptualise suggestions that could engage male footballers in sexual violence prevention and argued men would need to be motivated to attend events or programs and act on what they learned. 'Motivating' men could involve deception or incentive to attend and pay attention to messaging. Women said that ideally, men would be confronted with the human cost of their behaviour, whether harm had been caused directly or indirectly. However, women also expressed concern that men would not listen to women's experiences of violence. Instead, women suggested that respected male peers deliver or support education and awareness-raising initiatives to lend validity to these efforts. Additionally, women argued that men's potential existing investment in women, as sisters, mothers, daughters, wives, or girlfriends, could be leveraged to communicate to men how respect for women connects to sexual violence. These concerns highlight that motivating individual male footballers and football communities to challenge norms related to sexual violence was a key barrier to preventing violence.

The focus on motivation is important as women identified that communities were invested in maintaining the existing dynamics that perpetuated sexual violence in the first place.

Many of women's suggestions were meant to motivate men to act, specifically by confronting other men who perpetrated sexual violence in a range of forms as well as men who perpetuated sexual violence. This could involve weaponising the 'boys club' culture in Australian football by using respected peers to motivate men's investment in violence prevention. However, women explained that there were limits to these strategies since several high-profile respected figures within Australian football, in particular Eddie McGuire, frequently made sexist or misogynist remarks including references to violence against women that were largely unchallenged by many in the football community, including other leaders.

Community leaders were commonly identified as respected male figures within the broader football community, specifically respected players and CEOs in elite football and coaches in amateur football. Women relied on individual men to institute cultural change, despite identifying that sexual violence is located within sexist and misogynist norms and structural gender inequality. This individualist narrative is important due to its prominence in literature that positions sport as a vehicle for sexual violence prevention. The reliance on 'good' individual male leaders continued the trend of constructing sexual violence in binaries, such as the 'monster myth', since men who were seen as 'good' were designated as role models. This approach assumed that 'good' men challenge sexual violence and 'bad' men perpetrate it, ignoring how masculinity was entwined with sexual violence in ways that benefitted men. This binary approach to conceptualising sexual violence, specifically attributing violence to individuals, could explain why women did not observe a change in attitudes to sexual violence, despite efforts by many within sport to institute cultural change.

There is a tendency to rely on male leaders in sport organisations to deliver violence-prevention messages and to overestimate the influence these men have in their communities for engaging other men (Dyson and Flood 2008, Flood 2011, Flood and Dyson 2007; Lusher 2012; Lusher et al. 2005; Moynihan et al. 2010). This literature often aims to use individual male leaders to engage whole communities in violence prevention (Banyard et al. 2004). However, focus on individual leaders individualises sexual violence by overemphasising the potential effect of individual male leaders within male peer groups. While this approach has the potential to disrupt sexist and misogynist norms within smaller male peer groups or specific football clubs, it also locates these peer groups or clubs as the source of the problem, rather than focusing on community norms. Male peer groups have been identified as a significant space for violence prevention if men can be

encouraged to challenge other men and actively disrupt peer norms (Curry 1991; DeKeseredy and Schwartz 2013; Fabiano et al. 2003; Moynihan et al. 2010). The present research has established that reliance on men challenging their male peers is fraught, as men are often not invested in changing norms that benefit them and often cannot see their own dominance. In this study, men resented being positioned as agents of change, did not see why change needed to occur, or located the necessity for change within another space or demographic. Additionally, women and communities understood that challenging other men is necessary but difficult, supporting men's aversion to challenging their peers. The focus on individual men and male peer groups in academic literature mirrors the logic identified in men's responses because it allows communities to absolve themselves of responsibility for the proliferation of sexual violence. Importantly, the women interviewed identified that the norms that allow sexual violence to proliferate could be subverted or disrupted if Australian football community members change the way that they responded to sexual violence and challenged each other.

The strategies for enacting cultural change that women suggested were similar to arguments that position sport as a vehicle for violence prevention to engage communities adjacent to sport. Importantly, women encapsulated communities as everyone with a stake in Australian football and footballers. The approaches women outlined above focused on the role of Australian football organisations, such as clubs, in influencing communities and as male footballers as agents of change. Despite clearly outlining the active role that the broader football community played in perpetuating sexual violence, women did not discuss significant strategies to tackle this issue. The role of communities in maintaining and perpetuating norms that contribute to sexual violence is an important potential area for change. These findings support the significance of sport as an influential space for engaging communities in violence prevention. It is important to note that football communities perpetuate gendered norms that perpetuate violence. The barriers that communities might pose to significant cultural change need to be considered and addressed in efforts to implement violence prevention initiatives. This barrier might be overcome by engaging Australian football in anti-violence efforts as part of the broader community, rather than a special and influential community wing. This would involve encouraging the broad communities that form around sport to be actively invested in challenging norms that perpetuate sexual violence. A greater sense of community investment and responsibility for sexual violence could encourage community responses to sexual violence that promote accountability and community justice, rather than individual, legal, and punitive approaches.

Conclusion

This chapter has contextualised the key findings from this thesis within debates about gender, sex, and sexual violence, relevant to Australian football. The breadth of data collected and nuances between men and women's constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence offer challenges to existing research, including opportunities for subversion. Sport is recognised as a significant space for preventing violence against women, particularly for its potential to engage with and influence positive change in communities. This thesis supported the assertion that communities form around Australian football and reinforce gendered norms, including those that reify inequality in sexual relationships and diminish or normalise sexual violence. For instance, the construction of male Australian footballers' masculinity, including their sexual desirability, highlighted how the scope and frequency of these men's use of sexual violence was diminished or dismissed. These findings comprehensively outlined how constructions of masculinity influence and overlap with the construction of sex and sexual violence in nuanced ways.

Sexual politics allows us to see how vying and positioning of masculinity through bonding practices such as in the footy trip, normalises sexual violence. This process highlights sexual politics because men's access to male peer groups is actively privileged above women's safety from violence. This privileging was part of the maintenance of male footballers as 'good' in relation to their role in upholding Australian football as an important socialisation space. Male peer groups were relevant to idealised masculinity and community social cohesion, which ultimately perpetuated fundamental misunderstandings about sexual violence. Additionally, privileging of male peer relationships normalises and justifies sexual violence, constructing men's relationships through the lens of violence. This process acknowledges that violence is gendered while contributing to assumptions that violence is normal or natural, meaning opportunities for subverting the connection between masculinity, male peer groups, and sexual violence are inhibited. The acceptance of male footballers' use of sexual violence constituted low expectations of social responsibility for male footballers that existed in stark comparison to other community members, especially women.

Women's sexual experiences exist on a hierarchy which constructs certain women as more deserving of respect and care than others. This process is directly linked to an overall

lack of sexual pleasure and respect shown to most women, as part of a culture that privileges men's sexual pleasure. The active centring of men's sexual pleasure and desires in the context of Australian football took place by constructing male footballers as especially sexually desirable. Men constructed consent, respect, and sexual violence in ways that allowed them to deflect responsibility for perpetuating, perpetrating or preventing sexual violence. The process of normalising women's reduced access to pleasure and respect is reminiscent of sexual politics as these conditions allow sexual violence to proliferate and appear as an extension of normalised sexual practices.

Women who alleged sexual violence involving male footballers were seen as less believable and respectable because of their sexual connection to these men, while footballers were admired and automatically respected by communities. This shift in responsibility absolved both male footballers for committing sexual violence and communities for perpetuating it, made evident through the reliance on a legal framework for sexual violence. A legal model of sexual violence allowed men to escape accountability as it emphasised rare and forceful instances of violence. Men were able to construct sexual violence as irrelevant to them because what constitutes violence was able to be consistently contested. The reliance on legal models of sexual violence then reflected how sexual violence is able to be contested in ways that diminish the prevalence of violence. The normalisation of sexual violence in the Australian football context has potential contributions for using amateur and semi-professional Australian football to further understanding relevant to violence prevention in the broader Australian context.

Women utilised football clubs as a potential site for enforcing individual accountability for sexual violence and investment in change initiatives but suggested few ways to motivate community accountability. Despite focus on individuals, women were doubtful that individual men could be motivated to be involved in violence prevention initiatives. These doubts are consistent with women's experiences of being dismissed following sexual violence and were further contextualised by men's responses that distanced themselves from responsibility for sexual violence. In each case, the likelihood that individuals would distance themselves from culpability for sexual violence and dismiss sexual violence as a problem were significant barriers to implementing violence prevention strategies in football communities.

These barriers are important because sport has been established as an important site for engaging communities in violence prevention, as part of broader calls to utilise sport for

social change (Corboz et al. 2016 ; Dyson and Corboz 2016; Hamilton et al. 2019; Rowe et al. 2018; Sherry et al. 2015). Violence prevention in sport communities would require recognition that sexual violence is a structural issue and that violence is perpetuated in everyday ways, by everyday community members. The persistent construction of sexual violence as an individual issue undermines the potential for meaningful change because communities would need to recognise how they are implicated in perpetuating sexual violence and cultivate new ways of responding to sexual violence for accountability and cultural change to occur.

CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSION

This thesis explored how masculinity, sex, and sexual violence are constructed in the context of pre-elite Australian football, showing gender relations as continually remade and reinforced in this space. Australian football has previously been interrogated as a space where sexist gender norms proliferate, following sustained sexual violence allegations (Toffoletti 2007; Waterhouse-Watson 2013a). Given this context, recent efforts to include more women in Australian football and utilise this site for violence prevention warrant renewed analysis of gender relations in this space (Hamilton et al. 2019; Liston et al. 2017). Through a sexual politics framework, this thesis examined connections between sexual violence, masculinity, and sport, and provided new insights for further investigation if violence prevention is going to advance. First, it positioned sport as an *extension* of broader culture rather than a unique space. Second, it located gender, and violence, in *structures* of society and community rather than individuals. Third, it identified and problematised binary frameworks for understanding gender, instead focusing on the *process* of contestation, resistance, and subversion. Constructions of masculinity and sex overlapped, making sexual violence invisible in the Australian football setting. The ways that sexual violence is obscured show that sexual violence prevention needs to incorporate awareness of how gender is constructed and contested to be effective.

Using Australian football as a vehicle for violence prevention follows extensive allegations of sexual violence by players and other staff. Policy and education programs were introduced to combat violence and more recently the historic development professional playing pathways for women footballers were established (Hamilton et al. 2019). However, these initiatives have not necessarily resulted in a more equitable Australian football culture, in fact women participants continue to experience sexism and misogyny, including sexual violence (Marks 2019). Adding more women and educating individual male players has not generated cultural change, highlighting that more is needed to shift elite and community football cultures that continue to justify violence. Positioning Australian football as a space for preventing sexual violence assumes that this space is either inherently problematic or an example of progressive action on sexual violence and gender inequality. In reality, Australian football does not represent either example, as it is merely a reflection of how entrenched sexual violence is in Australian society and how difficult it is to address, resist, and prevent.

Positioning Australian football as an extension of broader Australian culture avoids problematising sport, instead focusing on its social importance and ownership of social problems. Sports like Australian football offer potential to examine broader cultural values around masculinity, including how individual men are admired as heroes and groups of men are expected to behave violently, but should not be conceptualised as a 'special place' where sexual violence is especially prevalent. Understanding how gender is contested in Australian football reveals dominant narratives due to the cultural importance of sport in Australian society. This approach encourages focus on Australian football's connection to broader society, including the communities that form around football. In this study, communities resisted recognising and responding to sexual violence, and instead positioned male footballers as physically and sexually superior to women, and women as sexually available to them. This investment in male footballers' perceived dominance holds broader relevance as footballers are used as examples of idealised masculinity, which in turn requires constant active maintenance inside and outside of football.

Centring women's experiences of sex and sexual violence positioned the findings from this research through a lens of feminist resistance. In our conversations, women highlighted their desire for change and how they had resisted the dominant narratives in their communities. Resistance included interrogating norms that allow violence to proliferate, reflecting when community members perpetuate these norms, and developing alternative ways to recognise and address sexual violence. Women's stories show that sexual politics as a framework can be reassuring as it highlights opportunities for subversion, even when subversive efforts encounter challenges.

The women involved in this research explained that male footballers' dominance was achieved primarily through sexual superiority over women. Male footballers' sexual superiority was derived from their social status and positions in their male peer groups, which were in turn maintained through sexual access to women. Women's sexual autonomy and fulfilment was not considered, as sexual access was constructed as a means for men to connect with each other. The way that social status and sexual desirability informed each other meant that this unquestioned, assumed sexual access appeared normal. The dominance of male footballers' perceived sexual desirability diminished women's common experiences of sexual violence, since 'all women wanted to have sex with footballers'. This thesis persistently found that continuums present in masculinity, sex, and sexual violence were ignored in favour of extreme binary constructions. The persistent use of binaries to construct masculinity and femininity,

individual men and groups of men, and sex and sexual violence hold important resonance with violence prevention work where similar dichotomies can be prevalent (Messner 2015; Nicholas and Agius 2018; Waling 2019). This research reinforces sport as an important site for preventing violence against women, with caveats, *and showed* that prevention efforts inadvertently reproduce dominant narratives that contribute to the proliferation of violence. The lessons from this research highlight that dominant narratives are pervasive and taken-for-granted, making them difficult to identify, let alone challenge.

The ways that constructions of masculinity, sex, and sexual violence overlapped highlight efforts to make male footballers' dominant social position appear natural and that as a result, this pattern is difficult to critique and resist. This difficulty is an example of how gender relations shift and are contested to maintain power relations. Sexual politics highlights the gender relations that underpin the pervasiveness of sexual violence. This framework holds important resonance for violence prevention as it identifies the ways that sexual violence was diminished or obscured in the context of pre-elite Australian football. Sexual violence was primarily positioned as an individual issue, rather than structural, allowing men and communities to distance themselves from responsibility for perpetrating, perpetuating, or preventing violence. An overreliance on legal institutions to identify violence meant that women were held responsible for addressing or preventing 'everyday sexual violence', deflecting responsibility from communities' roles in accepting this behaviour. In this context, there was little incentive or precedent for communities to acknowledge the continuum of sexual violence and disrupt male footballers' constructed masculine and sexual superiority as this would require communities to recognise their role in perpetuating violence. Violence prevention represents a contested context as confronting dominant narratives is subversive and faces hostility. In this context, alternative narratives are difficult to imagine as the role we all play in upholding sexual violence is obscured. Prevention efforts that reproduce gender differences, endorse norms that promote masculine dominance, and deemphasise the structural nature of violence against women will continue to replicate violence-supportive conditions (Messner 2015; Nicholas and Agius 2018; Salter 2015; Waling 2019). Violence prevention must emphasise the relationship between norms that justify sexual violence and socially constructed structural inequalities to avoid further perpetuating constructions of sexual violence that diminish the prevalence of violence and shift responsibility to women, further entrenching inequality.

This thesis has shown that communities need to be able to respond to inequality and violence, first by confronting their own values about violence to cultivate investment in structural change. Community investment in maintaining male footballers' dominance through sexual violence was the most significant barrier to addressing male footballers' use of sexual violence. Drawing attention to gendered patterns that reinforce men's perceived superiority challenges the idea that sexual violence is normal, however, highlighting the prevalence of sexual violence is met with resistance. Communities, including women and male footballers, commonly individualised sexual violence and prevention and advocated for punitive measures to address violence. Constructions of sexual violence and subsequent prevention approaches individualised violence, directing responsibility for prevention away from respected individuals like male footballers, and in particular broader communities. This pattern highlights the potential efficacy of initiatives that cultivate community investment and responsibility for sexual violence.

Approaches to violence prevention can lack understanding of gender as structural and relational and risk reproducing the gendered norms they hope to combat (Messner 2015; Nicholas and Agius 2018; Salter 2015; Waling 2019). This thesis has shown that sexual politics is a useful framework for constructing violence prevention as it conceptualises gender as constantly contested, maintained, remade, or resisted. Challenging dominant narratives is difficult in this context and requires understanding of resistance to and for violence prevention to be effective. Sexual politics names and embraces this resistance—for example, women who experienced sexual violence recognised that their experiences were informed by constructions of masculinity and sex that were perpetuated by communities and difficult to challenge. Singularly problematising, or promoting, masculinity or sport obscures how Australian football communities, and broader communities, contribute to perpetuating sexual violence and upholding men's dominance, especially through sex. Action on sexual violence will be difficult to achieve unless communities are made aware of their role in perpetuating violence. Efforts to shift social norms are often aimed at educating individuals, meaning that organisations and communities do not need to make structural changes and address their own behaviour. However, this thesis has demonstrated that if sports like Australian football are to be used as a setting for preventing violence against women, efforts need to engage the broad communities that form around sport, not just teams, clubs or individual players and coaches.

REFERENCES

AAP (2015). Lawyer For One Of Four Alleged Australia Day Rapists Says Incident Was 'A Youthful Prank'. news.com.au.

ABS. (2017). "South Australia: Region Data Summary."   Retrieved 06 June, 2018, from http://stat.abs.gov.au/itt/r.jsp?RegionSummary&region=4&dataset=ABS_REGIONAL_ASGS&geoconcept=REGION&datasetASGS=ABS_REGIONAL_ASGS&datasetLGA=ABS_NRP9_LGA&regionLGA=REGION&regionASGS=REGION.

Acker, S. and A. Wagner (2019). "Feminist Scholars Working Around the Neoliberal University." Gender and Education **31**(1): 62-81.

Agnew, D. and M. Drummond (2015). "Always A Footballer? The Reconstruction of Masculine Identity Following Retirement From Elite Australian Football." Qualitative Research In Sport, Exercise and Health **7**(1): 68-87.

AHRC (2017). Change the Course: National Report on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at Australian Universities. Sydney, Australian Human Rights Commission.

Albury, K., M. Carmody, C. Evers and C. Lumby (2011). "Playing By the Rules: Researching, Teaching and Learning Sexual Ethics with Young Men in the Australian National Rugby League." Sex Education **11**(3): 339-351.

Anderson, E. (2009). Inclusive Masculinity: The Changing Nature of Masculinities. New York, Routledge.

Anderson, E. (2011). "Masculinities and Sexualities in Sport and Physical Cultures: Three Decades of Evolving Research." Journal of Homosexuality **58**(5): 565-578.

Anderson, E. and M. McCormack (2016). "Inclusive Masculinity Theory: Overview, Reflection and Refinement." Journal of Gender Studies: 1-15.

Anderson, E., M. McCormack and H. Lee (2012). "Male Team Sport Hazing Initiations in a Culture of Decreasing Homohysteria." Journal of Adolescent Research **27**(4): 427-448.

Anderson, L., K. Gatwiri and M. Townsend-Cross (2019). "Battling the "Headwinds": The Experiences of Minoritised Academics in the Neoliberal Australian University." International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education **33**(9): 939-953.

Baird, B. (2009). "Morality and Patriarchal White Sovereignty: Three Stories of Gang Rape in Australia." International Feminist Journal of Politics **11**(3): 372-391.

Baird, B. (2010). "Ambivalent Optimism: Women's and Gender Studies in Australian Universities." Feminist Review **95**(1): 111-126.

Banet-Weiser, S. (2018). Empowered: Popular Feminism and Popular Misogyny. Durham, Duke University Press.

Banyard, V. L., Moynihan, M.M., Plante, E.G. (2004). "Bystander Education: Bringing a Broader Community Violence Perspective to Sexual Violence Prevention." Journal of Community Psychology **32**(1): 61-79.

Barber, K. and T. Bridges (2017). "Marketing Manhood in a "Post-Feminist" Age." Contexts **16**(2): 38-43.

Bartholomaeus, C. (2011). "What It Means to Be 'Manly': Gender, Sport, and Primary School Students." Outskirts **24**(1): online.

Beasley, C. (2005). Gender and Sexuality: Critical Theories, Critical Thinkers. London, SAGE Publications.

Beasley, C. (2013). "Mind the Gap? Masculinity Studies and Contemporary Gender/Sexuality Thinking." Australian Feminist Studies **28**(75): 108-124.

Beasley, C. (2015). "Caution! Hazards Ahead: Considering the Potential Gap Between Feminist Thinking and Men/Masculinities Theory and Practice." **51**(3): 566-581.

Benedict, J. (1997). Public Heroes, Private Felons: Athletes and Crimes Against Women. Boston, Northeastern University Press

Benedict, J. R. (1998). Athletes and Acquaintance Rape. Thousand Oaks, Sage.

Benedict, J. and A. Klein (1997). "Arrest and Conviction Rates for Athletes Accused of Sexual Assault." Sociology of Sport Journal **14**(1): 86-94.

Beres, M. A. (2007). "'Spontaneous' Sexual Consent: An Analysis of Sexual Consent Literature." Feminism & Psychology **17**(1): 93-108.

Beres, M. (2010). "Sexual Miscommunication? Untangling Assumptions About Sexual Communication Between Casual Sex Partners." Culture, Health & Sexuality **12**(1): 1-14.

Beres, M. A. (2014). "Rethinking the Concept of Consent For Anti-Sexual Violence Activism and Education." Feminism & Psychology **24**(3): 373-389.

Beres, M. A. and J. E. MacDonald (2015). "Talking About Sexual Consent: Heterosexual Women and BDSM." Australian Feminist Studies **30**(86): 418-432.

Bird, S. R. (1996). "Welcome to the Men's Club: Homosociality and the Maintenance of Hegemonic Masculinity." Gender and Society **10**(2): 120-132.

Boeringer, S. B. (1996). "Influences of Fraternity Membership, Athletics, and Male Living Arrangements on Sexual Aggression." Violence Against Women **2**(2): 134-147.

Boeringer, S. B. (1999). "Associations of Rape-Supportive Attitudes with Fraternal and Athletic Participation." Violence Against women **5**(1): 81-90.

Boucher, L. (2015). "Public Emotions and their Personal Consequences: The Nationalizing Affects of the Australian Football League since 1990." The International Journal of the History of Sport **32**(13): 1546-1566.

Boyle, K. M. and L. S. Walker (2016). "The Neutralization and Denial of Sexual Violence in College Party Subcultures." Deviant Behavior **37**(12): 1392-1410.

Bruce, T. (2015). "Assessing the Sociology of Sport: On Media and Representations of Sportswomen." International Review for the Sociology of Sport **50**(4-5): 380-384.

Bryson, L. (1987). "Sport and the Maintenance of Masculine Hegemony." Women's Studies International Forum **10**(4): 349-360.

Burgess, I., A. Edwards and J. Skinner (2003). "Football Culture in An Australian School Setting: The Construction of Masculine Identity." Sport, Education and Society **8**(2): 199-212.

Burkett, M. and K. Hamilton (2012). "Postfeminist Sexual Agency: Young Women's Negotiations of Sexual Consent." Sexualities **15**(7): 815-833.

Burt, M. R. (1980). "Cultural Myths and Supports for Rape." Journal of Personality and Social Psychology **38**(2): 217-230.

Carline, A., C. Gunby and S. Taylor (2017). "Too Drunk to Consent? Exploring the Contestations and Disruptions in Male-Focused Sexual Violence Prevention Interventions." Social & Legal Studies **27**(3): 299-322.

Chafetz, J. S. and J. A. Kotarba (2005). Little League Mothers and the Reproduction of Gender. Inside Sports. J. Coakley and P. Donnelly. London, Routledge**:** 57-64.

Chung, D. (2005). "Violence, Control, Romance and Gender Equality: Young Women and Heterosexual Relationships." Women's Studies International Forum **28**(6): 445-455.

Churchill, C. (2008). Gender Stereotypes Regarding Women in Sport as Reflected in the Regulation of Australian Sport. Essays in Sport and the Law. T. V. Hickie. Melbourne, Australian Society of Sports History**:** 135-146.

Clayton, B., and John Harris (2004). "Footballers' Wives: The Role of the Soccer Player's Partner in the Construction of Idealized Masculinity." Soccer and Society **5**(3): 317-335.

Coakley, J. J. (1982). Sport in Society: Issues and Controversies. St Louis, CV Mosby Company.

Connell, R. (1987). Gender and Power: Society, the Person, and Sexual Politics. Stanford, Stanford University Press.

Connell, R. (2005). Masculinities. Berkeley, University of California Press.

Connell, R. W. and J. W. Messerschmidt (2005). "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept." Gender & Society **19**(6): 829-859.

Corboz, J. (2013). Commercial Sport and Culture Change: Lessons from 'Respect and Responsibility'–A Primary Prevention of Violence against Women Policy Implemented in the Australian Football League. It's How You Play the Game: International Perspectives on the Study of Sport. S. Dun, M. Stell and M. Kalaji. Oxford, United Kingdom, Inter-Disciplinary Press**:** 25-35.

Corboz, J., M. Flood and S. Dyson (2016). "Challenges of Bystander Intervention in Male-Dominated Professional Sport: Lessons from the Australian Football League." Violence Against Women **22**(3): 324-343.

Cover, R. (2012). "Transforming Scandal: The 'St Kilda Schoolgirl', Digital Media Activism and Social Change." Media International Australia **143**(1): 47-56.

Cover, R. (2013). "Suspended Ethics and the Team: Theorising Team Sportsplayers' Group Sexual Assault in the Context of Identity." Sexualities **16**(3-4): 300-318.

Cover, R. (2014). "Sexual Ethics, Masculinity and Mutual Vulnerability." Australian Feminist Studies **29**(82): 435-451.

Cover, R. (2015). Vulnerability and Exposure: Footballer Scandals, Masculine Identity and Ethics. Perth, UWAP Scholarly.

Crawford, G. and V. K. Gosling (2004). "The Myth of the 'Puck Bunny' Female Fans and Men's Ice Hockey." Sociology **38**(3): 477-493.

Crosset, T. (1999). "Male Athletes' Violence Against Women: A Critical Assessment of the Athletic Affiliation, Violence Against Women Debate." Quest **51**(3): 244-257.

Crosset, T. (2002). Athletic Affiliation and Violence Against Women: Toward a Structural Prevention Project. Masculinities, Gender Relations, and Sport. M. A. Messner, J. McKay, and D. Sabo. Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage**:** 147-161.

Crosset, T. W., J. Ptacek, M. A. McDonald and J. R. Benedict (1996). "Male Student-Athletes and Violence Against Women: A Survey of Campus Judicial Affairs Offices." Violence Against Women **2**(2): 163-179.

Curry, T. J. (1991). "Fraternal Bonding in the Locker Room: A Profeminist Analysis of Talk about Competition and Women." Sociology of Sport Journal **8**(2): 119-135.

Curry, T. J. (1998). "Beyond the Locker Room: Campus Bars and College Athletes." Sociology of Sport Journal **15**(3): 205-215.

Damousi, J. (2018). Government Intervention Strips $4M From Humanities Researchers, Australian Academy of the Humanities. Retrieved from https://www.humanities.org.au/2018/10/26/government-strips-4m-from-humanities-researchers

Davis, A. Y. (1983). Rape, Racism and the Myth of the Black Rapist. Women, Race and Class. New York, Random House.

de Boise, S. (2015). "I'm Not Homophobic,"I've Got Gay Friends" Evaluating the Validity of Inclusive Masculinity." Men and Masculinities **18**(3): 318-339.

DeKeseredy, W. S. and M.D. Schwartz (2013). Male Peer Support and Violence Against Women: The History and Verification of a Theory. Boston, Northeastern University Press.

Demetriou, D. Z. (2001). "Connell's Concept of Hegemonic Masculinity: A Critique." Theory and Society **30**(3): 337-361.

Dimitrov, R. (2008). "Gender Violence, Fan Activism and Public Relations in Sport: The Case of "Footy Fans Against Sexual Assault"." Public Relations Review **34**(2): 90-98.

Dixon, K. (2014). "Feminist Online Identity: Analyzing the Presence of Hashtag Feminism." Journal of Arts and Humanities **3**(7): 34-40.

Doidge, S., J. Doyle and T. Hogan (2020). "The University in the Global Age: Reconceptualising the Humanities and Social Sciences For the Twenty-First Century." Educational Philosophy and Theory **52**(11): 1126-1138.

Drummond, M. J. N. (2002). "Sport and Images of Masculinity: The Meaning of Relationships in the Life Course of "Elite" Male Athletes." The Journal of Men's Studies **10**(2): 129-141.

Drummond, M. J. (2003). "The Meaning of Boys' Bodies in Physical Education." The Journal of Men's Studies **11**(2): 131-143.

Drummond, M. (2011). "Reflections on the Archetypal Heterosexual Male Body." Australian Feminist Studies **26**(67): 103-117.

Drummond, M. (2020). Boys' Bodies: Sport, Health and Physical Activity. London, Palgrave Macmillan.

Dyson, S. (2009). Fair Game? Women's Safety and Inclusion in Australian Football. Gender At the Crossroads: Multidisciplinary Perspectives. N. Kara. Cyprus, Northern Cyprus Eastern Mediterranean University Press**:** 459-466.

Dyson, S. (2012). Taking a Stand: A Case Study of Respect and Responsibility in the AFL 2005 - 2010. AFL Research Symposium. Melbourne.

Dyson, S. (2013). Evaluation of Respect and Responsibility Program Using a Whole of Organisation Approach in the AFL Context (Taking a Stand case study).

Dyson, S. and J. Corboz (2016). Prevention of Violence Against Women in the Sports Entertainment Industry: Disentangling Tensions Between Culture Change and Brand Protection in the AFL. Advances in Australian Football: A Sociological and

Applied Science Exploration of the Game. M. Drummond and S. Pill. Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation**:** 67-73.

Dyson, S. and M. Flood (2008). <u>Building Cultures of Respect and Non-Violence: A Review of Literature Concerning Adult Learning and Violence Prevention Programs with Men</u>. Melbourne, La Trobe University.

Dyson, S. and J. Grzelinkska (2010). <u>Fair Game Respect Matters: Sport As A Setting For the Prevention of Violence Against Women</u>. Melbourne, La Trobe University.

Dyson, S., J. Grzelinkska and C. Hobbs (2011). <u>For the Love of the Game: Equal and Respectful Relationships in Country Football Clubs</u>. Melbourne, La Trobe University.

Dyson, S., Kurdas, C., Heenan, M., Wallace, J., von Doussa, H. (2007). <u>AFL Respect and Responsibility Program: Creating Safe and Inclusive Environments for Women and Girls in Australian Football</u>. Melbourne, Australian Football League.

Earle, J. P. (1996). "Acquaintance Rape Workshops: Their Effectiveness in Changing the Attitudes of First Year College Men." <u>NASPA Journal</u> **34**(1): 2-18.

Fabiano, P. M., Perkins, H. W., Berkowitz, A., Linkenbach, J., Stark, C. (2003). "Engaging Men as Social Justice Allies in Ending Violence Against Women: Evidence for a Social Norms Approach." <u>Journal of American College Health</u> **52**(3): 105-112.

Ferree, M. M. (2018). "Theories Don't Grow on Trees": Conxtextualizing Gender Knowledge. <u>Gender Reckonings: New Social Theory and Research</u>. J. W. Messerschmidt, M. A. Messner, P. Yancey Martin and R. Connell. New York, New York University Press**:** 13-34.

Fewster, S. (2016). Former SANFL Footballer Nicholas Lionel Murphy Tells Court Alleged Rape Victim Wanted To Have A Threesome With Him and A Friend. <u>The Advertiser</u>. Adelaide, NewsCorp.

Fileborn, B. (2016). <u>Reclaiming the Night-Time Economy: Unwanted Sexual Attention in Pubs and Clubs</u>. London, Palgrave Macmillan.

Fileborn, B. and R. Loney-Howes (2019). <u># MeToo and the Politics of Social Change</u>. Cham, Springer International Publishing.

Fileborn, B. and N. Phillips (2019). From 'Me Too' to 'Too Far'? Contesting the Boundaries of Sexual Violence in Contemporary Activism. <u>#MeToo and the Politics of Social Change</u>. B. Fileborn and R. Loney-Howes. Cham, Springer International Publishing**:** 99-115.

Flood, M. (2008). "Men, Sex, and Homosociality: How Bonds Between Men Shape Their Sexual Relations with Women." <u>Men and Masculinities</u> **10**(3): 339-359.

Flood, M. (2011). "Involving Men in Efforts To End Violence Against Women." <u>Men and Masculinities</u> **14**(3): 358-377.

Flood, M. and S. Dyson (2007). "Sport, Athletes, and Violence Against Women." <u>NTV Journal</u> **4**(3): 37-46.

Flood, M. and B. Pease (2009). "Factors Influencing Attitudes to Violence Against Women." <u>Trauma, Violence, and Abuse</u> **10**(2): 125-142.

Forbes, G. B., L. E. Adams-Curtis, A. H. Pakalka and K. B. White (2006). "Dating Aggression, Sexual Coercion, and Aggression-Supporting Attitudes Among College Men as a Function of Participation in Aggressive High School Sports." <u>Violence Against Women</u> **12**(5): 441-455.

Forsyth, C. J., and C. Y. Thompson (2007). "Helpmates of the Rodeo: Fans, Wives, and Groupies." <u>Journal of Sport and Social Issues</u> **31**(4): 394-416.

Foubert, J. D., and B. C. Perry (2007). "Creating Lasting Attitude and Behavior Change in Fraternity Members and Male Student Athletes: The Qualitative Impact of an Empathy-Based Rape Prevention Program." <u>Violence Against Women</u> **13**(1): 70-86.

Four Corners "Code of Silence." (2009). Television broadcast. ABC Television. Broadcast 11 May.

Franzway, S. (2016). "The Sexual Politics of Citizenship and Violence." <u>Women's Studies International Forum</u> **58**: 18-24.

Franzway, S., Moulding, N. T., Wendt, S., Zufferey, C., Chung, D. (2019). <u>The Sexual Politics of Gendered Violence and Women's Citizenship</u>. Bristol, UK, Policy Press.

Frintner, M. P. and L. Rubinson (1993). "Acquaintance Rape: The Influence of Alcohol, Fraternity Membership, and Sports Team Membership." <u>Journal of Sex Education and Therapy</u> **19**(4): 272-284.

Frost, L., M. Lightbody and A. Halabi (2013). "Expanding Social Inclusion in Community Sports Organizations: Evidence from Rural Australian Football Clubs." <u>Journal of Sport Management</u> **27**(1): 453-466.

Gage, E. A. (2008). "Gender Attitudes and Sexual Behaviors: Comparing Center and Marginal Athletes and Nonathletes in a Collegiate Setting." <u>Violence Against Women</u> **14**(9): 1014-1032.

Gauthier, D., and C. Forsyth (2000). "Buckle Bunnies: Groupies of the Rodeo Circuit." <u>Deviant Behaviour</u> **21**(1): 349-365.

Gmelch, G. and P. M. San Antonio (1998). "Groupies and American Baseball." <u>Journal of Sport and Social Issues</u> **22**(1): 32-45.

Godenzi, A., M. D. Schwartz and W. S. Dekeseredy (2001). "Toward a Gendered Social Bond/Male Peer Support Theory of University Woman Abuse." Critical Criminology **10**(1): 1-16.

Grzelinska, J., S. Dyson and L. Smith (2014). "It's Part of the Club's DNA" Evaluation of the 2013 AFL Club Champions Community Education Program. Melbourne, The Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society.

Hall, M. A. (2002). The Discourse of Gender and Sport: From Femininity to Feminism. Gender and Sport: A Reader. S. Scranton and A. Flintoff. London, Routledge**:** 6-16.

Hall, N. (2011). ""Give It Everything You Got": Resilience for Young Males Through Sport." International Journal of Men's Health **10**(1): 65-81.

Hallinan, C. and B. Judd (2012). "Indigenous Studies and Race Relations in Australian Sports." Sport in Society **15**(7): 915-921.

Hallinan, C. J. and B. Judd (2016). Indigenous People, Race Relations and Australian Sport. Oxon, Routledge.

Hamilton, G., R. Liston and S. Mortimer (2019). "How Do Sporting Organisations Conceptualise and Operationalise the Prevention of Violence Against Women?" Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology **53**(1): 121-136.

Hart, C. and A. Gilbertson (2018). "When Does Violence Against Women Matter? Gender, Race and Class in Australian Media Representations of Sexual Violence and Homicide." Outskirts: Feminisms Along the Edge **39**(1): online.

Heath, M. (2007). "Lack of Conviction: A Proposal to Make Rape Illegal in South Australia." Australian Feminist Law Journal **27**(1): 175-192.

Hess, R. (1996). "Women and Australian Rules Football in Colonial Melbourne." The International Journal of the History of Sport **13**(3): 356-372.

Hess, R. (2000). "'Ladies Are Specially Invited': Women in the Culture of Australian Rules Football." The International Journal of the History of Sport **17**(2-3): 111-141.

Hesse-Biber, S. N. (2014). Feminist Research Practice: A Primer. Boston College, SAGE.

Hindley, D. (2005). "Footballer's Fight Club." Soccer & Society **6**(1): 16-33.

Hindley, D. (2006). In the Outer-Not on the Outer: Women and Australian Rules Football, Murdoch University.

Hirsch, R. V. (2017). In the Language of Domination: Football, Law and the Rites of Men, University of Melbourne.

Hobday, L. (2011). Former VFL Player to Stand Trial For Rape. Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Holland, K. J. and L. M. Cortina (2013). "When Sexism and Feminism Collide: The Sexual Harassment of Feminist Working Women." Psychology of Women Quarterly **37**(2): 192-208.

Humphrey, S. E. and A. S. Kahn (2000). "Fraternities, Athletic Teams, and Rape: Importance of Identification with a Risky Group." Journal of Interpersonal Violence **15**(12): 1313-1322.

Jones, K. W. (2008). "Female Fandom: Identity, Sexism, and Men's Professional Football in England." Sociology of Sport Journal **25**(4): 516-537.

Kalof, L. (2014). "Animal Blood Sport: A Ritual Display of Masculinity and Sexual Virility." Sociology of Sport Journal **31**(4): 438-454.

Kane, M. J. (1995). "Resistance/Transformation of the Oppositional Binary: Exposing Sport as a Continuum." Journal of Sport and Social Issues **19**(2): 191-218.

Kane, M. J. and L. J. Disch (1993). "Sexual Violence and the Reproduction of Male Power in the Locker Room: The "Lisa Olson Incident"." Sociology of Sport Journal **10**(4): 331-352.

Kane, M. J., N. M. LaVoi and J. S. Fink (2013). "Exploring Elite Female Athletes' Interpretations of Sport Media Images: A Window Into the Construction of Social Identity and "Selling Sex" in Women's Sports." Communication & Sport **1**(3): 269-298.

Katz, J. (1995). "Reconstructing Masculinity in the Locker Room: The Mentors in Violence Prevention Project." Harvard Educational Review **65**(2): 163-175.

Kay, J. B. and S. Banet-Weiser (2019). "Feminist Anger and Feminist Respair." Feminist Media Studies **19**(4): 603-609.

Kearney, A. (2012). "Indigeneity and The Performance of Corporeal Masculinities in the Australian Football League." Sport in Society **15**(7): 936-951.

Keddie, A. (2003). "Boys Investments in Football Culture: Challenging Gendered and Homophobic Understandings." Journal of Interdisciplinary Gender Studies **7**(1/2): 72.

Kelly, L. (1988). Surviving Sexual Violence. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

Kemble, M. (2019). "Holding the (Wo)Man": A Corpus Analysis of Patriarchal Discourses and Appraisal of AFLW Players in the Herald Sun Newspaper, University of Sydney.

Kift, S. (2005). "Sport and the Law: Sex and the Team Player: When A Team Becomes A Gang." Alternative Law Journal **30**(3): 136-145.

Klugman, M. (2012). "Gendered Pleasures, Power, Limits, and Suspicions: Exploring the Subjectivities of Female Supporters of Australian Rules Football." Journal of Sport History **39**(3): 415-429.

Klugman, M. (2015). ""I Love Him in an Absolutely Gay Way" Heterodox Fragments of the Erotic Desires, Pleasures, and Masculinity of Male Sports Fans." Men and Masculinities **18**(2): 193-213.

Koss, M. P. and H. H. Cleveland (1996). "Athletic Participation, Fraternity Membership, and Date Rape: The Question Remains—Self-Selection or Different Causal Processes?" Violence Against Women **2**(2): 180-190.

Koss, M. P. and J. A. Gaines (1993). "The Prediction of Sexual Aggression by Alcohol Use, Athletic Participation, and Fraternity Affiliation." Journal of Interpersonal Violence **8**(1): 94-108.

Krien, A. (2011). "Out of Bounds: Sex and the AFL." The Monthly: 36-43.

Larcombe, W., B. Fileborn, A. Powell, N. Hanley and N. Henry (2016). "'I Think It's Rape and I Think He Would Be Found Not Guilty': Focus Group Perceptions of (un)Reasonable Belief in Consent in Rape Law." Social & Legal Studies **25**(5): 611-629.

Lefkowitz, B. (1997). Our Guys: The Glen Ridge Rape and the Secret Life of the Perfect Suburb. Berkeley, University of California Press.

Light, R. and D. Kirk (2000). "High School Rugby, the Body and the Reproduction of Hegemonic Masculinity." Sport, Education and Society **5**(2): 163-176.

Lipton, B. (2017). "Measures of Success: Cruel Optimism and the Paradox of Academic Women's Participation in Australian Higher Education." Higher Education Research & Development **36**(3): 486-497.

Liston, R., Mortimer, S., Hamilton, G., & Cameron, R. (2017). A Team Effort: Preventing Violence Against Women Through Sport. Melbourne, Our Watch.

Livholts, M. (2008). The Loathsome, the Rough Type and the Monster: The Violence and Wounding of Media Texts on Rape. Sex, Violence and the Body: The Erotics of Wounding. R. Burr and J. Hearn. New York, Springer**:** 194-211.

Lonie, K. and K. Toffoletti (2012). "The Place of Scandal: Lara Bingle & Brendan Fevola." Outskirts **26**: online.

Loofbourow, L. (2018). "The Female Price of Male Pleasure." The Week. Retrieved from https://theweek.com/articles/749978/female-price-male-pleasure.

Lorentzen, P. (2012). A League of Extraordinary Gentlemen: Groupies and Gang Bangs in the NRL. The Sex Factor: Media Representations of Women and Men in

Australia. J. Little, B. Wadham, B. Pease, C. Atherton and P. Lorentzen. Melbourne, Deakin University, Centre for Citizenship and Globalisation: 36-45.

Lusher, D. (2012). Constructing Masculinity: Understanding the Connection Between Masculinity and Violence. Peace Psychology in Australia. D. Bretherton and N. Balvin. New York, Springer: 161-173.

Lusher, D., G. Robins and P. Kremer (2005). Masculine Behaviour and Social Networks in Team Structures. Melbourne, Australian Football League.

Manne, K. (2017). Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny. New York, Oxford University Press.

Marks, S. (2015). Cinderella at the (Foot)ball: Constructing the 'Imaginary Body' of the AFL 'WAG'. Flinders University.

Marks, S. (2018). "Explaining 'Stealthing' and the Conversation About Rape That We Need To Have." Writing From Below **3**(2): online.

Marks, S. (2019). "Cinderella at the (Foot)ball: Representations of "WAGs" in Australian Rules Football." Continuum **33**(4): 435-445.

McCray, K. L. (2015). "Intercollegiate Athletes and Sexual Violence: A Review of Literature and Recommendations for Future Study." Trauma, Violence, & Abuse **16**(4): 438-443.

McKay, J. (1994). "Masculine Hegemony, the State and the Incorporation of Gender Equity Discourse: The Case of Australian Sport." Australian Journal of Political Science **29**(1): 82-95.

McKay, J., M. A. Messner and D. Sabo (2000). Masculinities, Gender Relations, and Sport. Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications.

McLachlan, F. (2019). "It's Boom Time! (Again): Progress Narratives and Women's Sport in Australia." Journal of Australian Studies **43**(1): 7-21.

McMahon, S. (2007). "Understanding Community-Specific Rape Myths: Exploring Student Athlete Culture." Affilia **22**(4): 357-370.

McMahon, S. (2010). "Rape Myth Beliefs and Bystander Attitudes Among Incoming College Students." Journal of American College Health **59**(1): 3-11.

McMahon, S. (2015). "Participation in High School Sports and Bystander Intentions, Efficacy to Intervene, and Rape Myth Beliefs." Journal of Interpersonal Violence **30**(17): 2980-2998.

McNeill, D. (2008). "`Black Magic', Nationalism and Race in Australian Football." Race & Class **49**(4): 22-37.

Meenagh, J. L. (2020). "'She Doesn't Think That Happens': When Heterosexual Men Say No to Sex." Sexualities **0**(0): online.

Melnick, M. (1992). "Male Athletes and Sexual Assault." Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance **63**(5): 32-36.

Melton, E. N. (2015). "Creating Social Change in and Through Intercollegiate Sport." Journal of Intercollegiate Sport **8**(1): 1-13.

Messner, M. A. (1990). "When Bodies Are Weapons: Masculinity and Violence in Sport." International Review for the Sociology of Sport **25**(3): 203-220.

Messner, M. A. (2002). Taking the Field: Women, Men, and Sports. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

Messner, M. A. (2010). Out of Play: Critical Essays on Gender and Sport. Albany, State University of New York Press.

Messner, M. A. (2015). "Bad Men, Good Men, Bystanders: Who Is the Rapist?" Gender & Society **30**(1): 57-66.

Messner, M. A. and D. F. Sabo (1994). Sex, Violence & Power in Sports: Rethinking Masculinity. Freedom, The Crossing Press.

Messner, M. A. and M. A. Stevens (2002). "Scoring without Consent." Out of Play. Albany, SUNY Press: 107-122.

Mewett, P. and K. Toffoletti (2008). "Rogue Men and Predatory Women: Female Fans' Perceptions of Australian Footballers' Sexual Conduct." International Review for the Sociology of Sport **43**(2): 165-180.

Mewett, P. and K. Toffoletti (2012). "Oh Yes, He Is Hot": Female Football Fans and the Sexual Objectification of Sportsmen's Bodies. Sport and Its Female Fans. K. Toffoletti and P. Mewett. New York, Routledge**:** 114-129.

Michell, D., Wilson, Jacqueline Z., Archer, Verity (2015). Bread and Roses: Voices of Australian Academics from the Working Class. Rotterdam, Sense Publishers.

Moynihan, M. M. and V. L. Banyard (2008). "Community Responsibility for Preventing Sexual Violence: A Pilot Study with Campus Greeks and Intercollegiate Athletes." Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community **36**(1-2): 23-38.

Moynihan, M. M., V. L. Banyard, J. S. Arnold, R. P. Eckstein and J. G. Stapleton (2010). "Engaging Intercollegiate Athletes in Preventing and Intervening in Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence." Journal of American College Health **59**(3): 197-204.

Murnen, S. K. and M. H. Kohlman (2007). "Athletic Participation, Fraternity Membership, and Sexual Aggression Among College Men: A Meta-Analytic Review." Sex Roles **57**(1-2): 145-157.

Nash, M. (2013). "Reflections on Teaching Gender to Australian Sociology Undergraduates in the Neoliberal Postfeminist Classroom." Journal of Sociology **49**(4): 411-425.

Nelson, M. B. (1994). The Stronger Women Get, the More Men Love Football: Sexism and the American Culture of Sports. New York, Harcourt Brace and Company.

Nicholas, L. and Agius, Christine. (2018). Real Victims, Real Men, Real Feminists, Real Sluts. The Persistent Masculinist Collapse of Gender-based Violence Discourses. The Persistence of Global Masculinism: Discourse, Gender and Neo-Colonial Re-Articulations of Violence. L. Nicholas and C. Agius. Cham, Switzerland, Palgrave Macmillan: 61-87.

Nicholson, M. and R. Hess (2007). Australia's Sporting Culture: Riding On the Back of Its Footballers. The Games Are Not the Same: The Political Economy of Football in Australia. B. Stewart. Carlton, Melbourne University Press: 23-42.

Nurka, C. (2013). "Shame and Disgrace in Australian Football Culture: Rape Claims and Public Affect." Women's Studies International Forum 38: 43-51.

O'Neill, R. (2015). "Whither Critical Masculinity Studies? Notes on Inclusive Masculinity Theory, Postfeminism, and Sexual Politics." Men and Masculinities 18(1): 100-120.

O'Neill, R. (2018). Seduction: Men, Masculinity and Mediated Intimacy. Cambridge, Polity Press.

Olive, R. and H. Thorpe (2011). "Negotiating the 'F-Word' in the Field: Doing Feminist Ethnography in Action Sport Cultures." Sociology of Sport Journal 28(4): 421-440.

Ortiz, S. M. (1994). "Clinical Typifications By Wives of Professional Athletes: The Field Researcher as Therapist." Clinical Sociology Review 12(1): 48-68.

Ortiz, S. M. (1997). "Traveling with The Ball Club: A Code of Conduct For Wives Only." Symbolic Interaction 20(3): 225-249.

Ortiz, S. M. (2002). "Constructing Dependency in Coping with Stressful Occupational Events: At What Cost for Wives of Professional Athletes?" Sociology of Sport Online 5(2): 1-14.

Ortiz, S. M. (2011). "Wives Who Play by the Rules." At the Heart of Work and Family: Engaging the Ideas of Arlie Hochschild. A. Garey and K. V. Hansen. Piscataway, Rutgers University Press: 124-135.

Osborne, A., E. Sherry and M. Nicholson (2016). "Celebrity, Scandal and the Male Athlete: A Sport Media Analysis." European Sport Management Quarterly 16(3): 255-273.

Owton, H. (2016). Sexual Assault and Rape in Sport. Sexual Abuse in Sport: A Qualitative Case Study. H. Owton. Cham, Springer International Publishing: 41-53.

Palmer, C. (2011). Violence Against Women and Sport: A Literature Review. London, End Violence Against Women.

Palmer, C. and K. Thompson (2007). "The Paradoxes of Football Spectatorship: On-Field and Online Expressions of Social Capital Among the "Grog Squad"." Sociology of Sport **24**(2): 187-205.

Pape, M. (2020). "Gender Segregation and Trajectories of Organizational Change: The Underrepresentation of Women in Sports Leadership." Gender & Society **34**(1): 81-105.

Pavlidis, A. (2020). "Being Grateful: Materialising 'Success' in Women's Contact Sport." Emotion, Space and Society 35(1): 100673.

Pease, B. (2008). Engaging Men in Men's Violence Prevention: Exploring the Tensions, Dilemmas and Possibilities Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse.

Pease, B. and M. Flood (2008). "Rethinking the Significance of Attitudes in Preventing Men's Violence Against Women." Australian Journal of Social Issues **43**(4): 547-561.

Petrine, M. A. (2017). Brisbane Court: Trio Found Guilty of Raping Mate with a Bottle on Australia Day, 2015. The Courier-Mail.

Philadelphoff-Puren, N. (2004). "Dereliction: Women, Rape and Football." Australian Feminist Law Journal **21**(1): 35-51.

Pillow, W. (2003). "Confession, Catharsis, Or Cure? Rethinking the Uses of Reflexivity as Methodological Power in Qualitative Research." International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education **16**(2): 175-196.

Pini, B. (2005). "Interviewing Men: Gender and the Collection and Interpretation of Qualitative Data." Journal of Sociology **41**(2): 201-216.

Pini, B. and B. Pease (2013). Men, Masculinities and Methodologies. London, Palgrave Macmillan.

Poggio, B. (2018). Gender Politics in Academia in the Neoliberal Age. Gender Reckonings: New Social Theory and Research. J. W. Messerschmidt, P. Yancey Martin, M. A. Messner and R. Connell. New York, New York University Press.

Powell, A. (2007). "Sexual Pressure and Young People's Negotiation of Consent." ACSSA Aware **14**: 8-16.

Powell, A. (2010). Sex, Power and Consent: Youth Culture and the Unwritten Rules. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Powell, A. and N. Henry (2014). Framing Sexual Violence Prevention. Preventing Sexual Violence: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Overcoming a Rape Culture. A. Powell and N. Henry. London, Palgrave Macmillan**:** 1-21.

Powell, A., C. Overington and G. Hamilton (2017). "Following #JillMeagher: Collective Meaning-making in Response to Crime Events via Social Media." <u>Crime, Media, Culture</u> **14**(3): 409-428.

Powers, A. K. (1990). <u>The Psychological and Sociological Effects of Professional Sport on the Wives and Families of Professional Athletes</u>. Doctor of Philosophy, The Ohio State University.

Pringle, R. (2005). "Masculinities, Sport, and Power: A Critical Comparison of Gramscian And Foucauldian Inspired Theoretical Tools." <u>Journal of Sport and Social Issues</u> **29**(3): 256-278.

Pringle, R. G. and C. Hickey (2010). "Negotiating Masculinities via the Moral Problematization of Sport." <u>Sociology of Sport Journal</u> **27**(2): 115-138.

Rowe, K., A. Karg and E. Sherry (2018). "Community-Oriented Practice: Examining Corporate Social Responsibility and Development Activities in Professional Sport." <u>Sport Management Review</u> **22**(3): 363-378.

Runfola, R. and D. Sabo Jr (1980). <u>Jock: Sports and Male Identity</u>. New Jersey, Prentice-Hall.

Ryan, L. (1991). "Women's Studies in Australian Higher Education: Introduction and Brief History." <u>Australian Universities' Review</u> **34**(2): 2-7.

Safai, P. (2002). "Boys Behaving Badly: Popular Literature on the Mis/behaviour of Male Team Sport Athletes in North America." <u>International Review for the Sociology of Sport</u> **37**(1): 97-102.

Salter, M. (2015). "'Real Men Don't Hit Women': Constructing Masculinity in the Prevention of Violence Against Women." <u>Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology</u> **49**(4): 463-479.

Sawyer, R. G., E. E. Thompson and A. M. Chicorelli (2002). "Rape Myth Acceptance Among Intercollegiate Student Athletes: A Preliminary Examination." <u>American Journal of Health Studies</u> **18**(1): 19.

Schwartz, M.D. (2020). "Masculinities, Sport, and Violence Against Women: The Contribution of Male Peer Support Theory." <u>Violence Against Women</u> OnlineFirst: 1-20.

Schwartz, M. D., W. S. DeKeseredy, D. Tait and S. Alvi (2001). "Male Peer Support and a Feminist Routing Activities Theory: Understanding Sexual Assault on the College Campus." <u>Justice Quarterly</u> **18**(3): 623-649.

Serisier, T. (2005). "'Remembering Anita': Rape and the Politics of Commemoration." <u>Australian Feminist Law Journal</u> **23**(1): 121-145.

Serisier, T. (2018). Speaking Out: Feminism, Rape and Narrative Politics. London, Palgrave Macmillan.

Sherry, E., N. Schulenkorf and L. Chalip (2015). "Managing Sport for Social Change: The State of Play." Sport Management Review 18(1): 1-5.

Sherwood, M., M. Lordanic, T. Bandaragoda, E. Sherry and D. Alahakoon (2019). "A New League, New Coverage? Comparing Tweets and Media Coverage from the First Season of AFLW." Media International Australia 172(1): 114-130.

Simic, Z. (2010). "'Door Bitches of Club Feminism'? Academia and Feminist Competency." Feminist Review 95(1): 75-91.

Smith, D. and S. Stewart (2003). "Sexual Aggression and Sports Participation." Journal of Sport Behavior 26(4): 384.

Smith, M. (2017). Suburban Football's Role in Teaching Men Respect Towards Women. The Advertiser.

Spaaij, R., K. Farquharson, J. Magee, R. Jeanes, D. Lusher and S. Gorman (2014). "A Fair Game for All? How Community Sports Clubs in Australia Deal with Diversity." Journal of Sport and Social Issues 38(4): 346-365.

Spongberg, M. (2010). "Feminist Publishing in a Cold Climate? Australian Feminist Studies and the New ERA of Research." Feminist Review 95(1): 99-110.

Steinfeldt, J. A., B. D. Foltz, J. Mungro, Q. L. Speight, Y. J. Wong and J. Blumberg (2011). "Masculinity Socialization in Sports: Influence of College Football Coaches." Psychology of Men and Masculinity 12(3): 247.

Storr, R. (2020). "'The Poor Cousin of Inclusion": Australian Sporting Organisations and LGBT+ Diversity and Inclusion." Sport Management Review.

Thomas, A., H. Forsyth and A. G. Bonnell (2020). "'The Dice are Loaded': History, Solidarity and Precarity in Australian Universities." History Australia 17(1): 21-39.

Thompson, S. (1992). "Men Play Football, Women Wash the Dirty Socks." Refractory Girl 43: 2-5.

Thompson, W. (1995). Wives Incorporated: The Relationship Between Wives of Male Professional Hockey Players, Their Spouses, and Team Management. University of Leicester.

Thompson, W. (1999). Wives Incorporated: Marital Relationships in Professional Ice Hockey. Inside Sports. J. Coakley and P. Donnelly. New York, Routledge: 175-190.

Thorpe, H., K. Toffoletti and T. Bruce (2017). "Sportswomen and Social Media: Bringing Third-Wave Feminism, Postfeminism, and Neoliberal Feminism Into Conversation." Journal of Sport and Social Issues 41(5): 359-383.

Toffoletti, K. (2007). "How is Gender-Based Violence Covered in the Sporting News? An Account of the Australian Football League Sex Scandal." Women's Studies International Forum **30**(5): 427-438.

Toffoletti, K. (2016). "Analyzing Media Representations of Sportswomen-Expanding the Conceptual Boundaries Using a Postfeminist Sensibility." Sociology of Sport Journal **33**(3): 199-207.

Toffoletti, K. (2017). "Sexy Women Sports Fans: Femininity, Sexuality, and the Global Sport Spectacle." Feminist Media Studies **17**(3): 457-472.

Toffoletti, K. and P. Mewett (2009). "Gender Relations in Football: Female Football Fans Discuss Player Misconduct." Alternative Law Journal **34**(2): 126-127.

Toffoletti, K. and P. Mewett (2012). Sport and Its Female Fans. New York, Routledge.

Toffoletti, K. and C. Palmer (2019). "Women and Sport in Australia—New Times?" Journal of Australian Studies **43**(1): 1-6.

Tonts, M. (2005). "Competitive Sport and Social Capital in Rural Australia." Journal of Rural Studies **21**(2): 137-149.

Tuana, N. (2006). "The Speculum of Ignorance: The Women's Health Movement and Epistemologies of Ignorance." Hypatia **21**(3): 1-19.

Vaczi, M. (2016). "Dangerous Liaisons, Fatal Women: The Fear and Fantasy of Soccer Wives and Girlfriends in Spain." International Review for the Sociology of Sport **51**(3): 299-313.

Velardo, S. and S. Elliott (2018). "Prioritising Doctoral Students' Wellbeing in Qualitative Research." The Qualitative Report **23**(2): 311-318.

Waddington, G. S. (2018). "Alcohol, Masculinity, Violence and Anti-Social Behaviour in Sport." Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport **21**(4): 333.

Waitt, G. and D. Clifton (2015). "Winning and Losing: The Dynamics of Pride and Shame in the Narratives of Men who Play Competitive Country Football." Leisure Studies **34**(3): 259-281.

Waling, A. (2018). "Rethinking Masculinity Studies: Feminism, Masculinity, and Poststructural Accounts of Agency and Emotional Reflexivity." The Journal of Men's Studies **27**(1): 89-107.

Waling, A. (2019). "Problematising 'Toxic' and 'Healthy' Masculinity for Addressing Gender Inequalities." Australian Feminist Studies **34**(101): 362-375.

Waterhouse-Watson, D. (2007). "All Women Are Sluts: Australian Rules Football and Representations of the Feminine." Australian Feminist Law Journal **27**(1): 155-162.

Waterhouse-Watson, D. (2009). "Playing Defence in Sexual Assault 'Trial By Media': The Male Footballer's Imaginary Body." Australian Feminist Law Journal **30**(1): 109-129.

Waterhouse, D. (2010). "The Affair that Ended in Rape: Researching Australian Footballers and Sexual Assault." from http://sociologicalimagination.org/archives/929.

Waterhouse-Watson, D. (2011). "(Un) reasonable Doubt: A" Narrative Immunity" for Footballers Against Sexual Assault Allegations." M/C Journal **14**(1): online.

Waterhouse-Watson, D. (2012a). "Framing the Victim: Sexual Assault and Australian Footballers on Television." Australian Feminist Studies **27**(71): 55-70.

Waterhouse-Watson, D. (2012b). 'It Was the Beer': The Discursive Function of Alcohol in Representations of Sexual Violence. Future Directions in Applied Linguistics: Local and Global Perspectives. C. Gitsaki and R. B. Baldauf Jr. Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars Publishing**:** 311-327.

Waterhouse-Watson, D. (2013a). Athletes, Sexual Assault, and "Trials by Media": Narrative Immunity. New York, Routledge.

Waterhouse-Watson, D. (2013b). Rape Is Not a Team Sport: Militarism, Alcohol and Team Bonding. Athletes, Sexual Assault, and" Trials by Media": Narrative Immunity. D. Waterhouse-Watson. New York, Routledge**:** 100-129.

Waterhouse-Watson, D. (2014). "You Posted What on Facebook?' Sport, Sex and the 'St Kilda Schoolgirl." Media International Australia **151**(1): 37-46.

Waterhouse-Watson, D. (2016). "It's More Than a Job: Discourse and the Treatment of Elite Footballers Accused of Sexual Violence." Media International Australia **161**(1): 68-76.

Waterhouse-Watson, D. (2019a). Football and Sexual Crime, from the Courtroom to the Newsroom: Transforming Narratives. Cham, Switzerland, Palgrave Macmillan.

Waterhouse-Watson, D. (2019b). ""I Would Hate to See Our Good Name Tarnished": Twitter Users Respond to Sexual Assault in Football." Journal of Australian Studies: 1-17.

Waterhouse-Watson, D. (2019c). When Football Enters the Courtroom. Football and Sexual Crime from the Courtroom to the Newsroom. D. Waterhouse-Watson. Cham, Switzerland, Palgrave Macmillan.

Waterhouse-Watson, D. (2019d). Who Is the "Real" Victim? Race and Gender in the Trial of an Elite Australian Footballer. Rape Narratives in Motion. U. Andersson, M. Edgren, L. Karlsson and G. Nilsson. Cham, palgrave Macmillan**:** 147-169.

Waterhouse-Watson, D. and A. Brown (2011). "Women in the" Grey Zone"? Ambiguity, Complicity and Rape Culture." M/C Journal **14**(5): online.

Watson, J. (2014). "'I'm Just a 17-year-old Girl. ... I Can't Take on the AFL': The St Kilda Schoolgirl and the Contemporary Neoliberal Subject." Outskirts **30**(1): online.

Webster, K., P. Pennay, R. Bricknall, K. Diemer, M. Flood, A. Powell, V. Politoff and A. Ward (2014). Australians' Attitudes to Violence Against Women: Full Technical Report, Findings From the 2013 National Community Attitudes Towards Violence Against Women Survey (NCAS). Melbourne, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation.

Wedgwood, N. (2003). Aussie Rules! Schoolboy Football and Masculine Embodiment. Male trouble: Looking At Australian Masculinities. S. Tomsen and M. Donaldson. Melbourne, Pluto**:** 180-199.

Wedgwood, N. (2008). "For the Love Of Football: Australian Rules Football and Heterosexual Desire." Journal of Sport and Social Issues **32**(3): 311-317.

Wedgwood, N. (2009). "Connell's Theory of Masculinity – Its Origins and Influences on the Study Of Gender." Journal of Gender Studies **18**(4): 329-339.

Welch, M. (1997). "Violence Against Women by Professional Football Players: A Gender Analysis of Hypermasculinity, Positional Status, Narcissism, and Entitlement." Journal of Sport and Social Issues **21**(4): 392-411.

Wellard, I. (2002). "Men, Sport, Body Performance and the Maintenance of 'Exclusive Masculinity'." Leisure Studies **21**(3-4): 235-247.

Willson, M., M. Tye, S. Gorman, K. Ely-Harper, R. Creagh, T. Leaver, M. Magladry and O. Efthimiou (2018). "Framing the Women's AFL: Contested Spaces and Emerging Narratives of Hope and Opportunity for Women in Sport." Sport in Society **21**(11): 1704-1720.

Wilson, J. Z., G. Marks, L. Noone and J. Hamilton-Mackenzie (2010). "Retaining a Foothold On the Slippery Paths of Academia: University Women, Indirect Discrimination, and the Academic Marketplace." Gender and Education **22**(5): 535-545.

Young, B.-R., S. L. Desmarais, J. A. Baldwin and R. Chandler (2017). "Sexual Coercion Practices Among Undergraduate Male Recreational Athletes, Intercollegiate Athletes, and Non-Athletes." Violence Against Women **23**(7): 795-812.

APPENDICES

Appendix One: Recruitment material (interview participants)

Seeking Women to Participate in Research on Football Culture

A PhD researcher from the University of Adelaide is looking for women over the age of 18 who have had a sexual experience with an amateur and/or semi-professional football player to have an informal chat with. This experience can include current partners, ex-partners of any duration of time, and non-consensual encounters. If you are unsure if your experience meets the criteria, please contact the researcher to clarify.

All interviews are completely confidential, non-judgemental and should take no longer than 1 hour to complete. Participants will receive a $30 Coles-Myer voucher in recognition of their time.

If you or someone you know would like to participate or require more information please contact Shawna Marks by email at shawna.marks @adelaide.edu.au

This project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of Adelaide and has the approval number H-2016-048.

Do not hesitate to contact the researcher for more information on the project or clarification or visit https://www.facebook.com/SASportWomenResearch/

Facebook recruitment page

Text from Facebook recruitment page

Shawna Marks is a PhD researcher from the University of Adelaide who is undergoing a project about amateur and semi-professional football culture in South Australia. Shawna is interested in understanding more about attitudes to women and efforts to include women in sporting communities. This research has the potential to be beneficial, not only for the football community but for broader society too. Shawna is a passionate believer in sport as a positive driver for social change and positive community space that often includes those who do not feel that they belong elsewhere. However, the state of gender inclusivity of state and community football is not known as comprehensive studies often focus on elite football rather than other levels of the sport. There are many valuable voices that are being overlooked as a result.

This project aims to include the perspective of women who have previously been left out of the academic literature on this subject. Women as sexual partners are often overlooked by researchers, a wrong that this project aims to rectify.

Shawna is interested in hearing from current and ex-partners as well as women whose sexual experiences were brief. This includes non-consensual encounters. Shawna is looking to speak to women over the age of 18 who have had a sexual experience with an amateur and/or semi-professional football player to have an informal chat with. This experience can include current partners, ex-partners of any duration of time, and non-consensual encounters. If you are unsure if your experience meets the criteria, please contact the researcher to clarify.

All interviews are completely confidential, non-judgemental and should take no longer than 1 hour to complete. Participants will receive a $30 Coles-Myer voucher in recognition of their time.

If you or someone you know would like to participate or require more information please contact Shawna Marks by email at shawna.marks@adelaide.edu.au or visit https://www.facebook.com/Student-Researcher-Recruiting-Women-for-Interviews-About-Football-Culture-1153224808044902

This project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of Adelaide and has the approval number H-2016-048. Do not hesitate to contact the researcher for more information on the project or any clarification. If you are not eligible to participate but would like to be updated on the outcomes of the project, please email the researcher to be notified when the research is complete.

Appendix Two: Participant information letter (interview participants)

PROJECT TITLE: "Growing Up in Footy: An exploration of factors influencing the intersection between gender and sport, and the effect of this on the sexual culture of amateur footballers"

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: Shawna Marks (PhD candidate, University of Adelaide)

Dear Participant,

Thank you for your expression of interest. You are now invited to participate in the PhD research project described below which is exploring how amateur and South Australian National Football (SANFL) players perform, approach, and negotiate issues surrounding gender and consent.

What is the project about?
The research project seeks to understand how amateur and semi-professional footballers, understand consent and gender in order to better inform existing and future education programs. This exploration will involve questions around interactions with football players, attitudes towards women, interactions with women, how society views footballers, and how footballers view themselves.

Who is undertaking the project?
The project is being conducted by PhD student Shawna Marks of the University of Adelaide under the supervision of Professor Christine Beasley and Dr. Dee Michell of the University of Adelaide, and Professor Murray Drummond of Flinders University.

Are there any risks associated with participating in this project?
The themes to be explored are not intended to cause discomfort in any way, although it is recognised that the research may be sensitive for some and potentially cause emotional discomfort. Please note that if you become uncomfortable or upset at any point during the interview, the discussion will be halted, and you will be provided with an opportunity to withdraw from the discussion. You will also be given a referral to a specialist support service.

It is not the intention of this project to seek out information about illegal activities (for example cases of sexual assault). We do not wish to impose limits on the areas which you may talk about, however it is important that you are aware that in accordance with section 4.6.3 of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, if 'research discovers information about illegal activity by participants or others, researchers and institutions may become subject to order to disclose that information to government agencies or courts'. If illegal activity is disclosed the researchers are required to report this to the University of Adelaide Human Research Ethics Committee and seek advice regarding further reporting requirements on a case-by case basis.

What will I be asked to do?

This is a semi-structured interview project and you are invited to share your personal experiences, memories and reflections on young SANFL footballers. Your participation is entirely voluntary and would involve participating in an interview for roughly 60 minutes. This would take place at a cafe of your choice or on the North Terrace campus of the University of Adelaide during July-September 2016.

With the consent of all participants, interviews will be audio-recorded so that data transcription and analysis can be carried out. The recording will then be transcribed into print form, but only the researchers will have access to the material.

During the interview you will be asked about your personal experiences with SANFL or amateur footballers, intimate experiences with them, your observations about issues related to gender and consent, and any recommendations you may have for future changes in the organisation.

During the research process all recordings, transcripts, and participants' personal details and information that may be gathered will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the student researcher's office at the University of Adelaide. All electronic transcripts will be saved on the student researcher's University computers, which are password protected. At the conclusion of the project, research data will be placed in secure storage in the records deposit within the University of Adelaide's Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in the form of computer files and stored for five years.

What are the benefits of the research project?

There have been a number of policy developments and education programs created in response to numerous allegations of sexual assault. This research project aims to contribute up-to-date information related to this issue that includes perspectives on amateur footballers, who have been left out of previous research.

Can I withdraw from the study?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are not under any obligation to participate. If you agree to participate, you can withdraw from the study at any time without adverse consequences. Findings of the research will be disseminated through publications on an ongoing basis, and if material you have contributed has already been published, it will not be possible to withdraw it from that publication. However, you may withdraw your contribution from the research data prior to publication and, in that case, it will not be used in any further publications.

Will anyone else know the results of the project?

The findings of the study will be published as scholarly journal articles. Your contribution may be used to produce results in which you will not be identifiable (for example, in recommendations for future education programs for footballers). Quotations from your interview may also be used in research publications. In order to protect your identity, you may choose to adopt a pseudonym and for all identifying information to be removed from your parts in the transcript, or you may opt to use your own name.

Will I be able to find out the results of the project?

The research findings will be publicly available as journal articles. You may also opt to provide your email or postal address in order to receive a summary of the outcomes of the research at the conclusion of the project

Who do I contact if I have questions about the project?

Any questions regarding this project should be addressed to:

Shawna Marks

Email: shawna.marks@adelaide.edu.au

Ph: 08 8313 3743

Discipline of Gender Studies & Social Sciences

University of Adelaide

Adelaide 5005

You may also choose to contact members of the supervision team using their contact details below.

Professor Christine Beasley
Email: christine.beasley@adelaide.edu.au
Ph: 08 8313 5065
Department of Politics and International Studies
University of Adelaide
Adelaide 5005

Dr. Dee Michell
Email: dee.michell@adelaide.edu.au
Ph: 08 8313 3675
Department of Gender Studies & Social Analysis
University of Adelaide
Adelaide 5005

Professor Murray Drummond
Email: murray.drummond@flinders.edu.au
Ph: 08 8201 5306
School of Education
Flinders University
Bedford Park 5042

What if I have a complaint or any concerns?
The Human Research Ethics Committee monitors all the research projects which it has approved. The committee considers it important that people participating in approved projects have an independent and confidential reporting mechanism which they can use if they have any worries or complaints about that research.

This research project will be conducted according to the NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (see http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/e72syn.htm)

If you have questions or problems associated with the practical aspects of your participation in the project or wish to raise a concern or complaint about the project, then you should consult

the project coordinator Professor Christine Beasley or Shawna Marks, PhD Candidate. The contact details for both are above.

If you wish to discuss with an independent person matters related to:
- making a complaint, or
- raising concerns on the conduct of the project, or
- the University policy on research involving human participants, or
- your rights as a participant,

contact the Human Research Ethics Committee's Secretariat on phone (08) 8313 6028 or by email to hrec@adelaide.edu.au

I want to participate! How do I sign up?

If you wish to participate, please sign both copies of the enclosed consent form, retain one for your own records, and return the other (hard copy by post or scanned copy as an email attachment) to:

Shawna Marks

Email: shawna.marks@adelaide.edu.au

Ph: 08 8313 3743

Discipline of Gender Studies & Social Sciences

University of Adelaide

Adelaide 5005

Yours sincerely,

Shawna Marks

PhD Candidate

University of Adelaide

Appendix Three: Consent form (interview participants)

I have read the attached Information Sheet and agree to take part in the following research project:

Title:	"Growing Up in Footy: An exploration of factors influencing the intersection between gender and sport, and the effect of this on the sexual culture of amateur footballers"
Ethics Approval Number:	**H-2016-048**

I have had the project, so far as it affects me, fully explained to my satisfaction by the research worker. My consent is given freely.

I have been given the opportunity to have a member of my family or a friend present while the project was explained to me.

Although I understand the purpose of the research project it has also been explained that involvement may not be of any benefit to me.

I have been informed that, while information gained during the study may be published, I will not be identified and my personal results will not be divulged, unless I have specifically requested that to be the case.

I understand that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time.

I agree to the interview being audio recorded.   Yes   No

I would like to be identified using a pseudonym instead of my own name.   Yes   No

I would like to be identified using my own name instead of a pseudonym   Yes   No

I am aware that I should keep a copy of this Consent Form, when completed, and the attached Information Sheet.

Participant to complete:

Name: _____   Signature: _____   Date: _____

Appendix Four: Interview guiding themes

Introductions

Motivations for participation

General attitude towards women observed

Any issues of sexism or sexual misconduct that they were aware of?

Women's participation in clubs

Women's involvement or talk about women in off-field activities

Sexual behaviour of footballers

Gender roles in sexual experiences

Focus on/knowledge of consent

Football club's role in gender/consent

Responsibility for ethical standards in clubs

What needs to happen next?

Appendix Five: Survey content and questions

This survey is aimed at capturing data related to four factors that I think will be key to any attempt to understand the sexual cultures of amateur footballers. Masculinity, women, and the club (identity); Sex and consent (mechanics); Rape (ethics); and Group dynamics (the team). The survey is organized around these four themes.

This survey is part of a research project that is looking at how amateur footballers interact with women, what they know about key concepts like consent, and how playing football can impact on how someone sees himself. Before now researchers have not done any significant research with amateur footballers, instead focusing on the AFL. The issues that are important to AFL players might be very different to amateur footballers, and so it is important to do research with amateur players so that their voice gets to be heard too.

If you have played football seriously for at least one season in the last ten years for a club in a South Australian league (including Broken Hill and border towns) within the SANFL, AAFL, and SACFL you are eligible to participate in this research. South Australia is a big state, and I am hoping to get responses from footballers across the many clubs in SA.

This survey is an opportunity for you to give some feedback about issues that might be important to you and have your say on the way things are at your club. This has the potential to help correct some of the generalisations that people make about footballers and could also help leagues like yours to develop training programs that are based on more up-to-date information. The follow up interview is also an opportunity for you to have your voice heard.

If you think that I haven't asked enough questions about something that is important to you, or you would like to talk further about some of the issues raised in the survey send me an email at shawna.marks@adelaide.edu.au to arrange an interview via phone or in person. All interview participants will receive a $30 Coles-Myer voucher in recognition of their time. Interviews normally take no longer than 1 hour to complete and are completely confidential.

Your answers to this survey are completely confidential so you can be honest in your responses. I won't be able to tell who you are from any of the information in the survey, unless you choose to identify yourself to me after completing the survey.

Please view the Participant Information sheet prior to undergoing the survey. This is necessary

in order for your consent to participate to be informed, as well as to be aware of your rights as a participant (including complaints information), any risks involved in participation, contact information for the researchers, as well as other information beneficial to participants. This information is available at https://amateurfootballcultureinsaaphdresearchprojectweb.wordpress.com/2017/05/04/participant-information-sheet/

Please note that completing this survey is an indication of informed consent to participate in this study and confirms that you have read the Participant Information sheet.

This PhD research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of Adelaide and has the approval number H-2016-048

If this survey raises issues for you that you need to talk about with a professional, please call Men's Line on 1300 78 99 78 or go to their website https://www.mensline.org.au/

Section 1: You and your club
What year were you born?
(drop down list/check box)

Are you currently a member of a football club in South Australia?

Yes	No

What club and league did/do you play for?
(drop down list/check box)

How important is being a football player to who you are?

Very important	Important	Neither important nor unimportant	Unimportant	Very unimportant

How important is football to your community?

Very important	Important	Neither important nor unimportant	Unimportant	Very unimportant

How important do you think that you are, as a footballer, to your community?

Very important	Important	Neither important nor unimportant	Unimportant	Very unimportant

How important is being a man to who you are?

Very important	Important	Neither important nor unimportant	Unimportant	Very unimportant

Are there processes available to you to confront people in your club who say or do things that makes you feel uncomfortable?

Yes
No
I don't know

How important are women who work at your club, to the overall running of your club?

Very important	Important	Neither important nor unimportant	Unimportant	Very unimportant	No women work at my club

Players' wives and girlfriends are important to the running of my club

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Does your club run joint events with the local women's football or netball team?

Yes
No
I don't know

How important do you think these events are?

Very important	Important	Neither important nor unimportant	Unimportant	Very unimportant	My club doesn't partner with women's sport

Who do you most look up to in your club? (pick one)

Senior Coach
Captain
Senior player
Assistant coach
Trainer
Other non-senior player
Other: please explain

The following question will give you a hypothetical scenario to respond to. Answer it based on what you think you would do or how you would feel if you were faced with that situation.

The coach gives a half time address to the team and makes inappropriate comments about a player's sister, saying "maybe we need to get Jimmy's hot younger sister in a mini skirt to come down and motivate the boys."
Select all the statements that best represent how you would feel about this.

There is no way that kind of thing happens in our club
The players just wear it. It's just part of the game
It's harmless, people shouldn't be too sensitive
It bothers some players but we support each other
I'd like to complain but would feel uncomfortable about doing it
Other (please explain)

Section 2: Sex and consent

Informed consent to sexual relations (please select all that apply):

Is given when your partner says or does something to communicate that they give consent
Is given as long as your partner doesn't say no
Can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity
Cannot be given if someone is too drunk to know what they are saying

To give consent a person must be (please select all that apply):

The legal age of consent for sex
Conscious
Actively engaged in what's happening
Sober enough to understand what's happening

My idea of sexual consent is influenced by (please select all that apply):

| My friends |
| Movie and television |
| My family |
| My football mates |
| Previous experience |
| Sex education |
| Other (please explain) |

The sex education that I had at school was (please select all that apply)

| Informative |
| Engaging |
| Just okay |
| Needed improvement |
| Nonexistent |
| Don't know |
| Other, please explain: |

Can a person give consent if they are drunk?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Women are more attracted to men who play football then men who do not

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

A woman who has a reputation for sleeping around is not good girlfriend material

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Consent is complicated

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

It is easy to tell when a woman wants to have sex with me

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

A real man always says 'yes' to sex

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Having casual sex with footy chicks or groupies is a benefit of being an footy player

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

The following questions will give you some hypothetical scenarios to respond to. Answer them based on what you think you would do or how you would feel if you were if you were faced with that situation.

You meet a girl at a party while you are away, and at the end of the night, you invite her back to your hotel room for some privacy. You are pretty sure she wants to have sex as much as you do. Things get serious in the bedroom and you are just about to put on a condom when she says no, she doesn't want to continue, and starts to get dressed.
Please select the response that best describes what you would do in this situation.

She wanted it, I'd keep going
No means no, I'd stop and let her go
Sweet talk her - some girls just need to feel loved to follow through
Tell her she's a tease and kick her out
Other (please explain)

You are in a bar with a girl who has been flirting with you all night. She has had a lot to drink. You think she wants to have sex with you and you're up for it too, but she is pretty unsteady on her feet.
Please select the statements you think are correct.

She seems to want it so it's OK to go ahead
I need to get her consent even though she seems to be up for it
If she's drunk then she can't give consent. Best to leave it for another time
Other (please explain)

Section 3: Sexual assault

Rape results from men not being able to control their need for sex

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Women are more likely to be raped by someone they know, than by a stranger

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

A woman cannot be raped by someone she is in a sexual relationship with

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

Women often make false claims of being raped

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

A man is less responsible for rape if he is drunk or affected by drugs at the time

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

If a woman is raped while she is drunk or affected by drugs, she is at least partly responsible

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

A woman is more likely to accuse a man of rape if she regrets having sex

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

The following question will give you a hypothetical scenario to respond to. Answer it based on what you think you would do or how you would feel if you were if you were faced with that situation.

Your friend brags to you that he had sex with an underage girl at a weekend that has been pursuing for quite some time. You are concerned that your friend might have broken the law and could get into trouble with the police.

What do you say to him?

Do nothing, it's none of my business
Tell him that kind of behaviour is not on
Tell him that she could report him to the police for rape
Ask him if he made sure that she wasn't going to tell anyone
Say nothing and seek advice from someone you trust
Other (please explain)

Section 4:

Group dynamics

I sometimes act differently around women because other guys are watching me or egging me on

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

If I am with mates who are behaving in ways that might offend women (even if it's all in fun), I have no problem telling them to stop

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

What happens on end-of-season trips stays on end-of-season trips

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

When I am in a group of men who are speaking disrespectfully about women, I would feel uncomfortable telling them to stop

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

The following questions will give you some hypothetical scenarios to respond to. Answer them based on what you think you would do or how you would feel if you were if you were faced with that situation.

You are with a group of mates who have had a bit to drink and are having fun calling out and making comments to women in the street.

Please select the response that best represents what you would do in this situation.

Tell your mates it's not on and that it's disrespectful
Separate yourself from your friends so no one thinks you are part of what's going on
Apologise to the women and move away
Do nothing. I don't approve of their behaviour but I'm not comfortable speaking up
Join in. It's only a bit of fun and nobody's getting hurt anyway
Other (please explain)

Since getting serious with his girlfriend, one of your mates has started going home early after a game to be with her instead of spending social time with the team. What would you do?

Please select one response that best represents what you would do in this situation.

Give him a hard time about being under his girlfriend's thumb
I wouldn't do anything. It's no big deal, whatever makes him happy
Tell him that after a game his loyalty is to the team and he should stay with his mates
Nothing. I like to go home and spend time with my partner too
Suggest to the team that girlfriends and partners should come to these get togethers too
I would wait to see how my teammates react and do the same as them
Other (please explain)

You are in a pub with a group of mates celebrating after a game. Two of your friends have had quite a bit to drink and are being chatted up by a girl who seems pretty drunk. You think maybe your friends are too drunk to act responsibly, and you're worried that they might get into some trouble.

Please select one response that best represents what you would do in this situation.

Be a good mate and try to steer them away from the situation
Talk to others in the group about the best way to resolve the situation
Talk to the most senior player there about what to do
I'd leave them alone. It looks like they're having fun, so good luck to them!
I would probably just follow what my teammates do
Other (please explain)

Appendix Six: Recruitment material (survey participants)
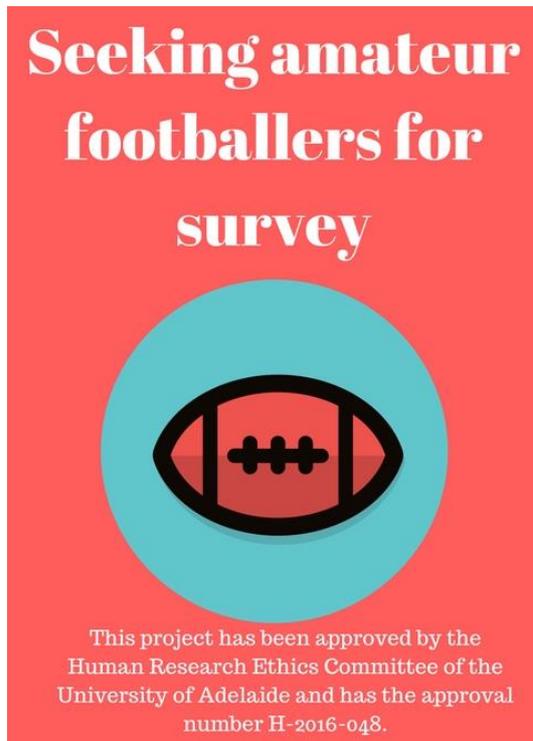
Facebook recruitment page

Text from Facebook recruitment page

Shawna Marks is a PhD researcher from the University of Adelaide who is undergoing a project about amateur football culture in South Australia. Shawna is interested in understanding more about attitudes to women and efforts to include women in sporting communities. This research has the potential to be beneficial, not only for the football community but for broader society too. Shawna is a passionate believer in sport as a positive driver for social change and positive community space that often includes those who do not feel that they belong elsewhere. However, the state of gender inclusivity of state and community football is not known as comprehensive studies often focus on elite football rather than other levels of the sport. There are many valuable voices that are being overlooked as a result.

This project aims to include the perspective of male amateur footballers who have previously been left out of the academic literature on this subject. Men can participate by completing a survey online to express their views and opinions. If they wish to further expand on issues within the survey, or other relevant topics they can participate in an interview. All interviews are completely confidential, non-judgemental and should take no longer than 1 hour to complete. Participants will receive a $30 Coles-Myer voucher in recognition of their time. If you or someone you know would like to participate or require more information please contact Shawna Marks by email at shawna.marks @adelaide.edu.au or follow the links on this page.

This project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of Adelaide and has the approval number H-2016-048.

Do not hesitate to contact the researcher for more information on the project or any clarification. If you are not eligible to participate but would like to be updated on the outcomes of the project, please email the researcher to be notified when the research is complete.

Appendix Seven: Participant information letter (survey participants)

PROJECT TITLE: "Growing Up in Footy: An exploration of factors influencing the intersection between gender and sport, and the effect of this on the sexual culture of amateur footballers"

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: Shawna Marks (PhD candidate, University of Adelaide)

Dear Participant,

Thank you for your expression of interest. You are now invited to participate in the PhD research project described below which is exploring the sexual culture of amateur Australian Rules footballers in South Australian clubs. Your participation involves answering questions in an online survey and an optional follow up interview.

What is the project about?

This research project is about understanding the relationship between sport, gender, and sex and what this means for amateur footballers. Previously research on issues like casual sex, groupies, sexual assault has been limited to AFL players and this research has been used to develop training programs and influence literature about issues within sport more broadly. This particular research project aims to incorporate the perspective of amateur footballers and get their opinion on a range of relevant issues and find out what they know about key concepts such as consent. This information is necessary to drive future directions in amateur clubs, such as the development of training programs. It also serves the purpose of correcting generalisations about footballers in the academic literature that may not necessarily apply to amateur footballers.

Who is undertaking the project?

The project is being conducted by PhD student Shawna Marks of the University of Adelaide under the supervision of Professor Christine Beasley and Dr. Dee Michell of the University of Adelaide, and Professor Murray Drummond of Flinders University.

Are there any risks associated with participating in this project?

The themes to be explored are not intended to cause discomfort in any way, although it is recognised that the research may be sensitive for some and potentially cause emotional discomfort for some people. Please note that if you become uncomfortable or upset at any

point while completing the survey you may stop and can withdraw altogether if you choose. You are under no obligation to continue the survey.

It is not the intention of this project to seek out information about illegal activities (for example cases of sexual assault). We do not wish to impose limits on the areas which you may talk about, however it is important that you are aware that in accordance with section 4.6.3 of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, if 'research discovers information about illegal activity by participants or others, researchers and institutions may become subject to order to disclose that information to government agencies or courts'. If illegal activity is disclosed the researchers are required to report this to the University of Adelaide Human Research Ethics Committee and seek advice regarding further reporting requirements on a case-by case basis.

What will I be asked to do?

The online survey consists of multiple-choice questions on a range of issues related to gender, sex, and football. Some of these ask you to express your opinion on a particular subject i.e., women's involvement in football clubs while others ask you to respond to hypothetical scenarios i.e., choosing whether or not to engage in casual sex after a night out drinking. The survey is designed to be completed quickly and based on your opinion. There are no wrong or right answers to any question and therefore should not be difficult to complete.

What are the benefits of the research project?

This survey is an opportunity for you to give some feedback about issues that might be important to you and have your say on the way things are at your club. This has the potential to help to correct some of the generalisations that people make about footballers by introducing new information, and could also help leagues likes the SANFL, AAFL, and SACFL to develop training programs that are based on more up-to-date and relevant information. The follow up interview is also an opportunity for you to have your voice heard.

Can I withdraw from the study?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are not under any obligation to participate. If you agree to participate, you can withdraw from the study at any time before completing the survey without adverse consequences. As the survey is completely anonymous, it will not be possible to identify your results to withdraw them once they are completed.

Will anyone else know the results of the project?

The findings of the study will be published as scholarly journal articles. Your contribution may be used to produce results in which you will not be identifiable (for example, in recommendations for future education programs for footballers).

Will I be able to find out the results of the project?

The research findings will be publicly available as journal articles. You may also opt to provide your email or postal address in order to receive a summary of the outcomes of the research at the conclusion of the project. However please be aware that in doing so you will be identifying yourself to the researcher.

Who do I contact if I have questions about the project?

Any questions regarding this project should be addressed to:

Shawna Marks
Email: shawna.marks@adelaide.edu.au
Ph: 08 8313 3743
Discipline of Gender Studies & Social Sciences
University of Adelaide
Adelaide 5005

You may also choose to contact members of the supervision team using their contact details below.

Professor Christine Beasley
Email: christine.beasley@adelaide.edu.au
Ph: 08 8313 5065
Department of Politics and International Studies
University of Adelaide
Adelaide 5005

Dr. Dee Michell
Email: dee.michell@adelaide.edu.au
Ph: 08 8313 3675
Department of Gender Studies & Social Analysis
University of Adelaide
Adelaide 5005

Professor Murray Drummond

Email: murray.drummond@flinders.edu.au

Ph: 08 8201 5306

School of Education

Flinders University

Bedford Park 5042

What if I have a complaint or any concerns?

The Human Research Ethics Committee monitors all the research projects which it has approved. The committee considers it important that people participating in approved projects have an independent and confidential reporting mechanism which they can use if they have any worries or complaints about that research.

This research project will be conducted according to the NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (see http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/e72syn.htm)

If you have questions or problems associated with the practical aspects of your participation in the project or wish to raise a concern or complaint about the project, then you should consult the project coordinator Professor Christine Beasley or Shawna Marks, PhD Candidate. The contact details for both are above.

If you wish to discuss with an independent person matters related to:

- making a complaint, or
- raising concerns on the conduct of the project, or
- the University policy on research involving human participants, or
- your rights as a participant,

contact the Human Research Ethics Committee's Secretariat on phone (08) 8313 6028 or by email to hrec@adelaide.edu.au

I want to participate! How do I sign up?

If you wish to participate, please go to the survey website to complete. Please be aware that completing the survey indicates consent to participate. You can access the survey at [survey web address].

If you decide to participate in a follow up interview, follow the prompts on the survey to contact the researcher and express your interest. From there the researcher will contact you to

organise a time and place to conduct the interview and will require that you sign a consent form.

Yours sincerely,

Shawna Marks
PhD Candidate
University of Adelaide