A Study of Female Sport Fans with Respect to Fantasy Sport Participation

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Abstract

Female sport fans make up ~40% of all North American big league sport fans.

However, female sport fans make up only 20% of all fantasy sport participants. This study asked: why is there an under-representation of female participation in fantasy sports?

In order to answer this question, 35 female sport fans who do not participate in fantasy sports were separated into five focus groups to provide the data necessary for this study.

Seven themes emerged to explain why there is an under-representation of female participation in fantasy sports: lack of time, their friends do not play, negative associations, control versus escape, sport statistics, team versus player allegiances, and males acting as gatekeepers. Finally, four recommendations were made for those marketing fantasy sports to female sport fans: increase the overall awareness of fantasy sports, promote the social aspects of fantasy sports, streamline fantasy sports, and promote the ease of use.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

Since the inception of organized sports, there have been fans cheering for their favourite teams. As North American professional sport leagues have grown into large industries, the importance of fully understanding fans and their behaviours has become paramount to the financial success of the leagues (Leeds & von Allmen, 2004). This has led researchers to study levels of fandom (Funk & James, 2001; Kwon & Armstrong, 2004; Mahony, et al., 2002), fan loyalty (Gladden & Funk, 2001, 2002; Gladden & Milne, 1999; James, 2001; Kolbe & James, 2000, 2003; McDonald & Milne, 1997; Sutton, McDonald, Milne, & Cimperman, 1997; Wann, Tucker, & Schrader, 1996), and motivation for fandom (Armstrong, 2002; James & Ridinger, 2002; Robinson & Trail, 2005; Trail & James, 2001), in order to better understand and utilize the bond that is created between fans and their favourite teams.

Once an individual identifies as being a "fan" of a team, there are three responses: affective, behavioural, and psychological, which they can display. The affective response relates to emotion that is triggered through the perceived positive and negative actions taken by a team (Wann, 2006). According to Wann (2006), fans can differ in the intensity of their affective responses; research suggests that this is largely due to the individual's level of team identification. There are two types of behavioural responses that a fan can display. The first type of response is sport consumption and the second is spectator aggression. Sport consumption involves following games both indirectly and directly, team-related responses such as purchasing team merchandise or visiting a team fan appreciation day, and sponsorship related responses such as having a positive attitude towards companies that sponsor an individual's favourite team (Wann, 2006). The second

type, spectator aggression, may be caused by many factors such as heat, alcohol, and in some cases, team identification (Wann, 2006). The final way an identified fan can respond is psychologically. Wann (2006) suggests that there are two ways in which one can enhance psychological well-being through group affiliation. The first way involves the self-esteem enhancement that is involved in being associated with a successful group. This process known as basking in reflected glory, happens when individuals increase their psychological connection with the success of others in order to vicariously gain a sense of accomplishment and self-identity (Cialdini et al., 1976). The second way to enhance psychological well-being is through creating a sense of belonging with others. Social identity theory suggests that being a member who is valued in a social group can lead to lower levels of alienation and higher levels of self-esteem (Wann, 2006). As sports is a topic of interest that crosses many boundaries, including gender, age, and race, it is logical that sport itself is a place that individuals would seek psychological refuge in the form of group affiliation.

These three responses (affective, behavioural, and psychological) lead to the many ways in which fans can consume sports. Sport can be consumed through attending live sport events (Wann, Melnick, Russell, Pease, 2001), watching sports on television (Sullivan, 2006; Wood & Benigni, 2006), attending sport events such as tailgate parties (Koreivo, 2011) and Super Bowl parties (Eastman & Riggs, 1994), listening to sports on the radio (Owens, 2006), reading sports in books, magazines, newspapers (Wanta, 2006), and online, joining online sport communities (Real, 2006), buying and wearing sports merchandise, gambling on sports (Lee, Kwak, Lim, Pedersen, & Miloch, 2011; Real,

2006), gathering and maintaining sports knowledge (such as players, teams, and rules) (Wann et al., 2001), talking about sports, and even thinking about sports.

Recently, many sport fans have supplemented their sport consumption through participation in fantasy sports (Levy, 2005). Interestingly, the ratio of male to female fantasy sport participants does not reflect the fan demographics of the professional sports from which the games are derived (King, 2010; Levy, 2005). According to King (2010), North American big league sports typically have a fan base which is composed of 36% to 41% female fans. The literature suggests that fantasy sports is approximately 90% male dominated, thus leaving only 10% of all fantasy sport participants female (Ruihley & Billings, 2012). This study will involve the use of qualitative focus groups to study female sports fans who do not participate in fantasy sports to better understand why they do not do so.

Fantasy Sports

History. Fantasy sports has a history that spans over half a century, beginning with the emergence of sports board games in the 1960s (www.strat-o-matic.com, 2012) and currently thriving through the use of the internet under the popular format of rotisserie sports. Within this time span many different variations of fantasy sports were developed. The following section will describe the evolution of fantasy sports and how it became the phenomenon that it is today.

The board games titled "American Professional Baseball Association" (APBA) and "Strat-O-Matic" are the first known games to be developed that could be considered fantasy sports. Created in 1951, APBA was a baseball simulation game that used cards to represent each major league player, boards that represented various on-base scenarios,

and dice that were used to generate random numbers. While APBA started with a focus on baseball, it soon expanded to other sports such as football, golf, basketball, hockey, bowling, boxing, soccer, and saddle racing using the same game mechanics (Lomax, 2006). Ten years after APBA was established, the game company Strat-O-Matic developed a tabletop baseball simulator that was similar to, but considered by many as more advanced than APBA (Lomax, 2006). In Strat-O-Matic baseball (similar to APBA, other sports are available) each athlete is represented by a playing card which contains ratings in various categories and result tables which are to be used in conjunction with dice rolls. Participants are in charge of making strategic and personnel decisions based on probabilities that are established by the respective athlete's real-life statistics derived from the previous year's outcomes. Both the APBA and Strat-O-Matic gathered what could be considered a cult following and can be found today in electronic versions playable on personal computers (Lomax, 2006; Walker, 2006).

Looking beyond board games, the origins of fantasy sports began with Bill Winkenbach in 1962. Winkenbach, at this point a limited partner of the Oakland Raiders, along with two writers, created what is known as the first fantasy football league, the Greater Oakland Professional Pigskin Prognosticators League (GOPPPL). This idea quickly spread throughout the Oakland and Bay Area and became the early model for the creation of modern fantasy football leagues (Esser, 1994). While the GOPPPL is considered by some as the emergence of the modern fantasy league, it is "Rotisserie Baseball" which claimed widespread recognition from the masses.

Rotisserie Baseball was introduced in 1980 by Daniel Okrent. The name Rotisserie Baseball was derived from the New York City restaurant, La Rotisserie Française where

Daniel Okrent and his colleagues met for lunch and first played the game. Rotisserie Baseball involves drafting teams from the current active Major League Baseball rosters. Statistics are followed during the present season in order to compete against others, and achieve the best score in multiple statistical categories. The difference between Rotisserie Baseball and other previous baseball games is that in Rotisserie Baseball participants are using the current season of play as the base of the outcomes rather than past seasons. This simple change leaves many variables unknown, such as playing time, health, and expected performance (Lomax, 2006; Walker, 2006).

When playing fantasy sports, participants have the opportunity to make all team decisions, including drafting players at the start of the season, acquiring players from other owners of fantasy teams via trades, claiming players from free agency, and setting player lineups. While the advent of the internet has changed the way Rotisserie Baseball is delivered, the core concept of Rotisserie Baseball is almost identical to what is commonly referred to as fantasy sports today.

Scope. In the past generation, fantasy sports has evolved from the obscurity that it maintained in the 1980s to becoming a large component of many sport fans consumption habits. This rapid development has dramatically increased both the number of users, and the amount of money within the fantasy sport industry.

The number of fantasy sport participants has been estimated to be on a steady rise, with the reported number of participants being 29 million (Fantasy Sport Trade Association, 2008), 30 million (Fisher, 2006; Roy & Goss, 2007) and 32 million (Dwyer, 2011) all reported within a five year span. With such a large number of participants, the monetary impact of fantasy sports is quite significant. The Fantasy Sport Trade

Association (FSTA) estimates that fantasy sports generate over \$800 million U.S. dollars (USD) annually in North America alone (2013). According to Beason (2004), this number significantly increases to \$3-4 billion dollars (USD) of annual economic impact when analyzed on the level of the global sports industry.

Rules. Within fantasy sports a constitution is developed through many rules which all must be determined prior to beginning a league. These decisions will influence the type of league, difficulty of the league, the time period of the league, and finally the reward(s) of winning the league. League commissioners commonly manipulate the rules between seasons in order to derive the most enjoyment from playing. Therefore, almost all leagues are unique in some aspect.

When creating a fantasy sport constitution many decisions must be made regarding: type of game play, universe of players, number of participant team "owners", and roster position spots. Using fantasy baseball as an example, participants must decide what type of game play they wish to partake in. This question is two-pronged as participants must decide which draft format and which scoring system is best for their league.

Drafting players is how teams acquire players to their roster. The most common draft formats include a standard draft using 'snake' picks where the final person to pick in a given round will also have the first pick in the subsequent round, and auction drafts. The auction format is where "owners bid to purchase a lineup of 23 players that fulfilled the position eligibility requirements... using a set budget" (Levy, 2005). During an auction draft, owners bid on players they would like to obtain. If multiple participants wish the services of one player then they may continue to bid on a player with increments of at least \$1. In the end, only the participant with the winning bid will obtain the player.

There are many possible ways to 'score' fantasy baseball. Initially, the league participants must decide on whether the league should be a head-to-head or a points league. Head-to-head leagues pit two participants against each other on a rotating basis to allow teams to play all other teams throughout the season. Once the two teams are matched up against each other, the team with the highest point total for that week obtains cumulative points which are compared at the end of the season in order to indicate the leagues' winner. A points league allows participants to accumulate points depending on the success or failure of the players who were drafted. Generally, the statistics that are tracked to accumulate points are home runs, batting average, runs batted in, runs scored, and stolen bases for batters and wins, WHIP (walks and hits per innings pitched), ERA (earned run average), strikeouts, and saves for pitchers (Levy, 2005). This is commonly known as a 5 x 5 league as it has five offensive and five pitching statistical categories. Similar to how leagues must decide on drafting and scoring systems, leagues must also decide on what universe of players they wish to play with.

In Major League Baseball there are the American and National Leagues. Each league has slightly different rules and baseball fans have historically followed one more than the other (Levy, 2005). Fantasy baseball leagues have the opportunity to either use a single league (American or National) or to use both leagues in combination in what is called a "mixed league". Although all three are readily played by the masses, Levy (2005) mentions that some purists suggest that mixed leagues are less demanding of skill as the talent pool greatly increases in size. Another factor that can alter the amount of skill necessary is the amount of participants in the league.

Typical fantasy baseball leagues have between 10-12 participants, also known as

owners. Although 10-12 participants are typical, they are by no means necessary. Some leagues run with fewer owners, and many run with more. In general, the more owners one has in the league, the deeper into the talent pool the league will go. This makes decision making difficult as owners may have to choose between players who are much less known to the common sports fan.

Roster position spots in fantasy baseball typically include one catcher (C), one first baseman (1B), one second baseman (2B), one third baseman (3B), one short stop (SS), three outfielders (OF) and a designated hitter (DH) and/or utility spot (UTL). Also, depending on the league, nine or ten pitchers (P) are typically drafted.

Growth. When looking at the growth of fantasy sports since the inception of Rotisserie Baseball in the 1980s, the commercialization of the internet can be considered a definitive tipping point in fantasy sport consumption. When the Rotisserie Baseball league was first played in 1980, newspaper box scores from the previous night's baseball games were utilized in order to keep league statistics. These statistics were then manually added to a spreadsheet which was used to keep track of the leagues' overall statistics over the course of the full baseball season. As can be imagined, this process was very time consuming and had to be done for the entire season of play and therefore only the most fanatical sports fans participated (Randle & Nyland, 2008).

Beginning in the late 1980s, Prodigy, an early internet service provider, began the first internet-based baseball game. Users would pay as much as \$1000 to play this game which continues to be played today under the title "Baseball Manager" (Levy, 2005). By allowing the game to be played on a computer through the internet, box scores were delivered in real time and statistics were calculated instantaneously. The elimination of

all the tedious work necessary for playing fantasy sports was the major breakthrough that was needed in order for widespread acceptance within mainstream sports culture (Levy, 2005). Furthermore, Farquhar and Meeds (2007) have suggested that the internet and fantasy sports fit well together because of the characteristics of the internet such as interactivity, demassification, and asynchronicity. The internet allows for high interactivity among fantasy sport participants, and between the users and the management of their team. Demassification refers to the fact that every user has the ability to manage their team as they see fit, allowing for individualistic participant strategies. The fact that online fantasy sports are asynchronous allows for fantasy sport participants to participate at their own leisure at any point of the day (Farquhar & Meeds, 2007).

Today, the internet contains a multitude of fantasy sport games, along with a vast array of websites dedicated to sports, fantasy sports, advanced statistical information on players and teams, injury updates, fantasy sport forums, and even online chat rooms dedicated to fantasy sports.

With the fantasy sports industry's exponential growth into the 1990s, representatives from many major fantasy sport providers decided it was in the best interest of the industry to form what is now known as the Fantasy Sport Trade Association in 1990. Originally it was proposed during the Fantasy Insights Convention, which was organized to discuss pending legalization of fantasy sports (FSTA, 2012). Today, the FSTA represents more than 120 member companies, provides industry research reports that involve representative samples of hundreds of fantasy sport participants on an annual basis (FSTA, 2003; FSTA 2008), hosts a biannual fantasy sport conference, and recognizes industry leaders through their "Industry Recognition Awards"

(FSTA, 2012).

User Profile. It is not a stretch to believe that consumer demographics such as gender, age, race, education levels, and average household income of fantasy sports participants would be similar to those of the fans of the individual sports they are based upon. Researchers have found that the demographics of fantasy sport consumers do not represent those of the average sport fan. This is overwhelmingly the case when viewing the gender breakdown.

According to King (2010), women make up 41% of all Major League Baseball (MLB) fans, 40% of all National Basketball Association (NBA) fans, 41% of all National Football League (NFL) fans, and 36% of all National Hockey League (NHL) fans. While these numbers are lower than their male counterpart, women still constitute a significant portion of all big four North American sports leagues' fan bases.

While the reported numbers differ slightly amongst the literature, in 2014 the FSTA claimed that 80% of all fantasy sport participants are male, and two years earlier Ruihley & Billings (2012) stated that the male gender dominates fantasy sports with as much as 90% of all total participants being male consumers. With such large female fan bases for all major league sports it is odd that so relatively few female sports fans play fantasy sports, a game derived from the very sports these women are fans of.

Numerous studies have been conducted on fantasy sport participants. Many of these studies have been conducted with student samples, including Davis & Duncan, 2006; Farquhar & Meeds, 2007; and Lee, Kwak, Lim, Pedersen, & Miloch, 2011. However, two sources, the FSTA (2014) and Levy (2005), present a larger more representative sample.

Consequently, these two sources will be used to provide a snapshot of the overall user profile of fantasy sport participants.

The FSTA (2014) found that the average age of the fantasy sport consumer is 34 years old. This number aligns closely with Levy (2005) where an average age of 36.9 and a median age of 35 was found with a standard deviation of 10.75. This further indicates that roughly 70% of the sample of fantasy sport participants is between the ages of 25 and 48 (Levy, 2005).

Similar to the gender demographic, when looking at race, research by both Levy (2005), and the FSTA have found that fantasy sports are predominantly a pastime for Caucasian consumers. The FSTA (2014) found their sample to be 89.8% white and in Levy's study, 93.7% of all fantasy sport participants self-identified as white.

When looking at the education levels of fantasy sport participants it is quite clear that the average fantasy consumer has achieved a higher education level than the national (American) average. Levy (2005) found that in his sample of 1145 fantasy sport enthusiasts, 31.4% of participants had received post graduate education, 37.3% of participants were college graduates, 23.6% of participants had some college or trade school, 5.4% had high school as their highest education, and finally, just 2.3% of participants had less than high school as their self-identified educational attainment. When comparing these findings to those by the FSTA's (2014) industry survey, the FSTA reported slightly lower overall levels of education, yet revealed some close similarities as well. One of the major similarities is that in the FSTA's (2014) sample, 78.1% of respondents had received at least a college degree. In Levy's (2005) sample, 70% of the sample had received a college degree. Since only 30% of Americans over the

age of 25 hold a four-year college degree (U.S. Census, 2012), fantasy sports clearly have a greater appeal to those who have received post-secondary education.

The FSTA's (2014) found that the average household income of fantasy sport participants was found to be \$94,000 (USD). In the study conducted by Levy (2005) before students are removed, the median and mean household income levels are both located above \$75,000 (USD). After students are removed from the equation, the mean household income of the sample is \$91,377 (USD).

It is interesting to note that 75% of individuals play fantasy sports within their social circle (Dwyer, 2011), 83% of fantasy sport users consider themselves avid fans (Nesbit & King, 2010), and according to Dwyer (2011), dropout rates in fantasy sports are as low as 3.4%. Given such a low dropout rate, coupled with the apparent surge in fantasy sport participation (FSTA, 2008), it is quite apparent that fantasy sports will continue to be part of sport culture for the foreseeable future.

When summarizing the user profile information gathered from the literature, the profile of the average fantasy user becomes clearer. The literature suggests that the average fantasy sports consumer is a white, approximately 34-37 year-old male, who has attained either a college or post-graduate degree, and has a household income of approximately \$90,000 (USD) a year.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

The literature review will provide an analysis of previous studies relating to fantasy sports and will look at the factors that motivate individuals to participate in fantasy sports. The first topic, fantasy sports, will be reviewed from multiple perspectives, including the influence on consumption and loyalty. The second topic, fantasy sport motivation, will present a framework for fantasy sport motivation analysis which will be compared to other similar frameworks. The third topic, sport fandom motivation and gender will be analyzed and compared across the literature. Finally the literature review will briefly highlight some of the female sport fan literature the researcher discovered in order to gain a more a more holistic view of the female sport fan.

Fantasy Sports

Although the study of fantasy sports is still in its early stages of academic development (Farquhar and Meeds, 2007; Levy, 2005; Lomax, 2006; Ruihley & Hardin, 2011), the fantasy sport literature has taken multiple distinct paths of research, including motivation to compete (Dwyer & Kim, 2011; Dwyer, Shapiro, & Drayer, 2011; Farquhar & Meeds, 2007; Roy & Goss, 2007; Spinda & Haridakis, 2008), marketing (Dwyer, 2011; Drayer, Shapiro, Dwyer, Morse, & White, 2010; Leporini, 2006), competitive fandom (Halverson & Halverson, 2008), masculinity (Davis & Duncan, 2006), the moderating role of perceived knowledge (Lee, Kwak, Lim, Pedersen, & Miloch, 2011), loyalty (Dwyer, 2011), history (Lomax, 2006), media interactivity (Schirato, 2012), the role of fantasy sports as a complement to traditional sport consumption (Drayer, Shapiro, Dwyer, Morse, & White, 2010; Karg & McDonald, 2011; Nesbit & King, 2010), and is

also present within popular literature (Walker, 2006). This study will focus on the literature addressing why individuals decide to consume fantasy sports.

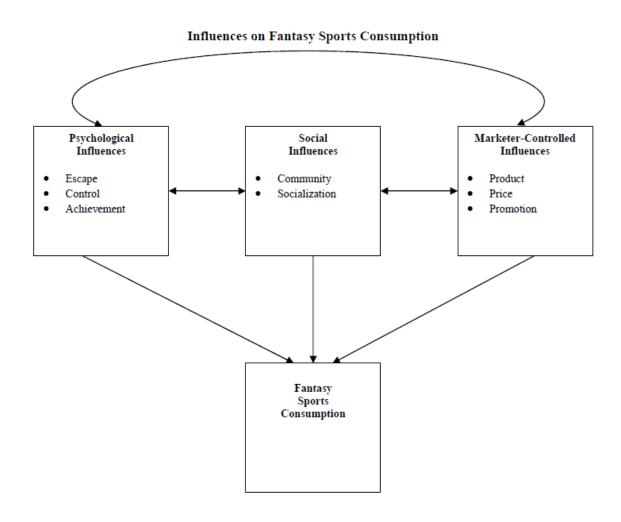
Fantasy Sport Motivation

An individual's decision to participate in a fantasy sports league is influenced by a myriad of factors. Similar to any decision regarding consumption, both internal and external factors will come into play. In the past ten years, great progress has been made in the study of the motivational factors behind participation in fantasy sports. Researchers from many different fields such as gaming, (Halverson & Halverson, 2008), gambling (Lee, Kwak, Lim, Pedersen, & Miloch, 2011), gender studies (Davis & Duncan, 2006), marketing (Dwyer, Shapiro, & Drayer, 2011; Roy & Goss, 2007) communications (Farquhar & Meeds, 2007) and fan behaviour (Spinda & Haridakis, 2008) have delved into the motivational factors that relate to fantasy sport.

A challenge when trying to synergize any literature is sorting through the confusion that occurs when multiple authors are using different labels, all of which are being used to describe similar phenomena. Since the research on fantasy sport motivation is coming from many diverse fields of study, it is only natural that the researchers have their own unique terminology specific to their field. Therefore, although the research that has been conducted on fantasy sport motivation has taken place in many different fields which each contain their own terminology, in the end, almost all of the findings can be grouped into the same major categories for analysis.

One of the most clear and concise frameworks for understanding the factors that motivate fantasy sport participation is the Influences on Fantasy Sport Consumption Framework (Figure 1.) developed by Roy & Goss (2007). According to their study, the

overarching categories that contribute to fantasy sport participation include psychological influences, social influences, and marketer-controlled influences. Within these three categories fall multiple individual items. The umbrella of psychological influences includes escape, control, and achievement. Social influences include community and socialization. Finally, marketer controlled influences include product, price and promotion (Roy & Goss, 2007).



Psychological influences are the individual characteristics that can affect one's decision to participate in fantasy sports (Roy & Goss, 2007). The variables within the psychological influences include: "the ability to exert *control*; the desire to *escape* from

reality; and the feelings of *achievement* experienced after success in competitive play" (Roy & Goss, 2007, p.99).

Control. The variable of control involves the positive feeling derived from the sense of being in power. Roy and Goss (2007) are not the only scholars to identify control as a contributing variable to fantasy sport participation. Levy (2005) and Spinda & Haridakis (2008) have also included the variable of control within their fantasy sport motivational factors. When playing fantasy sports, participants have the opportunity to become 'owners' of a sport franchise and are in charge of making all decisions regarding their team. Decisions including drafting players at the start of the season, acquiring players from other owners of fantasy teams via trades, and claiming players from free agent talent pools provide fantasy team owners opportunities to experience what it would be like to be a general manager of a major league team (Davis & Duncan, 2000; Levy, 2005).

While other authors such as Karg & McDonald (2011) suggest that knowledge is its own variable, the Roy and Goss (2007) framework has knowledge intertwined with the variable of control. According to Roy & Goss (2007), the accumulation of "knowledge is highly correlated with the control experienced by fantasy team owners" (p.99). Their work suggests that the more information or knowledge one possesses about their team roster, the more confident they will become. This leads to stronger feelings of control when making decisions regarding their respective teams.

Escape. Sport has long been known to provide an opportunity for individuals to forget their daily challenges and momentarily 'get away from it all' (James & Ridinger, 2002; Kim & Trail, 2010; Wann, 1995; Wann, Schrader, & Wilson, 1999). The motive of

escape is prevalent across all demographic groups and is not limited to any one age group, income level, or occupation (Roy & Goss, 2007). Fantasy sports are an ideal setting for escapism as owners can become fully immersed in professional sports, making decisions that are usually reserved only for general managers of professional teams.

Achievement. The final variable within the psychological influences is achievement. It can be said that the need for achievement can be met through the competitive nature of fantasy sports. According to Roy & Goss (2007), who reference Heckhausen (1967), achievement motivation is "the striving to increase, or keep as high as possible, one's own capability in all activities in which a standard of excellence is thought to apply and where the execution of such activities can, therefore, either succeed or fail" (p.4). The achievement variable is visible in most fantasy sport motivation studies (Karg & McDonald, 2011) but is sometimes deposited under another label such as self-esteem (Spinda & Haridakis, 2008), or bragging rights (Levy, 2005).

Playing fantasy sports produces opportunities for competition not only by having competitors compete with each other for a final overall prize, but also for weekly matchups in head to head leagues (Davis & Duncan, 2006) and side 'prop' bets such as the "Home Run King of the Week" available on Yahoo! Sports (Yahoo, 2012).

Additionally, the possibility of extrinsic rewards are also known to be a factor related to achievement (Dwyer & Kim, 2011; Lee, Kwak, Lim, Pedersen, & Miloch, 2011). These extrinsic rewards can range from prize money, to the winner's name engraved on a trophy.

While there are many ways to 'achieve', one way that is not often mentioned is strengthening skills. According to Bernhard & Eade (2005) fantasy sport participants

strengthen their analytical skills and problem solving abilities through analyzing their fantasy sport teams. Therefore while seeking achievement, participants may be actually honing their intellectual skills that can be applied within reality.

According to Roy and Goss (2007) the social influences on fantasy sport consumption include the variables of community and socialization. Roy and Goss (2007) base their social influence variables on the work of Holt (1995). Holt (1995) suggests that consumption can be considered play when there is a desire to interact with fellow consumers. The social influences suggested by Holt (1995) that apply to fantasy sport include both the variables of community and socialization.

Community. Participating in fantasy sports provides many opportunities for individuals to engage in communities with like minded sport fans who are not in their immediate social network. Both public and private leagues allow for participants to converge, creating communities where the focal interest shared amongst group members is fantasy sports. Most individuals in private fantasy sport leagues play with individuals within their social groups. This suggests that a form of community may already be established and that fantasy sports may be a forum in which to continue or augment already recognized communities. In public leagues, individuals can sign up to play fantasy sports against other fantasy sport participants with whom they may have had no prior interaction. The tools offered by the fantasy sport provider, such as online drafts, forums, 'smack talk', and the use of emails all help develop a community enriched environment (Yahoo! Sports, 2012). These tools are especially important for community building in public leagues where participants may have never had prior interaction.

Fantasy sports also provide a means of communing through the shaping of one's

identity (Roy & Goss, 2007). Similar to how one would identify that they are a fan of a certain team (Wann et al. 2001), participants often identify as being a fantasy sport participant in general. Furthermore, Roy & Goss (2007) suggest that identifying with fantasy sports can become an aspect in one's identity and assist in gaining acceptance within communities with related interests. Though the variable community was not found in many studies on its own, it was mentioned in Davis and Duncan (2006) as bonding, and is more commonly grouped with the other *social influence* variable within the Roy and Goss (2007) framework: socialization (Karg & McDonald, 2011; Spinda & Haridakis, 2008).

Socialization. The literature suggests that the opportunity to interact with others in previously established social networks is a strong influence on fantasy sport consumption (Karg & McDonald, 2011; Roy & Goss, 2007; Spinda & Haridakis, 2008). Roy and Goss (2007) note that the role of socialization may be more important than the role of sport for some private leagues. To illustrate this point they give the example of a fantasy sports league established by a group of former college classmates who may be more motivated to participate in the fantasy sports because of social affiliation (staying in touch with former classmates), rather than sports.

The role of socialization is also related to the family variable as presented by Wann, Schrader, & Wilson (1999). As family offers an established social network, it provides an environment that is ideal for socialization.

The final characteristic that motivates individuals to participate in fantasy sports are marketer-controlled influences. The marketer-controlled influences are influences on potential consumers made with the use of the marketing mix decisions relating to

product, price, and promotion (Roy & Goss, 2007).

Product. When looking at the motivation to participate in fantasy sports the product variable includes the branding of the game, the multiple game formats, and the layout of the user experience (Roy & Goss, 2007). The branding associated with fantasy sports has the ability to impact the perceived value of the service offered (Aaker, 1996; Keller 1993). When looking at fantasy sports, the perceived quality and credibility of the game offered depends on the strategy and successfulness of the marketers involved. The cobranding of MLB.com's Fantasy Sports and Bloomberg Sports is a great example of a fantasy sports provider teaming up with an analytics company in order to provide the best possible statistical data for their fantasy sport consumers. This strategy allows Bloomberg Sports an opportunity to team up with the marquee baseball property, while at the same time MLB is able to provide their customers with superior data (MLB.com, 2012).

The availability of multiple game formats can also affect the desirability of the fantasy product. When a provider offers an array of fantasy sport variations, such as the aforementioned roto-scoring system, salary cap system, or any form of keeper league (keeper leagues allow teams to keep players from one fantasy season to the next), it allows the consumer the ability to choose any style of game they wish to play.

The final attribute of the product variable is the design of the user experience.

Originally, as noted by Roy and Goss (2007), fantasy sports were conducted solely via face-to-face interactions. The arrival of fantasy sports on the internet also introduced the need for a positive user interface for participants to interact with. This has led marketers to provide many user interface options to the fantasy sport participant, including customizable team logos, colour schemes, and presentation of statistical data. The

presentation of statistical data is of utmost importance to highly-involved fantasy sport participants. Participants use this statistical data to assess players in order to make the best possible decisions regarding team lineups and trade proposals and to monitor both their individual status and the status of other teams in the league (Roy & Goss, 2007). Almost all fantasy sport providers, including many of the larger providers (Yahoo! Sports, CBS Sports, ESPN.com) have acknowledged this thirst for data and now provide in-depth statistical analysis and player profiles on top of their basic statistical information for a monetary cost. The availability of group message boards or forums may also enhance the fantasy sport product presented. Message boards allow for individuals to talk to all other fantasy sport users in order to discuss trade proposals, strategies, brag, ask for help, or even just to fulfill participant's socialization and communing needs (Roy & Goss, 2007).

Price. The pricing of fantasy sports offerings has had a large impact on the consumption habits of fantasy sport participants. Since many of the major fantasy sport providers such as Yahoo! Sports, CBS Sports, ESPN, and all of the North American major leagues including MLB, NBA, NFL, and the NHL provide a form of free fantasy sports on their websites, many new participants are willing to play since there are no financial risks involved (Roy & Goss, 2007). These free games are essential for the fantasy sport industry to be able to attract new customers. Free fantasy sport offerings also serve the purpose of guiding individuals to sponsors websites in order to drive ad revenues (Fisher, 2006). Since fantasy sport participants may check their rosters and research players multiple times a day, the ad revenues accumulated from upwards of 32 million participants can be quite significant (Dwyer, 2011). In addition to the free fantasy

sport games that are offered, companies often also offer fantasy games in which individuals must pay a set monetary amount in order to partake. The consumers who are involved with these pay-for-play fantasy games often have higher involvement and are more experienced participants (Roy & Goss, 2007). Many of the pay-for-play leagues pool the initial entry fee money and offer cash prizes for the winners at the conclusion of the season. Through offering both free and cash fantasy sport leagues, companies are targeting the light and heavy fantasy sport consumers.

Promotion. Fantasy sport providers use promotional programs in order to both entice individuals to participate in their fantasy sport offerings and to reward game play (Roy & Goss, 2007). Fantasy sport providers wish to attract consumers to purchase their offered products. One of the standard promotions used in order to do this is discounting the price of the product. Other, non-pricing promotions used to get individuals to participate in fantasy sport are draft parties, celebrity endorsements, product placements, and cross promotions. Rewarding game play is another way fantasy sport providers try to promote their offerings. Depending on whether the league is free or costs money to play will largely affect the prize offered to the winner at the conclusion of the season. Free fantasy sports leagues often do not offer any prizes other than the pride and bragging rights associated with winning. For many, this allows them to fulfill their psychological need of achievement, while simultaneously permitting them the ability to partake in fulfilling the needs for socialization and community through bragging to the others within their fantasy sport league (Roy & Goss, 2007; Spinda & Haridakis, 2008). The monetary prizes offered for fantasy sports are normally directly correlated to the entry fee associated with playing. With this being said, prizes range from \$200 for a \$14.95 entry

fee (CBS Sports, 2012), to \$100,000 for a \$1,400 entry fee (nfbc.stats.com, 2012). With such a wide array of costs and rewards, the fantasy sports industry appeals to a large range of consumers.

Sport Fandom Motivation and Gender

The motivation to participate in fantasy sport has now been broken down into the three categories of psychological, social, and marketer-controlled influences, and further into their distinct subcategories. Although these categories are known to be the motivational factors for fantasy sport participation, there is some ambiguity within the literature as to how each gender is individually motivated to follow sport in general by the psychological, social, and marketer-controlled influences, and the subcategories within them.

Multiple scholars have attempted to uncover the gender-based motivational differences within sport fan behaviour (Funk & James, 2001; Grantz & Wenner, 1995; James & Ridinger, 2002; Ridinger & Funk, 2006; Robinson & Trail., 2005; Sargent et al., 1998; Wann, 1995; Wann et al., 1999). Within this sample, most scholars focused on either comparing male and female collegiate sport fans (James & Ridinger, 2002; Robinson & Trail, 2005), or male and female fans of women's professional sports (Funk & James, 2001; Lough & Irwin, 2001; Lough & Kim, 2004). Since this study is centered on female sport fans, and their motivation to consume North American professional sport fantasy leagues, these studies do not fit well with the current research.

The Sport Fan Motivation Scale (SFMS) developed by Wann (1995) and expanded on in Wann (1997) and Wann, Schrader, & Wilson (1999) obtains a depiction of the differences in consumption motivation for both the male and female sports fan. The

SFMS is based on previous research which revealed that there are eight common motives for fandom: eustress (a positive form of stress that stimulates and energizes an individual, Wann et al., 1999), self-esteem (Branscombe & Wann, 1991), escape (fans who are dissatisfied or bored with their life may be able to temporarily forget about their troubles through sport fandom, Wann et al., 1999), entertainment (Gantz & Wenner, 1995), economic (individuals influenced by the economic motivation are motivated by the ability to gamble on events, Gantz & Wenner, 1995), aesthetic (the beauty and grace that is found in athletic performances (Smith, 1988; Wann et al., 1999), group affiliation (desire to be with other people, Branscombe & Wann, 1991), and family (Gantz & Wenner, 1995). While the escape motive is represented in both the SFMS and the Roy and Goss "Framework of Influences on Fantasy Sport Consumption", the other seven items can be easily related to the existing items within the presented framework. The factors eustress and self-esteem fit within the psychological influences, with eustress relating to achievement and self-esteem relating to control. The social variable of group affiliation found in Wann et al. (1999) is comparable to the social influence of community. Socialization as presented in Roy and Goss (2007) is related to the family variable found in Wann et al. (1999). Lastly, the entertainment and economic factors are related to the marketer controlled influences. Entertainment relates to both product and promotion and economic factors directly relates to achievement.

In total, five unique studies were completed using the SFMS. These studies had varying degrees of sample heterogeneity, focused on different types of sports, (individual compared to team, aggressive compared to non-aggressive) and finally examined the relationship between sport fan motivation and athlete motivation (Wann et al., 1999).

These studies had multiple conclusions. The researchers found that males obtained higher degrees of eustress and self-esteem through being a sports fan. They also found that males were motivated to become a fan more because of the aesthetics of sports in comparison to females. Finally, females were found to score higher on the item regarding family. Males and females were not said to exhibit significant differences in the items of escape, entertainment, economic, or group affiliation (Wann et al., 1999).

Female Sport Fans

Once this baseline understanding of gender and the motivational influence it has on sport fandom was established, the researcher believed it would be beneficial to further explore the female sport literature in order to grasp a more holistic view of the female sport fan. While many female sport fans studies were investigated, including: women as sport consumers (Branch, 1995), the commodified female sport fan (Wenner, 2012), self-identification in female sport fans (Obel, 2012), what it means to be a "hot" or "cool" female sport fan (Pope 2012), women's sexual objectification of sportsmen's bodies (Toffoletti & Mewett, 2012), predicting sport fan motivation using anatomical sex and gender role orientation (Wann & Waddill, 2003), and brand image and consume image congruence (Barnes & Lough, 2006), one study of particular relevance is Ruihley and Billings (2012) which attempted to understand the motivational differences between men's and women's fantasy sport participation.

Ruihley and Billings conducted a quantitative survey comparing a sample of 348 male and 182 female fantasy sport consumers. The study found that many of the motivational factors involved in fantasy sport consumption were the same for both men and women, with the top three factors of enjoyment, entertainment and surveillance being

the same for both genders. The most prominent finding was in regard to the motivational factors enjoyment and passing time, in which men scored significantly higher than women. Ruihley and Billings (2012) suggest that future work should be conducted in order to ascertain why the differences between the each genders motivation to participate in fantasy sports exist and furthermore whether women players experience barriers to their play enjoyment that men do not experience. While Ruihley and Billings (2012) research studied both male and female sport fans who currently participate in fantasy sports, the current study aims to focus on building an understanding female sport fans who currently do not participate in fantasy sports.

This female sport fan literature will be readdressed in the Results section as it will prove helpful in the attempt to understand female sports fans and their under-representation in fantasy sports.

Research Question

This literature review analyzed the existing scholarly work on fantasy sports and furthermore compared multiple theories regarding the factors that motivate individuals to participate in fantasy sports. Currently, fantasy sports have between 29-32 million participants within North America (Dwyer, 2011; Fantasy Sport Trade Association, 2008; Fisher, 2006; Roy & Goss, 2007). While this is a significant number of participants, only ~20% of fantasy sport participants are women (FSTA, 2014). Knowing that women make up 36-41% of all North American big four sport fans are women (King, 2010), it begs us to ask the question: Why is there an under-representation of female participation in fantasy sports? Through understanding the reasons why female sports fans do not currently play fantasy sport, this research aims to provide recommendations for those

marketing fantasy sports to the female demographic. This in turn has the potential to greatly increase both the number of participants within fantasy sport and the amount of revenue generated through fantasy sport users.

Chapter 3 - Methodology

Method

Semi-structured, single-category-design focus groups are the source of data for this study. Interviews of this nature have a non-directive style where the main objective is to promote different perspectives on the topic being discussed (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2008). According to Bloor, Frankland, Thomas, & Robson (2001), focus groups can "throw light on the normative understandings that groups draw upon to reach their collective judgments" (p.4). It is this normative understanding that the researcher utilized in order to understand the motivational factors which lead to non-participation in fantasy sport.

The participants of this study were selected using purposive sampling. According to Patton (2002), the reason qualitative researchers use purposive sampling is because this type of sampling allows the researcher to select information-rich participants which will allow for rich data. Female sports fans were purposefully recruited through multiple mediums including advertising through posters, emails, and personal solicitation. These mediums allowed the researcher to communicate the purpose of the research with potential participants and answer any follow up questions either by email or by personal communication.

Focus groups. Focus groups have been utilized as the sole data collection method in many studies involving sport, including Blom, Hardy, Burke, & Joyner (2003), Johnson, Tillgren, & Hagstromer (2009), Oliver, Hardy, & Markland (2010), Slater & Tiggermann (2010), Smith & Ingham (2003), and Whitehead & Biddle (2008). When comparing the methods in these six sport consumer studies, the number of focus groups used in each study ranged from four (Oliver et al., 2010; Johnson et al., 2009) to eight

(Whitehead & Biddle, 2008), and the studies had between 27 (Johnson et al., 2009) and 49 (Slater & Tiggermann, 2010) total participants.

According to Krueger & Casey (2009), "the accepted rule of thumb is to plan three or four focus groups with each type or category of individual" (p.21). Since the participants are very homogenous, being segmented by gender and the fact that they are all sports fans, the researcher believes the participants are less than moderately diverse. It is believed this homogeneity would reduce the number of focus groups needed before theoretical saturation (as described by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in Morgan (1998)).

While noting the range evident within the six presented sport consumer focus group studies, for the purpose of this study the researcher planned to have a total of five focus groups consisting of five to eight participants, for a total of 25 to 40 participants. Through having a range of 25 to 40 participants, this study aimed to satisfy the suggestions of Kruger & Casey (2009) while also following the precedent set by multiple sport related academic focus groups in the past decade.

Focus group demographics. A total of five focus groups were conducted. Focus groups ranged in size from four to ten participants for a total of 35 focus group participants. Through falling within the range of 25 to 40 participants, this study satisfies the suggestions of Kruger & Casey (2009) while also following the precedent set by multiple sport-related academic focus groups in the past decade (Blom, Hardy, Burke, & Joyner, 2003; Johnson, Tillgren, & Hagstromer, 2009; Oliver, Hardy, & Markland, 2010; Slater & Tiggermann, 2010; Smith & Ingham, 2003, & Whitehead & Biddle, 2008). Three out of the five focus groups succeeded in satisfying the range of five to eight participants with the other two focus groups extending the range in both directions, at

four and ten participants respectively. Although two out of five focus groups did not fall into the range of five to eight participants, the fact that the focus groups had both one less participant and two more participant than recommended had negligible effect on the proceedings and overall outcome of the focus groups. As the data collected from the two outlying focus groups was as content rich as the other three focus groups, it was logical to include them within the data analysis.

The focus group participants ranged from 18 to 27 years old, with a mean age of 20.7, and the majority of the participants (28 out of 35) had some college or university education. The focus group participants were predominately university students, many with part-time or full-time jobs. The sample that was recruited turned out to be fairly homogenous; this has the potential for both negative and positive effects. The negative effect of having a homogenous sample is that it decreases the transferability of the study to other contexts. In this case, the positive effect is that the results will directly reflect the homogenous sample, resulting in a rich understanding of a specific demographic. In this case, college and university educated female sport fans. As this is one of the first qualitative studies regarding the motivating factors surrounding female fantasy sport participation, obtaining a rich understanding of one demographic may prove to be as beneficial as gaining a general overview of the entire female sport fan population.

Research assistant. It was advantageous for the study to have a research assistant present for both the preparation and execution of the focus groups. When recruiting for this position there were certain qualities that were viewed as assets. First, it was very beneficial for the research assistant to be female. Kruger and Casey (2009) state that the gender of the moderator has the ability to inhibit communication within the study.

Therefore, as the focus groups were composed of all female members, having a female research assistant may have provided some comfort to the participants of the study. Having a female's perspective when developing the focus group questions and organizing the focus groups was an advantage. According to Neuman & Robson (2012) the visible characteristics of the interviewer, including race and gender may influence the focus group participants' responses; especially those concerning race and gender. As the lead moderator was male, the female assistant moderator was utilized for questions regarding fantasy sports and its relation to gender. At the conclusion of each focus group the research assistant and the lead moderator had debriefing sessions where an open discussion was held. This allowed for the lead moderator to obtain a females perspective of the proceedings of the focus group.

For the purpose of this study the research assistant did not receive monetary payment, but instead received course credit towards the completion of her degree. The research assistant was also required to sign a general statement of confidentiality (Appendix A) to ensure that all data that was collected remained confidential.

Recruitment. In order to recruit the focus group participants, purposive sampling was used. Purposive sampling is a type of non-random sampling in which the researcher uses a wide range of methods to locate possible cases of a highly specific and difficult to reach population. As female sport fans who do not participate in fantasy sport were recruited for this study, purposive sampling was used (Neuman & Robson, 2012). In order to contact potential participants, posters, websites, and recruitment via intermediaries were used.

Posters were employed in order to advertise to the general population. They are non-invasive, to the point, and can carry a large amount of information. This study utilized posters for both on and off-campus solicitation. Recruitment posters (Appendix B) were posted in key areas throughout Brock University in order to best accumulate participants for the study. Key areas included high traffic corridors and areas in which athletics are conducted. Posters were placed in areas athletics are conducted under the assumption that those who participate in sports may enjoy being a fan of sports as well. Posters were also placed on bulletin boards throughout the greater St. Catharines community.

Within this study, websites were also used as a recruitment tool. Two sites were used in order to help recruit potential participants: Kijiji.ca and facebook.com. Kijiji.ca is a multifaceted website. One of the many options which Kijiji.ca offers is a message board focused on communities. This was utilized to inform and recruit potential participants. Facebook.com is a social media website that allows for mass communication among millions of users. Using Facebook.com, the researcher was able to directly target specific individuals and groups with relative ease.

Announcements in Brock University undergraduate classes were also made in order to recruit participants. Simple announcements in class relating to the purpose, method, and monetary components of the study helped spark curiosity for certain participants who may not otherwise have been interested in participating.

While the use of posters and websites is fairly straight-forward, the recruitment of participants through intermediaries deserves additional attention. Recruitment of participants via intermediaries according to Bloor et al. (2001) "can occur in snowball

sampling, for example, where an eligible individual is approached by the researcher at a chosen recruitment site and the individual is then willing to recruit eligible members of their own existing network to take part in the research" (p.31). Due to the advantage of reduction in recruitment effort, and the ability to penetrate social networks (Bloor et al., 2001), recruitment via intermediaries was used.

Requirements. In order to participate in the study the participants were required to be female and a major league sports fan. For the purpose of this study a sports fan is any individual who self identifies as a sports fan. This is in accordance with Wann, Schrader, & Wilson (1999), who state that individuals who are motivated by one or more of eustress, self-esteem, escape, entertainment, aesthetics, or group affiliation will tend to view themselves as sports fans.

The focus groups commenced the third week of November 2012, and ran until January 2013. Once a potential participant showed interest in partaking in the study, they were asked to choose one of the potential focus group dates to commit to. Individuals recruited in person as well as through other means received an email drafted by the researcher. It outlined the purpose of the study along with the dates of the focus groups.

There is a limit to the degree of control the researcher has over the respondents (Bloor et al., 2001), but every effort possible was made to ensure the participants came to the focus group. This included the use of email and telephone to communicate the time, date, and location of the focus group as well as monetary compensation. The moderator emailed the recruited participants initially, describing the time, date, and location of the focus group they were to participate in. The same information was also emailed exactly two days before the focus group was to take place, except in this email an 'RSVP' was

also included in order to confirm the participant was coming to the focus group. If the participant did not have an email address, this information was transferred by telephone. In the situation that a recruited participant did not respond to the RSVP, a telephone call was made to that individual in order to confirm their participation in the focus group.

In order to increase the likelihood of large focus groups, monetary payments were made to all participants. According to Bloor et al. (2001), "it is quite usual to offer participants a small amount of money to cover any 'out-of-pocket' expenses incurred as a result of attending the group" (p.34). Research done by the Rodgers Marketing Research in Canton, Ohio found that 66% of those surveyed indicated compensation as the main motivator for participation (Krueger & Casey, 2009). In this study, participants received \$20 for their time and expenses. According to Kruger & Casey (2009), eating as a group tends to promote conversation and communication. Therefore, refreshments were provided for all of the study participants. The refreshments were placed on a table to the side of the room to allow easy accessibility for all participants.

Preparing for focus groups. Preparation for the focus groups included creating or gathering tangible materials such as informed consent forms, name tags, audio recorders, beverages, pens, paper, and the monetary compensation for the participants. Intangible preparations included a pre-session strategy, having a plan to deal with people who were not invited, a focus group questioning strategy, and finally creating a conclusion that ties together everything that has happened throughout the focus group.

All participants were asked to complete an informed consent letter (*Appendix C*) when they arrived at the focus group. Both the moderator and assistant were able to field any questions pertaining to the study. Name tags were created for the participants in the

focus group. The name tags were placed on the table immediately before the start of the focus group. The participants were strategically placed around a table in keeping with the suggestions of Kruger & Casey (2009). The moderator and assistant observed the participants before the beginning of the session in order to note who dominated the group, who considered themselves knowledgeable, and if anyone seemed shy or intimidated. The moderator and assistant then strategically placed each participant's name tag on the table in order to encourage productive discussion. Individuals who may have dominated the conversation were seated directly beside the moderator; this way, if the participant was controlling the conversation the moderator could slightly turn their body away from the participant and openly welcome others' contributions. Participants who may be shy were placed directly across from the moderator in order to create maximum eye contact.

The focus group was audio recorded for later transcription and coding. For each of the five focus groups two digital audio recorders were used simultaneously to capture the discussions. Two digital recorders were used in case there were any technical or human errors that impaired or damaged the data collected from the focus groups. All audio recordings were transferred onto two password protected data storage devices, for which only the principal researcher had the password. Participants in the study were informed of the recording of the focus group both on the informed consent letter and directly before the focus group. Pens and paper were available to all participants. This allowed them to write down thoughts, comments, questions or anything else that they felt was important during the focus group.

Compensation. At the completion of the focus groups all participants received monetary compensation enclosed within an envelope. These envelopes were of standard

legal size and had the name of each participant on the front. Participants were required to sign a form (Appendix D) indicating that they received the monetary compensation.

These receipts were kept in a locked filing cabinet until the completion of the study. Once the study was completed the receipts were shredded and properly disposed of in order to ensure participant confidentiality.

Welcoming participants. What happens before the focus group sets the tone for the entire discussion (Kruger & Casey, 2009). Therefore it was the role of the moderator as well as the assistant to welcome participants and make them feel comfortable. This involved welcoming the participants at the door, introducing them to everyone in the room, and engaging in small talk. Kruger & Casey (2009) suggest not bringing up topics that could cause debate such as politics, religion, or a controversial topic in the media. During this time period the moderator and assistant also assisted the participants in filling out the informed consent letter which is required for participation in the focus group. Participants were also informed that the researchers would be willing to send them a written report when the study was completed.

Questions. The primary researcher's role in this focus group setting was that of the moderator. During focus groups, the moderator worked with the participants in order to find out their reactions to the phenomenon in question. The moderator used open-ended questions which appeared spontaneous to the participants, but were actually carefully developed and contained considerable input from the literature review (Krueger & Casey, 2009).

All questions asked within the focus group were open-ended in nature and applied to the answering of the research questions. Krueger and Casey (2009) outline five types

of questions moderators can follow when conducting focus groups. These types include the opening question, introductory questions, transition questions, key questions, and ending questions (Appendix E).

The purpose of the opening question was to get everyone to talk early in the discussion. It was designed to be easy to answer, with facts rather than opinions. The opening question was not a discussion question, but rather an opportunity for participants to get comfortable with the group. It was important to not highlight power or status inequities among participants in these questions as they could harm the organic flow of future discussion (Krueger & Casey, 2009).

Introductory questions should introduce the subject of discussion and require the participants to start engaging with their connection to the topic. They are commonly open-ended and deal with the product or service at hand. An example of this would be a researcher asking the focus group, "what comes to mind when I mention this product?" (Kreuger & Casey, 2009)

Transition questions served as links between the introductory questions and the key questions. The purpose of these questions was to allow everyone to see how others felt about the topic, and to allow participants to discuss their experiences with the topic.

The key questions should drive the study. These questions should gather the most amount of information for analysis by asking questions regarding the crux of the topic. Key questions can take anywhere from 10 to 20 minutes each.

Ending questions should bring closure to the discussion. They should allow participants to reflect upon their experiences and are critical to analysis. Two types of ending questions were valuable: the summary question, and the "all things considered"

question. At the end of the focus group, the moderator briefly summarized the main points brought forward during the discussion and asked the participants if the summary reflected the discussion that had taken place. This is when participants were allowed to correct the views of the moderators and help guide the future analysis of the focus group. The moderator asked the participants, "Have we missed anything?" This allowed the participants to bring up any thoughts that were not directly addressed during the discussion, but may still be important to the study. Shortly after the conclusion of the focus group, the moderator sent out letters thanking the participants for their contribution to this study (Appendix F).

Limitations

Limitations are "shortcomings, conditions or influences that cannot be controlled by the researcher" (Soicher, 2010). The researcher is aware of several limitations in this study:

- 1) Researching non-consumers;
- 2) Novice moderator;
- 3) Male researching females

This study is focused on why female sport fans do not participate in fantasy sports, therefore it is inevitable the study will be examining non-consumers. Since non-consumers are being studied, it was expected that during the focus group there could be an overall lack of knowledge on the subject. At times this lack of knowledge led to moments of silence within the focus group. While the focus group participants were not knowledgeable in regards to fantasy sports, they were knowledgeable about sports. The common interest of sport provided the moderator a foundation through which he could

foster social group interaction, in-turn decreasing the possible negative effects of group silences.

The fact that the lead researcher for this study was a novice moderator was also seen as an unavoidable limitation. Kruger & Casey (2009) suggest that "interviewing looks deceptively simple, but it requires mental discipline, preparation and group interaction skills" (p.85). In order to combat this limitation the principal researcher conducted a pilot focus group in order to gain experience conducting focus groups, and also to test the focus group questions. Although conducting one pilot focus group by no means made the researcher a focus group expert, the pilot study did allow the researcher to gain a basic understanding of focus group moderation that was further developed with every subsequent focus group.

The final limitation that cannot be controlled by the researcher is that a male researcher is studying female participants. For this reason a female research assistant was brought into the study in order to provide a level of comfort to the focus group participants and to provide insight on the female prospective of the focus group findings.

Data Analysis

The conversations from the focus groups were transcribed and used as data.

According to Kitzinger (1994) in Bloor et al. (2001), the process of focus group interview transcription results in data which may include instances where people talk simultaneously, where sentences are not finished, where people contradict themselves and others, where people's arguments develop throughout the focus group, and where people misinterpret others' comments and take the discussion off on tangents. Bloor et al. (2001) state that editing should be kept to a minimum at the transcription stage as an

exact copy of the speech is required for the purpose of analysis.

In accordance with Bloor et al. (2001), the analysis was systematic and rigorous, reflecting the views of all cases, not only those that fit the researcher's agenda.

An interpretive lens was used in order to study female sort fans who do not participate in fantasy sports in order to better understand why they do not do so. In keeping with the tenets of the interpretive paradigm, data analysis was inductive and not based on a priori theory-driven hypothesis, but instead on patterns and themes uncovered in the data analysis. Kvale and Brinkmann's (2008) three step analysis of meaning coding, meaning condensation, and meaning interpretation was deemed most suitable in providing practical guidelines to best ensure rigour in the data analysis process.

The purpose of meaning coding is to develop categories that reflect the full experiences and actions of the subjects involved in the study (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2008). Since this study focused on the experiences and actions of the participants, this analysis method seemed appropriate. Meaning condensation in accordance to Kvale and Brinkmann (2008) entails taking the root meaning from longer statements expressed by the participants of the focus groups and compressing them into briefer statements which maintain meaning. Meaning condensation involves five steps which include: reading the data thoroughly, determining natural meaning units, restating themes that dominate the natural meaning unit, interrogating the meaning unit in order to tie back to purpose, and tying together the non-redundant themes (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2008). Once these steps were completed, meaning interpretation took place. The interpretation stage recontextualizes the statements within larger frames of reference rather than decontextualing them as is done when categorizing. The interpretation of the data then

led to text expansion, where the researcher found relations among meanings which may not have been discovered when coding and categorizing (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2008).

Trustworthiness. In order to ensure that the results of the study were both consistent and representative of the data, multiple techniques were used to establish trustworthiness. Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated that the basic issue of trustworthiness is simple: how can an inquirer persuade others, or themselves, that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to. Within the traditional positivistic paradigm there are numerous criteria for trustworthiness, including: internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). While these criteria are less applicable in qualitative studies, Lincoln and Guba (1985) recognized this and proposed a parallel set of trustworthiness criteria for qualitative research. The parallel set of criteria for qualitative research include: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Throughout this study trustworthiness was established through following the criteria established by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Some examples of how trustworthiness was gained include the use of rich description, and the use of research notes. Rich description was used when reporting the findings of the study in order to promote transferability. Finally, detailed research notes were created in order to assist the dependability and confirmability of the study. By heeding the suggestions of Lincoln and Guba (1985) a conscious effort was made to create trustworthiness within this study.

Ethical considerations. The use of focus group research introduced multiple ethical considerations. The ethical considerations that were most prevalent for this study all fall under the three categories of honesty, confidentiality, and conflict of interest

(Greenbaum, 1988). These three categories of ethical considerations were all addressed in the informed consent sheet that all participants read and signed in accordance with the Brock University Research Ethics Board guidelines. The researcher was honest when disclosing the fact both verbally and on the informed consent sheet that the sessions were to be digitally recorded for later transcription. Participants were notified both verbally and on the informed consent sheet that all conversations that exist within the focus group may be used as publishable data. Along with this, it was disseminated verbally and on the informed consent sheet, that participants may excuse themselves from the study at any time without consequence.

Confidentiality of participants within the transcription and the future published data was maintained through the safe storage of data and the use of pseudonyms. Data was stored on two identical universal serial bus (USB) flash drives. These data storage devices were encrypted and required a password for entry. Only the primary researcher knew the required password. This ensured the safe storage of all data being used for this study.

As stated by Bloor et al. (2001), the researcher cannot control confidentiality outside of the group setting and therefore there is the risk that information will be spread throughout pre-existing groups. Therefore, the contents of the focus group can have consequences beyond the temporal and social borders of the focus group. Steps were taken in order to increase the likelihood of complete confidentiality and comfort of the participants. First, the participants were required to sign an informed consent letter that described that all participants must be confidential with the information that they, all other participants, and the moderator discussed. Also, the confidentiality requirements

were verbally reiterated immediately before the focus group started. Furthermore, the researcher ensured the participants were aware of the topic of study before they agreed to participate in the focus group (Bloor et al., 2001). While ensuring the participants are at ease discussing the topic increased the likelihood of comfort, the researcher can never be entirely sure what direction the focus group discussion will take (Bloor et al., 2001). Therefore, the researcher took the suggestion of Bloor et al. (2001) and was prepared to be "sensitive to situations where individuals became distressed or uncomfortable and intervene where necessary" (p.26). Though the researcher was prepared, within the focus groups there was no instance where intervening was required.

Due to the fact that the study focused on non-participants of fantasy sport, there was a low level of conflict of interest presented regarding the topic of fantasy sport. Despite the low level of conflict of interest regarding the issue being studied, the potential for conflict of interest still existed in regards to power inequities. According to Neuman & Robson (2012), professional researchers and research participants are in a relationship of unequal power and trust. Researchers have power over participants, and in turn the participants trust the researchers' judgment and authority. The researcher's authority to conduct research and to earn the trust of others is paired with the ethical responsibility to protect the interests of the participants.

One conflict of interest that may have posed a challenge is the fact that the primary researcher was also a Teaching Assistant for undergraduate Sport Management courses at Brock University. Conflict has the potential to arise as the primary researcher may have a preexisting power relationship with female students within labs and seminars, the same females that may directly fit the target sample of this study. In order to minimize

potential conflict of interest, any students that the primary researcher had a power relationship with (through being a Teaching Assistant) were not eligible to participate in the study.

While there were minor ethical considerations necessary for this study, they in no way detracted from the positive accumulation of knowledge that was possible through conducting the study.

Researchers' role and reflexivity. As stated by Neuman and Robson (2012), "reflexivity is a technique for establishing confirmability in qualitative research where the researcher is self-aware of his or her influence and potential bias" (p. 288). Since the main researcher was a fantasy sport participant (Appendix G) and also the moderator within the focus groups, there was potential for the researcher to influence the participants. In order to minimize potential bias, the researcher worded and reword (in case of a misunderstanding) all questions and statements designed for the focus groups ahead of time. This helped minimize any interactions that may have potentially influenced the participants in any way.

Chapter 4 - Results

This research study was designed to answer the question, why is there an underrepresentation of female sport fans participating in fantasy sports? The primary purpose
of this study was to provide an in-depth understanding of North American big league
female sport fans in relation to fantasy sports. Specifically, this study looks at why so few
female sport fans play fantasy sports, and provides strategies that aim to increase female
participation rates. The marketing strategies suggested may not only assist those
marketing fantasy sports, but may also provide valuable insight for academics
researching female sport fans.

The previous chapter outlined the methods used to collect and analyze the data necessary for this study. This chapter will develop an understanding of the women who participated in the study in order to come to a rich understanding of their lived experiences as female sport fans. Usually, clear and concise definitions can be given in order to best understand a concept. No one definition, however, can accurately define the female sport fan experience and attempting to do so would be an attempt to diminish the existing complexities. Instead of attempting to provide a definition, a more holistic approach will be taken in order to understand the broad range of female sport fandom. An analysis of how the female focus group participants became fans of sport, the methods they use to consume sport and their motives for sport consumption will be explored. This will be followed by investigating the marketing induced influences of fantasy sports.

Once a clearer understanding of the focus group participants is obtained, we will begin to answer why there is an under-representation of female participation in fantasy sports.

Becoming a Female Sports Fan

The focus group participants indicated that they were socialized into sport fandom by the men in their lives, predominantly family members. According to Wann et al. (1999), family is the only aspect of sport fan motivation where women ranked higher than men. This study found that family does influence personal sport fandom. Fathers and brothers were found to influence females initially in their progression to sport fandom, and this continued after the female became a sport fan. Many of the participants were introduced to sport fandom through a combination of sport participation and sport spectating. In most cases, including the following, it was the father who provided ample opportunities for his daughter to participate in sport fandom:

My dad is really into sports, so he put me into baseball at four, starting with t-ball. Then he coached me all the way through rep baseball and rep basketball too. On weekends we would watch basketball as a family and I started out being like 'dad

I don't want to watch it'. He would sit us down and tell us what was going on explaining so we would know what's going on. It turned out to be really fun, we would go on trips and watch basketball tournaments, stuff like that.

As sport crosses many demographic boundaries (Wann et al., 1999), it can be seen as a valuable social tool allowing families to develop deeper connections through spending time together and having similar interests, as the following participant can attest:

With parents and siblings at a sporting event, or whether it's you are going to tournaments on weekends, it's you as a family, so you have a deeper relationship with them because you are interested in the same things. So it's about

family time if you are watching, the Stanley Cup finals, or the Toronto Maple Leafs play, or going to tournaments.

Another participant stated both her father and brothers were sport fans and that she became a sports fan in order to spend time with them.

Mine was my family I guess. I am the youngest of five children so my brothers and my dad were a big influence on me. ...[M]y older brothers were always playing sports and I always wanted to be involved and then that kind of happened, just watching sports. My dad was a fan of a team, then I became a fan of a team and wanted to hang out with him and my brothers.

In some cases, female sport fans said that in the beginning they were 'forced' to watch sports by a male figure in their life, but over time began enjoying aspects of sport spectating and sport fandom:

I think for myself I always played sports, but I didn't really become a fan until my step-dad kind of made it mandatory that we watch hockey and then it was always on, and then after that I just got really into it so I would always watch games; I went to games.

Although this individual had prior experience playing sports, in this situation it was her step-father who influenced her to watch hockey, ultimately resulting in her becoming a fan of the sport.

Becoming a sports fan through companion viewing.

A common theme that emerged from all five of the focus groups was that the majority of the female participants were introduced to sport fandom through companion viewing, as suggested by their stories above. According to Wenner (2012), companion

viewing is a common strategy of joining a sports-addicted partner in order to provide a gateway, "facilitating the 'tuition' and 'socialization' to learn and adopt social norms of fan ship" (p.137). Companion viewing allows the 'companion' to learn about sports in a non-threatening, social environment that may or may not include their own family members. While some of this 'tuition' and 'socialization' can be absorbed directly from television broadcasts, one cannot overlook the vast amounts of knowledge and enjoyment that can be gained from in person, social interactions with other sport fans.

How the Focus Group Participants Consumed Sports

Although some of the women in the focus group went to live sporting events, they primarily consumed sports through the media. Since the mid-20th century, the sports media landscape has existed almost entirely through the mediums of print, radio, and television. As the internet and smartphones have gained traction in regard to consumption, the consumption of print and radio have declined, while the significance of live sports programming on television has remained secure.

Print media. The focus group participants infrequently mentioned reading print media regarding sports. One of the study's participants who did mention print media noted that when she rode a local commuter train, she would often read the sports section of the newspaper in order to pass the time.

I know this is really old-school, but I would get information from the newspaper because I commute a lot on the [train] and if I have nothing to do there is always newspapers lying around and I don't read the news, but I will definitely read the sports section.

While only a few participants in the study read print media, almost all the participants consistently spoke of consuming television programs - in the form of games, highlight shows, or other sport programming.

Television. Television has become central to the prominence of sport. Major sporting events often draw enormous television audiences, sometimes over half the population (e.g. Olympics, World Cup Final) (Whannel, 2013). Twenty-four hour news and entertainment programming on ESPN and other sports channels provide audiences with access to live events, highlight shows, analysis, as well as stories on the personal lives of athletes. Television has in turn become a significant source of revenue for a variety of sports, opening the way to much larger earnings for sport organizations in the form of sponsorships (Whannel, 2013).

Over the past decade technology has rapidly changed the way we consume sports on television. The advent of high definition televisions has made the home viewing experience one that rivals the benefits of actually going to live events. For the focus group participants, television was one of the primary sources used to supplement their sport fandom. Though many of the women watched sports by themselves, many enjoyed watching sports in a group setting.

Group affiliation was a popular reason participants in the focus groups got together in order to spectate sports. For some female fans the group affiliation aspect of watching televised sport was just as much of a motivation factor as the sport itself. One focus group participant acknowledged this phenomena when she stated, "We enjoy getting together with friends and watching games, that camaraderie, that excitement of going to games and watching on T.V., but not the details of every game and who loses to who".

Companionship viewing. While most men prefer to watch sports alone, women tend to prefer watching with others, often men (Gantz, Fingerhut, Nadorff, 2012). Companionship viewing involves connecting less knowledgeable individuals to a sports addicted partner in order to provide a non-threatening environment that stimulates the transfer of sport knowledge and fandom norms.

In the following quotation, this focus group participant has already watched all the sports highlights multiple times, yet she continued to watch them as it allows her to spend time with her boyfriend. "My boyfriend used to put it on morning, noon, and night every single meal. I'm like are you serious! We have watched this 18 times today and I know every single play that happened from the night before".

When the focus group participants made reference to their sports television viewing habits, it was quite clear that the female sport fans were highly influenced by the viewing habits of the male sport fans in their life.

Digital media. The advent and expansion of the internet and mobile phones has created opportunities for sport leagues, teams, and media companies to grow their brand exposure and disseminate vast amounts of digital media to the public. "Digital media has also enabled both athletes and sport organizations to bypass traditional sport news providers and offer their own digital texts for the latest sport-specific news and action" (Meân, 2010, p.172). The focus group participants consumed digital media by visiting sport-related websites and using mobile phone applications.

Websites. As of 2014 more than 2.4 billion people worldwide were using the internet (Internet World Stats, 2014). Websites can be an inexpensive and efficient way to provide consumers with access to sports related information. Before the internet, sport

organizations were completely reliant on mass media to disseminate information such as that found in news releases. Now, public relations practitioners can post this information on organizational websites where those interested can access it at their leisure (Stoldt, Dittmore, & Pederson, 2011).

The vast majority of the female fans had visited their favourite team or league's website. The focus group participants often used websites to view team and player statistics; such as this participant who revealed that she often views her favourite teams' website to see the statistics: "I will just go on their website, go on their roster, see who has the top points, three stars, +/-, because I play, I like to see the statistics". The female sport fans commonly used computers in order to view their favourite sport related websites. However, when computers were not available, mobile applications were frequently revealed as a quick way to consume sports information.

Mobile applications. Mobile applications (apps) help users by connecting them to internet services more commonly accessed on computers, and by making it easier to use the internet on portable devices. Mobile apps have provided a means to bring together different aspects of the mediated experience of sport, offering new kinds of personalization and choice. As well as their involvement in the consumption of sport via mobile media, apps play a heightened role in the logistics and coordination of individuals and groups participating in and watching sport (Goggin, 2013). The focus group participants used apps to supplement their television and internet sport consumption.

For me beyond the traditional T.V. and internet I have the Sportsnet app on my phone, so I will constantly look at that to see updated scores and things like that...

I use the app for a lot of sports.

While mobile applications offer new types of personalization and choice, social media allows information to be shared and viewed by the masses.

Social media. Social media has evolved into a powerful, yet often misunderstood, part of the communication spectrum (Clavio, 2013). Social media has given fans and athletes a voice they never possessed before, but in doing so it has prompted fear and concern among sport entities unaccustomed to dealing with media where users control a considerable share of the content flow (Sanderson, 2011). Social media is unique in that it has an active audience, it has the opportunity for media interactivity, and it allows for coviewing in disparate locations (Gantz, Fingerhut, & Nadorff, 2012; Goggin, 2013).

It has long been recognized that the "active audience" of television enjoys watching programs and interacting with them, as well as communicating about them with present and absent others. With the advent of social media, this active audience can now communicate via smartphones and the internet (Goggin, 2013). This next quotation highlights how social media allows for the consumer to be an active audience member when consuming sport:

Well in our house it's four girls and we all cheer for rival teams and it's always interesting that we are in the same house religiously watching some games and we will just start twitter wars (messaging back and forth), and everyone that is following us is like, oh they are going to move out; there's going to be bloodshed.

Media interactivity in the field of sport functions as both a lure and as a way of transforming a viewer's relationship to a game. At a basic level, it brings audiences into the sports media mix. "Interactivity can be defined as the degree to which a communication technology can create a mediated environment in which participants can

communicate (one-to-one, one-to-many, and many-to-many), both synchronously and asynchronously, and participate in reciprocal message exchanges" (Kiousis, 2002, p.372). Media interactivity has a number of important functions, designed to keep audiences attentive and interested. With the advantage of providing pedagogical tools and advice (visual and scriptural), interactivity provides both the illusion of literacyviaparticipation, and the ability to navigate away from the chaotic in order to settle on and enjoy what is known, understood, and appreciated (Jutel & Schirato, 2008). The tools and advice available through media interactivity may give female sport fans the opportunity to facilitate the acquisition of sports knowledge without the traditionally perceived gender barrier.

Social media and co-viewing. Arguably the most important aspect of social media is the co-viewing of media content. Co-viewing, or the ability to view content with others can change the nature of the fandom experience, enriching it in ways that viewing alone cannot. From mobile phones to social networking sites, existing and new technology play a role in the social dimension of fandom, giving fans an opportunity to share their information with others in disparate locations.

It is important to note the difference between co-viewing and companionship viewing. Companionship viewing involves watching sports with a sports-addicted partner or someone with significant influence on your life (father, brother, uncle); while co-viewing is when you are seeing something that is simultaneously being viewed by another in a different location. Another key difference is that co-viewing does not make any distinction as to who the co-viewer is.

Although co-viewing is normally seen as non-threatening, Gantz, Fingerhut, &

Nadorff (2012) suggest that there is the opportunity for co-viewing to dampen viewing enthusiasm. If the co-viewer roots for the opposing team, gloats, acts as a know-it-all, or is more interested in socializing than in viewing, it can detract from the viewing experience. Co-viewing with people who are not equally knowledgeable or passionate about sports can have the same effect.

Why the Focus Group Participants Consume Sports

Now that we have found how the focus group participants became sport fans, and the methods they use to consume sports, we will now explore the reasons female sport fans consume sports. The collection of sports knowledge for later use as social capital, the opportunity for group affiliation, and the opportunity to escape were all common reasons the focus group participants consumed sport.

Sports knowledge as social capital. One way to utilize sports knowledge is to use it as social capital. Social capital refers to features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit. The central idea of social capital theory is that social networks have value (Putnam, 2000).

The following is an example of a fan that pays attention to statistics in order to gain the social capital needed to prove her authenticity as a sports fan:

I know myself; with having two brothers they would always be saying "oh you don't know anything about sports", just to bug me and stuff. So I find I do pay attention to stats just so when they are all talking about it I can jump in and kind of stick it to them and say I do know what I'm talking about; just because I'm a girl.

The collection of sports knowledge can be viewed as an education process. Often fans are motivated to watch sports to learn about players and teams. This was especially the case for the following focus group participant who was finishing a degree related to sports and felt that through subscribing to Sports Illustrated, (a publication focusing on North American professional and collegiate sports) she could diversify her sports knowledge.

I also have subscribed to Sports Illustrated for I don't know how long. But more recently I think my subscription has ended. But that was before I was nearing the end of Sport Management and I felt like I needed to know a bit more about different sports, you know pro sports are not what I want to do, but that was more to educate myself and I got to read some really cool stuff.

Some of the focus group participants who were not receiving a sports related degree and therefore would not need the same levels of sports 'education', as those who were, mentioned that sports is a topic of conversation that emerges across many social groups. As sport is a prevalent topic of discussion, they mentioned that it is important to them to 'keep up with the Joneses' when it comes to sports knowledge. Smith (1988) found evidence that sport is a universal subject that nearly everyone knows something about, and that unlike other subjects, sport is a topic of conversation that involves little risk. One focus group participant compared discussing sports to discussing world issues when she stated:

[T]he social aspect of wanting to fit in, wanting to be able to talk about something, like it's fantasy sports or then there's world issues if you're talking with

people about world issues you don't want to just sit there, you want to be informed about the information and have something to say.

Likewise, another participant drew a connection between sports knowledge and popular culture when she affirmed that sports knowledge is "almost like a pop culture thing, so I have something to talk about". This fan stated that watching sports on television allows her to catch up on sports knowledge for the purpose of future conversations:

"I don't go online to look up stats because I'm not a computer person, but PTI [Pardon the Interruption] and TSN (The Sports Network), that's when I can catch up knowing about all the players; then I can talk to other people about it".

While this fan collects sports knowledge for future social interactions, others pointed out that sports knowledge may also be used as leverage to impress males.

I don't know ... the only time I would look up a stat is to like, this is kind of stupid, but some people may do this, to like impress a guy or say like, well you think you know about sports, well so do I. Kind of get into that stuff to show that, "yeah I'm a girl, but I know about sports too".

While collecting sports knowledge for the purpose of increasing social capital is one reason for the female sport fans to consume sports, another reason is the opportunity for group affiliation.

Group affiliation. Wann (2006) suggested that there are two ways in which one can enhance their psychological well-being through group affiliation; being a member who is valued in a social group and basking in reflective glory. Social identity theory suggests that being a member who is valued in a social group can lead to lower levels of alienation and higher levels of self-esteem (Wann, 2006). Basking in reflected glory

involves increasing the psychological connection with the successes of others in order to vicariously gain a sense of accomplishment and self-identity (Cialdini et al., 1976).

Several studies have found that peer and family relations in the sport setting, such as friendship, peer acceptance, family presence, and social interaction could motivate participation (Jamber, 1999; Weiss & Duncan, 1992). Other studies have found group affiliation to be a particularly salient motivator for female athletes (Rychkman & Hamel, 1993), with the importance of social facilitation increasing with advancing age for women (Gill & Overdorf, 1994).

Group affiliation allows sport fans to craft a sense of personal identity stemming from the core values of the group. This self-identity is a strong motivating factor for individual spectators and participants to be involved in sport. Many of these positive factors regarding group affiliation can be found in this next quotation from the study's focus groups.

I feel like you are part of something bigger than the team itself. It is almost like a community. When you find someone else that is a fan of your favourite team it is an instant connection. Like I feel when you go to a game and you cheer for your team you get lost in the whole atmosphere of the game. Even if you go to [local restaurant] to see a game, you feel like everyone is on your side. You can hate the person, but at that moment you are best friends. That is what I like about sports; they bring people together, for that hour and a half or however long.

Sports provide an opportunity for fans to come together and have shared experiences. Be it at a live sporting event or at home watching the television, sport spectating allows time for fans to shed their everyday worries and focus on a common interest.

Sport as escape. As sport has long been known for providing opportunities for individuals to 'get away from it all', the ability to elude the norm and 'escape' is one of the motives for sport consumption that traverses all demographics (Wann et al, 1999). While the motive of escape is prevalent among all demographics, the methods in which individuals decide to escape can vary greatly. The most common way the female sport fans in this study used sport as an escape was viewing athletes through a voyeuristic lens.

Voyeurism. The sexual objectification of athletes, most commonly involving voyeuristic looking, is another way individuals use sport to escape. Although Smith (1988) argues that athletic movements can have artistic beauty and grace and that "a splendid athletic performance rivals any great work of art" (p.58), and Madrigal (2006) presented physical attraction as one of six factors that explain the experience of sporting event consumption; some believe that this form of voyeurism denotes inauthenticity of one's fandom. This female fan said if she was to promote fantasy sports to her friends she would promote the aspects of voyeuristic looking. "If I was to market this to my friends; they don't follow individual players based on their stats, it's all he's the best looking, so, maybe a fantasy good looking team". In a different focus group a participant echoed the previous theme of voyeuristic looking, but added that she would also like to include more information regarding the personal lives of the athletes.

I don't know about you girls, but when you look up the rosters I like to occasionally check out to see what they look like. Maybe if you made it so that women, instead of following sports and statistics, would really be following men and if the players are on board ... they have a couple more photo shoots a year. But guess what; you get more female participants because instead of having a

number next to their name, you have a picture next to their name, and you can go into their thing and read their bio, and other additional things.

This type of voyeuristic looking is perceived by some respondents in the focus groups to be inconsistent with 'authentic' fandom. Fans that hold this view outright reject the possibility of finding players sexually attractive, and in the process, construct themselves as more authentic followers of the game than women who enjoy looking at players' bodies (Toffoletti & Mewett, 2012).

While Toffoletti & Mewett (2012), suggest that some fans believe the sexual objectification of athletes is inconsistent with authentic fandom, Obel (2012) found in her study of female rugby union fans that although some of the females realized a romantic interest in certain players, "they did not consider these romantic and sporting interests as incompatible, but rather suggested that overall they brought an immense pleasure and pride to their lives and enabled them to 'let loose'" (p. 115). When asked about the sexual objectification of athletes, the issue of 'authentic fandom' was not lost on the focus group participants, "Yeah, there are two sides to look at this. There are females who aren't into sports and they want that, and then there are females who are into sports who won't like that because they will find it offensive." This participant identifies two different groups of females; those who are not into sports, and enjoy voyeuristic looking; and those who are 'authentic fans', who would find it offensive. These groups are comparable to Giulianotti's (2002) study which identified two types of fans: 'hot' committed fans, and 'cool' casual supporters. In this case 'cool' female sport fans would have lower levels of attachment, typically gaining interaction through television and the internet. Female sport

fans who are considered 'hot' possess higher forms of loyalty and have developed an organic identification with a particular aspect of sports (Pope, 2012).

One participant candidly spoke about how some males tend to group all female sport fans together as 'cool' fans. She outlines that this female stigma, in combination with the competitiveness of fantasy sports, could lead to unpleasant personal experiences. "I feel like it would make me enjoy something like this less, if someone was constantly saying 'you were doing this because you're a girl'".

This study found that the literature is split regarding voyeurism and its relation to the authenticity of female sport fans. Similar to the split found in the literature, the female sport fans in the focus groups also had dissenting opinions regarding whether voyeuristic looking is compatible with 'authentic' sport fandom. While Hess (1996) in his study of Australian rules football warned against trivializing women's interests to 'a discussion of the delights of male bodies in tight shorts' (p.357), it would be shortsighted to not recognize the existence of sport fans who are motivated by the aspect of voyeurism. Going forward, marketers should not overlook, but instead embrace the voyeuristic aspects of female sport fandom.

Marketing Induced Influences

After gaining an understanding of how the women in the focus group became fans, the methods they use to consume sport, and their motives for sport fandom, we will now begin to explore the marketer induced influences of fantasy sports. The product, price, and promotion of fantasy sports will all be analyzed in relation to female sport fandom and fantasy sport participation.

Product. During the focus groups, a great deal of discussion centered on the

marketing induced influences of the product, price, and promotion of fantasy sports.

While discussing the product, many thoughts, ideas, and suggestions were collected and later organized into three main themes: branding, game formats, and layout and user experience.

Branding. The branding associated with fantasy sports has the ability to impact its perceived value; the importance of branding cannot be understated. With this being said, the focus group participants were anything but thrilled with the current state of branding being done by fantasy sport marketers. For the females in the focus groups, it was almost exclusively commercials on television, advertisements on the internet, and interacting with male fantasy sport consumers that affected their brand perception of fantasy sports. This section will explore the impact that male fantasy sport consumers have on female sport fans, while the commercials and advertisements will be further discussed in the forthcoming promotion section.

The branding of fantasy sports is affected by a multitude of factors. According to Plummer (1985), brand personality traits can be formed and influenced by both direct and indirect contact that the consumer has with a brand. In this way, the personality traits of the people associated with the brand are transferred directly to the brand (McCracken, 1989). As fantasy sport participants are overwhelmingly male, it is no surprise that fantasy sports were perceived to possess masculine personality traits.

When the focus group participants were asked what they think of when fantasy sports are mentioned, the participants candidly spoke about their perceptions. Many of the observations involved fantasy sports as a way for males to get away from the girls. "Fantasy sports always seems like, you know, guys night out, get away from the girls",

stated one participants. "Yeah it's true, you always think they are in the basement with the beer, hiding". Another participant stated that fantasy sports is "like another version of poker night for them". At the beginning of the focus group some participants had only a vague understanding of what fantasy sport was, yet already perceived it as something solely for males: "that's my perception of it because I have only known males who join in..." stated one participant.

Similar to how the branding of fantasy sport has a large impact on the perception of the offered product; the game formats that are available to play also have a role in fantasy sport consumption.

Game formats. The availability of multiple game formats has the ability to attract sport fans of different skill levels and therefore increase the overall desirability of fantasy sports. This has led fantasy sport providers to offer a range of formats including rotoscoring, salary cap, and keeper leagues. Intriguingly, none of these formats were mentioned during the focus groups; instead some of the participants were inquisitive about the existence of female-only fantasy sport leagues and fantasy sport leagues that were based off women's professional sport.

One participant suggested that by creating and marketing female-only fantasy sport leagues, women may be more apt to participate due to a decrease in intimidation.

Maybe to market like an only girl's thing. So there is not that intimidation factor, because some girls would be like, "I don't really know that much about it, so I don't want to go against guys and get my butt kicked", right?

This perceived intimidation may be related to the fact that female sport fans' lack of sports knowledge in turn causes them to be intimidated by seemingly more

knowledgeable males. By removing the intimidation factor, in this case the 'knowledgeable males', this individual believes that the number of female fantasy sport consumers may increase. Contrary to what this fan suggested, another participant believed that an all-female fantasy sport league would lack the competitiveness found in fantasy leagues involving males. "I feel like if you get a group of girls that don't know what, like this group here, say if we were to do it, it wouldn't be competitive, it wouldn't be the way it normally is ran." Comparable to how there was divided thoughts on female-only fantasy sport leagues, there was a similar disparity when discussing fantasy sports based on women's professional sport leagues.

Multiple participants queried whether there were fantasy leagues for women's professional sports, usually with an inquisitive nature like this next participant who stated, "Do you know if there's ... could you do a fantasy league, but with the WNBA?" Although the question of whether there are fantasy leagues for women's professional sports was brought up in all five focus groups, not one individual stated that it was of interest to them personally. Many of the participants instead suggested "I think it's just the comfort to know it's there; just the option". One participant further accentuated the complexity of this topic by explaining that even though she knows it's a contradiction, and that on the whole female sport fans watch more male sports than female sports, it is still comforting to know that fantasy sports for women's professional sports exists.

I'm sure a lot of girls follow men's sports more than females; just you want to know it's there. Even though that's such a contradiction as I myself watch a lot more male sports because that's what's on T.V. and what other people are watching. You say you want female sports and would you watch that over males,

I don't know.

The participants acknowledged the desire to know that fantasy leagues exist for women's professional sports, despite the fact they showed no initiative to play in those leagues.

This subject matter should be further investigated in order to develop a deeper understanding of the female sport fan psyche in relation to fantasy sport participation and women's professional sport leagues.

Layout and user experience. The final characteristic of the product variable is the layout and design of the user experience. In the focus group the participants were asked, "What would it take to get you interested in playing fantasy sports?" Numerous suggestions were made as to what features could be altered, added, or taken away. One of the ideas that garnered the most attention was the development of a guide to help the participants learn about the players and statistics involved. "I think a guide that can help you learn who the top player is, so you can help all those who don't know who the toprated players are in the league." Even though multiple fantasy sport providers annually publish fantasy guides, such as CBS Sports "Fantasy Baseball Draft Kit," (CBS Sports, 2013) it is quite interesting that none of the focus group participants knew of their existence. This is especially intriguing given the fact that one of the reasons that female sport fans do not participate in fantasy sport is due to a lack of statistical sports knowledge. Therefore, although the knowledge needed to participate in fantasy sports can be obtained almost solely within the aforementioned guides, the female sport fans within this study lacked knowledge about the guide's existence. Since a lack of knowledge is one of the barriers to fantasy sport participation, marketers may benefit from advertising the availability of draft preparation guides. Providing the statistical information needed to

play fantasy sports in a succinct and easily understood guide, may encourage individuals who previously thought they lacked the knowledge needed to participate to reconsider.

The need for a positive user interface for participants has led marketers to provide many interface options to the fantasy sport participant, including customizable team logos, colour schemes, and presentation of statistical data. As fantasy sports are centered on the accumulation of statistics, it was expected that there would be some suggestions regarding the organization and presentation of the statistics themselves. Many of the thoughts involved being updated on the status of your team, specifically progress reports on how their team was doing in comparison to the rest of the league. "Yeah I like to see progress reports when there is a goal, I like those," stated one participant. Graphs were often brought up as a replacement for vast numbers of columns and rows containing statistical data. In one instance the focus group began to converse about how graphs that track your performance may entice participants to continue participating. During this discussion one participant stated, "I enjoy graphs that track your progress ... it kind of entices you if you just started. It's almost like, 'one more day then I can see it go up'". The presentation of statistical data was found to be of utmost importance to highly involved fantasy sport participants (Levy, 2005). Since the participants in this study were not highly involved, it was of no surprise that other aspects of the fantasy sport such as the user interface and layout received an equal amount of importance from the focus group participants.

One of the major discussion points was the upkeep that is needed when participating in fantasy sports. Many of the females suggested ways in which fantasy sports could be streamlined and made more easily accessible. Some participants proposed

having an email sent to the fantasy sport user on a daily basis: "Yeah, I think it would be more interesting if the site was interactive. Where you got an email that said these guys are playing tonight... After the game it says your player got this many points, it updates you without having to check". Another participant added that "you could give them a choice for the emails, weekly, biweekly, daily". While receiving an occasional email was recommended by some of the focus group participants, others wanted to take it a step further and have the fantasy sport providers create applications for their cellular phones.

I think I would set it up like if you had an app, then you could you know how it will say you have one message, two message in that app, that would be fine. Then send an email at the end of the week. So you would see it when you flip to your app that there are the messages.

Streamlining the fantasy sport experience was also suggested by multiple focus group participants.

I think for the time management thing, instead of us caring, because you know a lot of women won't sit down to watch sports, if they just got like a quick email to their iPhone or Blackberry that says "hey these are your points this week". "Would you like to trade players or would you like to stay?". If you want to trade you can trade, if you want to stay, you click next or whatever. Make it quick so they can do it on their phone, you don't have to be at a computer to look at all the stats.

This gave the impression that she had low levels of fan identification. As expected, it would appear to be much easier to attract highly identified sport fans to play fantasy sports, rather than those with low fan identification. Given that there are ~26.5 million

mobile phone subscriptions in Canada (CWTA, 2013), and ~327.6 million subscriptions in the United States (CTIA, 2013) streamlining fantasy sports to the point where they can be accessed and controlled on mobile phones has the potential to be a growth channel for fantasy sports. Fantasy sport providers such as Yahoo! Sports (2013) have acknowledged this opportunity for growth and are capitalizing on the large number of mobile phone users through the creation of fantasy sport applications that allow users to keep track of their players from their phone, get roster alerts, track player statistics, and keep up on news about their fantasy team.

Price. When participating in fantasy sports the user has the option of playing in either a free league or a pay-to-play league. Free leagues are in fact just that--free for the user to participate in. Pay-to-play leagues require the users to contribute a set amount of funds into a pool of money that will be dispersed to the winners at the conclusion of the league.

Free leagues. As none of the females in the focus groups had ever played fantasy sports it is of no surprise that they were tentative about paying for a service that is also offered at no cost. What was a surprise was the reaction that was received after informing the focus groups that fantasy sports were free to join and participate in. Some participants, such as the following, believed that fantasy sport providers should be marketing the fact that fantasy sports are free and contain no catches or hidden fees.

• I think it should be marketed that it is free. I always think there is a catch, or what do they want. It's completely free, like what do you have to do to register just put your email and stuff? It's not a big deal at all, just getting it out there, that it's a very easy thing to join too. It's easy and free.

• I use yahoo sports and I see the big banner for it [fantasy sports]. I'm almost skeptical as to whether I am getting myself into something I will have to pay money towards, you know what I mean? ... I don't want to participate in online gambling, I don't want to get roped into something I can't get out of.

The fact that fantasy sports were now known to be free was a good enough reason for other participants to overlook their questionable knowledge relating to individual players. "Yeah I don't think I have enough knowledge about individual players and stuff, to pick a decent team. …I'm not sure if I could do something like this. If it is free I would consider it".

Some thought that all forms of fantasy sports were gambling, similar to a sports-book:

I always thought they were gambling, like for money. I never knew you could do it for free, I always thought if you wanted to participate you had to bet something. Maybe I was getting it confused with sports bets, I don't know. But that is what I always thought, and I'm against gambling.

While many of the focus group participants agreed that the ability to participate in fantasy sports for free was an option that may entice them to participate, the discussion regarding leagues with an entrance fee was not nearly as homogenous.

Pay leagues. When conversing about pay-for-play fantasy sport leagues the focus group participants brought up two interrelated themes. The first theme involved how fantasy sports can be seen as a form of gambling; the second theme focused on how having an incentive can drive decision making. The participants discussed that while they may not approve of gambling, when money is the incentive their level of effort would rise. "Personally I'm from a family that doesn't like supporting gambling or anything, but

when money is involved people put more effort into it" stated one focus group participant. Another participant added:

Some people would hate that because it's gambling, but other people would find it more exciting and there is a possibility that if you do a little research and pick the right players, you can win a hundred bucks. So why not?

Though the focus group participants mentioned that some see gambling in a negative light, or that their families did not approve of gambling, none of the participants stated that they themselves were opposed to gambling as it is connected with fantasy sports. However, there was discussion that females may not enjoy the act of gambling as much as their male counterparts. "The only thing is that I don't know how much women get into gambling; as much as guys? So I don't know how much of a sell that would be." According to research done by Lee et al. (2011), gender differences may affect females' gambling preferences in regards to fantasy sports. Lee et al. (2011) identified that males show greater preference to games of skill, while females prefer games of chance. Males also preferred strategic and social gambling activities, while females preferred nonstrategic and less social forms of gambling. An example of strategic and social gambling would be poker, while less social, non-strategic gambling would include slot machines. Fantasy sports can be viewed as a strategic form of gambling that requires both skills and applicable knowledge, and which has the capability of being highly social. The fact that males prefer social gambling activities more than females is quite interesting when noting that the females in the focus group continually identified with the social aspects of sport.

The majority of the participants agreed that when money is used as an incentive, both interest and effort levels will rise. The following quotations exemplify how the

females sport fans rationalized their thoughts regarding monetary incentives and how it would affect their fantasy sport consumption:

- Obviously if you are paying \$20 to be in the pool you're going to be more focused because there is that money on the line, that reward at the end if you do everything right, and luck is on your side and you do win in the end.
- I feel like if there was an incentive I would check it more, if there was no prize I
 wouldn't really care, I would be like, "oh forgot to take this guy off the bench, big
 deal".
- Makes it more interesting, I might try a little harder if there was money involved.

 It is clear that monetary incentives may entice female sport fans to continue participating in fantasy sports.

Though monetary incentives may entice female sport fans to continue to participate in fantasy sports, gaining their initial attraction using this type of incentive will be much more difficult.

Based on the participants' reactions, those in charge of marketing fantasy sports have not been able to gain the initial attraction that is needed to entice the female fan base to start participating.

Promotion. Promotional programs are often used by fantasy sport providers in order to attract individuals to participate as well as reward game play (Roy & Goss, 2007). According to Fink, Trail, & Anderson (2002), "bringing women sport fans into the fold has a huge upside for marketers and sport organizations. Women fans stay loyal and spend more on licensed merchandise and clothing". Yet as marketers attempt to cultivate female fans to increase game attendance and broaden demographics for product

merchandising, they are in a perplexing position. By advertising to women they risk alienating their primary male consumer. According to Branch (1995) some believe that women's sports are caught in a "Catch 22" in terms of respect, recognition, and financial visibility. Although this quotation is about women's professional sports, the same predicament is challenging the marketing of male professional sport to women. The female focus group participants were well aware that they were not the target market of fantasy sport providers, and had no hesitancy in voicing their opinions on the topic.

When asked how they would market fantasy sports to women, many of the participants quickly brought up their distaste for the current media portrayal of the female sport fan. The sport related media typically portrays females as either 'babes', a subject to distract males in their 'dreamworld'; or as 'bitches', females who want to pull men away from their male hegemonic sport domain (Jhally, 2007). One participant displayed her annoyance with male oriented sports related ads when she stated:

Sometimes I feel when I watch big league sports especially; it's not just advertising for fantasy leagues, it's advertising in general, it's very male oriented... and "hey we are drinking beer, look at that hot chick in a bikini". And sometimes it's just like... I know that things are generally male oriented, but I enjoy these things too! I don't necessarily want to look at that hot chick in a bikini for 30 seconds while the boys drink beer and I think like [participants name] said, a lot of the ads are just men. But if I saw women included in a meaningful way, not just being the girlfriend and bringing the wings. In sports marketing in general I think that would be a good way to get women into it.

Stating that the inclusion of female fans in sport marketing would be beneficial to gaining

a female following seems common sense. The regular tendency is for sport marketers to move females toward one pole or the other of a schizophrenic stereotype: 'babe' or 'bitch' (Jhally 2007). This absence of 'authentic' rather than stereotyped females in sport marketing has been termed 'symbolic annihilation' (Sabo & Jansen, 1992). The symbolic annihilation of the female sport fan and its relation to fantasy sport marketing is quite clear in the following two quotations taken from the focus group.

- There is no mention of gender in advertising for fantasy leagues and when they are showing all guys sitting around, naturally you would assume it's an all guy thing.
- I think, marketing wise, all the commercials I've seen have just been guys playing it, but if there were girls with them doing it, showing them playing it, that would be more effective to know that girls can do it too, and it's not just a guy thing.

Here the participants assume fantasy sports is an activity for males, primarily because males are predominately used in the advertisements. When asked how they would involve females in an advertisement, there were mixed feelings among the focus groups. One participant noted:

Personally I would rather see an ad of ten people sitting in a room, two of them are female and eight of them are male. Not even five and five and it's just, I want to feel like I'm part of the team and I'm not adding some type of gender equality.

Occasionally in marketing promotions, females are mixed into the male-dominated scenery. Some female fans in the focus groups wished not to be identified specifically as a female fan but just as a fan. Williams and Woodhouse (1991) observed that female fans expressed a strong preference not to be singled out by sex, as they believed that their gender was irrelevant to their fandom. Not wanting to be singled out as a female sport fan

was echoed by another participant who said that an all-female fantasy sport league would be a nice option, but she would rather see the female participants as part of a larger multigendered group.

I would rather see females as a member of the group, because I feel when you do an all-female group, marketers are weird and would make it a 'pink thing' and show all these females around in their pink versions of jerseys and on their pink laptops or pink iPhones saying "oh, he's cute I want to add him to my team..." I think you need to show them as a part of something that already exists, not something new.

The data collected in this study suggests that marketers of fantasy sport are currently 'missing the boat' in regards to advertising to female sport fans. Those in charge of marketing fantasy sports are currently walking a thin line between advertising to female sport fans and alienating their principal male consumers. Marketers must strive to create advertisements that appeal to both the untapped female sport fans and the primary consumers.

Factors Influencing Female Sport Fans' Lack of Participation in Fantasy Sports

This study has investigated how the focus group participants became fans, the methods they use to consume sport, and their motives for sport fandom. Once this baseline understanding of the female fans was established, the study then reviewed the marketer induced influences of product, price, and promotion in relation to female fantasy sport consumption. Now that a more holistic view of the female sport fan has been established, this study will now cover the factors that influence female sport fans' under-representation of participation in fantasy sports.

During the focus group the participants were asked why they currently did not participate in fantasy sports and if they ever could ever foresee a time in the future when they would play fantasy sports. While some of the participants mentioned that they may now play fantasy sports in the future after being a part of the focus group, many participants offered reasons as to why they do not participate in fantasy sports, or stipulated circumstances that would be necessary in order to gain their participation. When this information is organized thematically, seven themes emerged from the data. These seven themes include a lack of free time available, that their friends do not currently play fantasy sports, negative associations relating to fantasy sports, the relation between the motives of control and escape, lack of applicable sports knowledge, team versus player allegiances, and finally, males acting as gatekeepers to fantasy sport consumption.

Lack of time. One of the more common reasons for not participating in fantasy sports is a perceived lack of time. Since the majority of participants in this study were students, it would not be a stretch to assume that many of them were continuously under time constraints brought on by schoolwork, jobs, and extra-curricular activities. Some of the participants acknowledged that if in the future they had more time, they may think about playing fantasy sports:

Right now if someone was to ask me I would say no. Because right now I know I don't have time; but thinking about if say I was only taking four courses or something and maybe had time, I probably would say yes.

Other participants stated that with their current workload they did not foresee a time when they would play fantasy sports.

I barely have time to hang out with my boyfriend, so I don't, I don't know... I'm taking six courses, I have a job, running a couple other groups, there is a lot going on so. It kind of would be, I just don't have the time at all.

Finally, one of the focus group participants felt that fantasy sports, "sounds like such a waste of time" and that it was not something she ever saw herself investing her time into. While lack of time was one of the factors that led the female sport fans to not participate in fantasy sports, another equally important factor that was that a high percentage of the females did not have any female friends playing fantasy sports.

Friends. It is not a stretch to say that one's friends have an influence over their use of recreational time. In this study, some participants expressed that due to their perceived lack of time they would only play fantasy sports if their friends did. According to Dwyer (2011), 75% of all fantasy sport participants play within their social circle. With this in mind, the time restrictions mentioned by the female fans may be of little concern in comparison to the fact that none of their friends play fantasy sports.

Yeah, I think it goes back to friends again. Because I guess if you are really into sports and love it, it can be fun by yourself as well, but I think for university students that don't have much time it's just like you would do with your friends. One female echoed this statement as she explained that in order to get her to play she would simply need someone to ask her to play.

I still think to get me into playing ... to actually get me to start playing, I need someone to say, "play in our league". Because my guy friends wouldn't just say, "hey, want to come play in our fantasy league?" They wouldn't think I would ever think twice about that.

Although this participant suggested that in order to participate she would need one of her friends to ask her to play, she also mentioned that her male friends who were interested in fantasy sports would never think to ask her. This feeling was fairly common as many of the participants declared that their female friends do not play fantasy sports, and that their male friends would never think to ask them to participate. One participant stated, "Most of my friends are females so, I think that's why they don't generally play ... I just thought it was a guy thing."

Negative associations. In the case of fantasy sports, negative associations may deter individuals from participating in fantasy sports in the future. What constitutes a 'negative association' must be judged by the individual who experienced the negativity and therefore can vary greatly from person to person. For one focus group participant, constantly hearing conversations about fantasy sports was enough to comprise a negative association.

For me it's kind of annoying because that's all I hear about in lecture. It's majority guys, and I'm surrounded. They are all talking about their trades and "why didn't you trade him", and "why didn't you let me do this", and "oh did you see what I got?" I'm like "can we talk about something else for five minutes?" It gets a little frustrating because literally that is all I hear about.

Another negative association related to fantasy sports involved a family member spending funds reserved for groceries.

I ended up paying for groceries because he didn't win! He was so sure he was going to win. It was almost like when gamblers can't stop, he assumed that I would have no interest in it, without even talking to me about it. And I actually

had to pry information out of him as to what exactly it was. Where exactly was our grocery money going, and then he got excited to talk about it and then covered basically what you covered and then shut back down again. But I know he spends quite a bit of time on it and he; he gets enjoyment out of it, it's something that he looks forward to. As long as the bills are paid and he's happy, I'm happy.

Control versus escape. A key psychological influence on fantasy sports consumption is the feeling of control that can be derived through participation in fantasy sports. The more knowledge one has about players on their fantasy team, the stronger the feelings of control will become for fantasy team owners (Roy & Goss, 2007). However, many of the focus group participants believed they did not possess the sports knowledge required to participate in fantasy sports. Some types of sport knowledge that they believed they did not possess included: general statistical information, storylines, informal or formal opinions, and personal information about athletes, coaches, or administrators. Some participants, such as the one in the next quotation, highlighted that their lack of player knowledge did indeed contribute to their lack of participation in fantasy sports:

I think the reason I haven't played it [fantasy sports] is I just don't know anything about the players, themselves. So I would have no idea who to pick and stuff like that. The fact is I don't know the players on some teams, I just know a couple, so that is why.

For male sport fans the sense of control derived from participation in fantasy sports has been known to increase the perceived levels of escape. Contrary to male sport fans,

female sport fans lack of perceived control in fantasy sports may in fact lead to decreased levels of escape.

When asked why they do not participate in fantasy sports, some of the females stated that they did not want to add any stress to their spectating routine. "I've got way too much else to be anxious about in my life to be worrying about who's scoring what goal against who. I don't have time for it" stated one focus group participant. This sentiment was further developed by another participant in a separate focus group who said, "I just want to sit down and enjoy watching the game without thinking, oh my gosh, he has to score". Roy & Goss (2007) found the motive of escape is prevalent across all demographic groups and is not limited to any one age group, income level, or occupation (Roy & Goss, 2007); the women in the focus group, however, saw fantasy sports as a source stress, rather than an opportunity to escape.

A potential explanation for this phenomenon is that contrary to men, who see fantasy sports as a fun way to escape from the everyday monotony, women see fantasy sport as a stressful distraction that removes the fun from spectating sports events. Female sport fans may not see the work needed to participate in fantasy sports as an escape from everyday life, but rather as another source of stress to add to their routine.

Sports statistics. During the focus groups the participants were encouraged to ask questions about aspects of fantasy sports that they did not understand. While there were many questions regarding the various components of fantasy sports, the brunt of the queries pertained to the large amount of statistics that were featured. Typically the participants stated that they did not care and/or understand what the statistical categories represented. When conversing about the statistics used in fantasy baseball, particularly

the pitching statistic walks plus hits per innings pitched (WHIP), one participant noted that "I just don't like the ones that are equations...I just want runs, outs, hits, RBI's [runs batted in]". Through heeding this participant's insight and removing some of the statistics that might be considered advanced, one would assume that the amount of knowledge required to compete in fantasy sports would decrease. Simply put, by decreasing the amount of knowledge needed to participate, the number of recreational participants may in fact increase. This is not the first study to come to this deduction, Ruihley & Hardin (2011) proposed that "the amount of statistics may be reduced for some leagues so the recreational FSU [fantasy sport user] can participate without having an everyday commitment to keeping track of a team or athlete". Ruihley & Hardin (2011) suggest that "simplified leagues may be created to make the process of participating and tracking statistics easier" (p.250).

Team versus player allegiances. Up to this point, many of the reasons female sport fans do not participate in fantasy sport have involved characteristics tertiary to sport. However, one reason that is directly related to sport involves the turmoil created by having both a favourite sports team as well as a fantasy sport team. One participant illustrated this concept when she stated:

I see all my guy friends, their favourite teams are on TV, but they are cheering for the other players because they are on his fantasy team. It's like, "are you a true fan of your team or do you just want your fantasy players to do well?"

Having female sport fans question the authenticity of male sport fans provides an interesting reversal in roles. Fantasy sport participants must strike a delicate balance between cheering for their favourite team and cheering for the players on their fantasy

team. Judging by the number of male participants in fantasy sport, one would assume that males have an easier time managing their allegiance to both their favourite team as well to the players on their fantasy team. Interestingly, the females in the study often questioned how fantasy sport participants could cheer for the players on their team rather than for their favourite team, as seen in the following quotations:

- Pick one you know, you can't say you are a Leafs fan when you are cheering for the opposing team because you have a guy on your fantasy team.
- It's a different way of being a sports fan I guess. For me it's always been about the team and sometimes there is an individual like Sidney Crosby who I'm like, "Yes! You! You're my favourite", but it's still the team. If Sidney does shitty the team does shitty; if he does well, the team does well. But it's not just about him, they all have to work together, whereas [in fantasy sports] if Sidney does well that's all you want, you don't care about how the team does.

The sentiment gathered from the focus group was that fantasy sport participants were breaking the 'sport fan code' by cheering for both their favourite team and their fantasy players.

I find that fantasy sports, the guys I know watch the game and, "I don't care if my team wins anymore, I just want this guy to get this many yards or I just need one more kick". It changes what they actually care about in the game.

While the focus groups questioned the allegiance of male sport fans who participate in fantasy sports, Lee (2011) found that when female sport fans do participate in fantasy sport they are more likely to draft players from their favourite team than men, yet are just as likely to draft players from teams they consider rivals. One highly identified female

fan participating in the study said she had previously participated in fantasy sports, but no longer does so now; her story exemplifies the strong allegiances that female sport fans can have with their favourite team(s) and player(s).

My roommates and I at the time made a team, but I had trouble because I just wanted to draft all Boston Bruins and I didn't want to draft any Leafs or any Habs or any of the teams I didn't like, even though their players were good. So eventually; and my teammate was a Bruins fan too so she didn't argue any of it. So then half way through the year we lost interest because we were at the bottom and just didn't want to trade away Bruins and all the good players you would want were taken, so Sidney Crosby, Stamkos, and Malkin and players like that ...

This participant highly valued her allegiance to the Boston Bruins (a professional hockey team in the NHL) and made an educated choice not to draft any players from the teams she did not like, regardless of the skill she knew they possessed.

Males as gatekeepers. According to Gosling's (2007) writing on sport fans, the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion for a community are mediated through cultural terms and because of this, sport fans must gain the correct 'cultural ticket' in order to be accepted within the community. For many males, receiving this cultural ticket is simply part of growing up, while for females access to this community is not as freely distributed. Males who lack athletic prowess can gain acceptance within the sport fan community through the collection of sports knowledge or as Epperson (1999) states "becoming a walking encyclopedia of sports trivia". This is not the case for females, who must first gain the respect of those 'on the inside' of the community--in this case the male fans. A major obstacle for females in gaining this respect is the language of sport.

Coddington (1997) describes how this language barrier creates a cyclical challenge for female sport fans:

In order to overcome exclusion and to achieve inclusion, women need to gain respect and there begins a somewhat vicious circle. To gain admission to 'the inside', women need to gain (male) respect. In order to gain this respect, women need to speak the language of sport and be listened to by those 'on the inside.'

Here is an example of a focus group participant who had previously interacted with male fantasy sport participants: "Well like I don't understand I talked to guys and they are like, 'we don't want girls in our [fantasy sport] leagues'. With that attitude; like girls don't understand sports".

As sport has traditionally been a male preserve where women are cast as the 'other', this exclusion has restricted women's participation in sport fandom based on historical cultural expectations (Cecamore, Fraesdorf, Langer, & Power, 2011). This social exclusion can be seen as one of the largest barriers to female sport fandom, and fantasy sport participation.

Chapter 5 - Marketer Implications

Sport marketing towards female fans has historically been characterized by generalizations and stereotypes. Sport organizations must realize that female sport fans are not all the same, possessing varying degrees of needs, attachment, and loyalty (Coddington, 1997). With this in mind, marketers must not succumb to these generalizations and stereotypes, but instead properly frame their product in accordance to their user-base. Based on the research findings, five recommendations emerged for sport marketers trying to attract females to fantasy sport:

- Increase awareness
- Promote the social aspects of fantasy sports
- Streamline fantasy sports
- Promote ease of use

Increase Awareness

The findings of this study suggest that female sport fans lack an overall understanding of fantasy sports. The first step in raising female sport fans understanding is to raise the level of awareness regarding fantasy sports. Awareness can be increased through targeting female sport fans in fantasy sport advertising. Currently, males are the dominant gender associated with sports advertising. It is highly likely that this male 'dominance' in sport advertising has contributed to the lack of female participation in fantasy sports. Including females in fantasy sport advertising may help promote the fact that fantasy sports can be played by anyone, not just males. One suggestion was to advertise in the magazine "Women's Health".

Well you already have, Women's Health magazine is targeting women who are interested in fitness, who are interested in sport to a degree. You don't have too many men reading *Women's Health* magazine, so just putting that article in.

In addition, the female sport fans advocated that female fans should not be shown simply playing against men, but instead interacting with them as knowledgeable sport fans. It is up to those marketing fantasy sports to show female fans they do not have to become one of the guys in order to participate, but can instead explore sport fandom and fantasy sports on their own terms.

One theme that emerged from the study was that the female focus group participants thought fantasy sports was something that only men played. There were two main reasons for this. Only two of the participants knew any women who have played fantasy sports, yet they all knew multiple men. The second reason was that they had never seen any women in advertising for fantasy sport. Since the fans in the focus group rarely saw any women participating in fantasy sports, it is not a surprise that they had trouble imagining themselves playing. Marketing campaigns may benefit from providing female role models who are highly knowledgeable in terms of both their general sports knowledge and their knowledge of the personal lives of professional athletes. By regularly exposing the female sport fans to women who are succeeding in fantasy sports, marketers should focus on increasing the credibility and authenticity of female sport fans.

Promote the Social Aspects of Fantasy Sport

This study has strengthened the claims made in the literature that female sport fans are highly influenced by opportunities to participate in the social aspects of sport fandom. Focus group participants enjoyed the social aspects of sport spectating such as spending

time with family, conversing about sports, going to live sporting events, watching televised sports, and using social media to supplement their fandom. By focusing on the social aspects of fantasy sports and downplaying the perceived barriers of sports knowledge and competition, more female sport fans may view fantasy sports as a way to supplement their social lives. Therefore fantasy sports would not be seen in a negative light (e.g., I don't have time for this), but instead in a positive light (e.g., I finally get to hang out with my friends). Two ways to promote the social aspects of fantasy sports include cooperative participation and embracing social media.

Cooperative participation. The focus group participants unanimously agreed that they were more likely to participate with friends than by themselves. (Dwyer, 2006). When the female sport fans were asked what it would take to get them to participate in fantasy sports, the need to play with a knowledgeable partner was repeatedly discussed. Most of the focus group participants had never been asked to play fantasy sports, but almost all knew someone who currently, or had previously played fantasy sports. One focus group participant stated "If I was going to do it, I would like to partner up with my boyfriend to do it. So I know what I'm doing; instead of doing it alone and having no clue". Another participant said "I like the pairing up idea, I would definitely be into that, because then you have a team member. There is more motivation there. I would probably do that if I was paired up with a guy". In both of these quotations the female fans stated that in order to participate in fantasy sports they would have to be paired up with a sports-knowledgeable, male partner.

Davis and Duncan's (2006) study of fantasy sport league participation found that when male participants asked women to play fantasy sports it was generally to fill up

empty roster spots that could not be filled with male participants. Although this does get women to play fantasy sports, it puts the women in a subordinate position (i.e., We couldn't get enough men, so you can join) where they may not only lack the knowledge needed to play, but are also in a foreign environment that is not conducive to learning. By allowing fantasy sports-knowledgeable partners and a female sport fans to compete together (rather than each having their own team), the tuition and socialization of fantasy sports can be conveyed in a non-threatening environment.

Through promoting companionship participation, fantasy sport providers can capitalize on the pre-existing interpersonal connections of their current fantasy sport user-base in order to connect their already loyal consumers to potential participants within their social circle.

Social media. Participants in the focus groups displayed interest in both the professional and personal lives of their favourite athletes. Fantasy sport providers have an opportunity to utilize social media platforms in order to build intimate connections between athletes and fantasy sport participants. This study found that some female sport fans enjoyed voyeuristically viewing professional athletes. Social media is a strong platform to promote voyeurism as it is able to provide a high level of transparency regarding the personal characteristics of athletes such as their physical attractiveness, relationship status, and social lives. The most important aspect of social media is its ability to allow large amounts of information to be shared instantaneously with friends and family. Fantasy sport providers should invest in developing strong ties between fantasy sport participants and social media platforms in order to capitalize on these positive aspects.

One way for fantasy sports to establish strong ties to social media is to embed social media platforms within the layout of fantasy sport websites. Allowing fantasy sport participants the option to attach social media such as Facebook or Twitter will enable them to see real time updates from both the professional athletes drafted onto fantasy teams as well as from fellow participants in the fantasy league. As the athletes and fans decide what is to be posted, the information will be dynamic and constantly evolving. Connecting social media to fantasy sports will allow female sport fans to flourish in the social atmosphere that they enjoy, while simultaneously providing a means to accumulate the sports knowledge needed to make informed fantasy sport decisions.

Promoting the social aspects of fantasy sports may cause the female sport fans to overlook the perceived barriers and focus on the positive social aspects of fantasy sports. With the overarching goal of increasing the number of female fantasy sport participants.

Streamline Fantasy Sports

While some of the focus group participants were drawn in by the initial description of fantasy sports, others were still skeptical that they had enough time, enough knowledge, or cared enough about fantasy sports in general to participate. In order to increase the number of female participants, it would be logical to find ways to decrease the amount of time and knowledge that is necessary to participate. One way to counteract these challenges would be to streamline fantasy sports in order to them easier to participate in. Streamlining fantasy sports could be accomplished through reducing the number of statistics used in a league, not drafting as many players (negating the need to take players off the bench and putting them into the lineup on a daily or weekly basis), and promoting applications that allow players to access their fantasy teams through

smartphones and tablets.

Streamlined leagues. Streamlined leagues would have a reduced number of statistical categories tracked and players drafted. Not only would there be immediate time savings found when less information needs to be gathered for preparing for fantasy drafts, but it will also make in season decisions much faster to make due to easier analysis. This will not only decrease the amount of decisions that need to be made but will also allow less knowledgeable sport fans to be more competitive due to the reduction in applicable knowledge (fewer players to keep up with).

As the positions and number of athletes differ for every sport, there will be differences in how these reductions can be generated. The following is an example as to how fantasy sports, in this case the NHL, can be streamlined in order to produce a more simplistic fantasy sport offering.

A typical fantasy hockey league involves drafting two Centers, two Left Wingers, two Right Wingers, two Defensemen, two Goaltenders, and finally two players to put on the Bench. By removing one Center, two Wingers (one right and one left), and one Goaltender, a streamlined version of fantasy hockey could have a total of eight positions, rather than 12. Similar to drafting fewer players, reducing the number of statistical categories tracked in leagues could also reduce the time and effort needed to participate. Although the option for tracking all 12 statistical categories should be offered, streamlined leagues should also give the opportunity to categories that the fantasy sport participants deem irrelevant. Fantasy hockey leagues generally track eight skater statistics (goals, assists, power play goals, shorthanded goals, hits, game winning goals, penalty minutes, plus/minus) and four goaltender statistics (wins, save percentage, goals against

average, shutouts). A streamlined version of fantasy hockey could exclusively track

Goals and Assists for skaters, and Wins and Save Percentage for goaltenders; this would

reduce the number of statistical categories tracked from 12 to four.

By decreasing the number of players drafted and statistics tracked, streamlined leagues can reduce the amount of time and knowledge needed to participate in fantasy sports.

Mobile phone applications. Mobile phone applications may prove to be a potential growth engine for fantasy sports. The ability to access and manipulate one's fantasy sport team from a mobile device will decrease, if not eliminate, the need to use a computer when playing fantasy sports. With smartphone applications fantasy sports are completely mobile; the consumer can check lines, trade players, or contribute to the discussion board regardless if they are watching the game at home or taking an international vacation. As there are approximately 26.5 million mobile phone subscriptions in Canada (CWTA, 2013), and approximately 327.6 million subscriptions in the United States (CTIA, 2013), if fantasy sport applications capture even a small percentage of the mobile phone market, they have the potential to engage a new audience for fantasy sports while simultaneously lowering the amount of time that is necessary to participate and increasing the ease of use.

Promote Ease of Use

Some of the focus group participants stated they did not participate in fantasy sports because they did not know what it was. Others had heard about fantasy sports, yet lacked any details regarding the game mechanics. After hearing a brief explanation of the core game mechanics of fantasy sports, many of the participants quickly 'caught on' and

started asking more in-depth questions regarding the inner workings of the game.

Through marketing the relative ease of fantasy sports, female sport fans may begin to develop a curiosity about the inner working of the game. This curiosity may in turn provide the first step needed for female sport fans to start participating in fantasy sports.

Chapter 6 - Conclusion

Although there are between 29-32 million fantasy sport participants in North America (Dwyer, 2011; Fantasy Sport Trade Association, 2008; Fisher, 2006; Roy & Goss, 2007), only ~20% of these participants are female (FSTA, 2014). In order to understand why so few women participate in fantasy sports, this study asked: Why is there an under-representation of female participation in fantasy sports? Thirty-five female sport fans, making a total of five groups, provided the data necessary to answer this question. When the data was analyzed and compared to the literature, seven themes emerged to explain why there is an under-representation of female participation in fantasy sports:

- Lack of time
- Friends do not play
- Negative Associations
- Control versus escape
- Sport statistics
- Team versus player allegiances
- Males acting as gatekeepers

Based on the seven themes that emerged from the focus groups and the knowledge gained in the literature review, four recommendations were made for those marketing fantasy sports to female sport fans:

- Increase the overall awareness of fantasy sports
- Promote the social aspects of fantasy sports
- Streamline fantasy sports
- Promote ease of use

Generalizability

The female sport fans that were recruited for this study turned out to be fairly homogenous group; ranging in age from 18 to 27 years old, with most (28 out of 35)

having some college or university education. In this case the homogenous sample was able to provide the study with a rich understanding of a specific demographic; however the negative effect of having such a homogenous sample is that it decreases the generalizability of the study. In order to increase the generalizability of this study, future researcher could replicate this study using a more diverse sample.

Directions for Future Research

The literature review found that fantasy sport is primarily consumed by white men. While the findings of this thesis help address why so few females play fantasy sport, more work is needed to understand the wide diversity of today's sport consumer.

For male sport fans the sense of control derived from participation in fantasy sports has been known to increase the perceived levels of escape. This study found that contrary to male sport fans, female sport fans perceived lack of control in fantasy sports may in fact lead to decreased levels of escape. Future research should investigate the relationship between the factors of control and escape in order to understand their effects on fantasy sport participation in both male and female sport fans.

The focus group participants acknowledged the desire to know that fantasy leagues exist for women's professional sports. This subject matter should be further investigated in order to develop a deeper understanding of the female sport fan psyche in relation to fantasy sport participation and women's professional sport leagues.

Going Forward

This study found that fantasy sport marketers are currently 'missing the boat' in regards to satisfying the needs and wants of female sports fans. Historically marketing towards female fans has been characterized by generalizations and stereotypes. Marketers

must accept that female sport fans are not all the same, but instead possess varying degrees of needs, attachment, and loyalty. Moving forward marketers must look past the generalizations and stereotypes and find ways to promote fantasy sports to female sport fans without alienating the principal male consumer.

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Appendix A General Statement of Confidentiality

General Statement of Confidentiality Research Assistants and Transcribers

Name	of Research Assistant/Transcriber:
Title(s) of Research Study:
(Please	e print)
confidence of collect videot inform participal collect informaticipal collections of the collection of	portant part of conducting research is having respect for privacy and lentiality. In signing below, you are agreeing to respect the participant's right to y and that of the people and organizations that may be included in the information ed. Such information may include interviews, questionnaires, diaries, audiotapes, and apes. You are asked to respect people's right to confidentially by not discussing the lation collected in public, with friends or family members. The study and its pants are to be discussed only during research meetings with the Principal igators, Co-Investigators, Program Manager, and/or others identified by the gators.
In sig	ning below, you are indicating that you understand the following:
	I understand the importance of providing anonymity (if relevant) and confidentiality
0	to research participants. I understand that the research information may contain references to individuals or organizations in the community, other than the participant. I understand that this
0	information is to be kept confidential. I understand that the information collected is not to be discussed or communicated outside of research meetings with the Principal Investigators, Co-Investigators or others specifically identified by the Investigators.
0	When transcribing audio or videotapes (where applicable), I will be the only one to hear the tapes and I will store these tapes and transcripts in a secure location at all times.
0	I understand that the data files (electronic and hard copy) are to be secured at all times (e.g., not left unattended) and returned to the Principal Investigator when the transcription process is complete.
	ning my name below, I agree to the above statements and promise to ntee the anonymity (if relevant) and confidentiality of the research participants
Signati	nre of Research Assistant/Transcriber:
Date:	

Appendix B Recruitment Poster

Female Participants Needed

Female sport fans are needed for **focus groups** regarding female participation in fantasy sports. The research team wishes to recruit both females who play and do not play fantasy sports.

The study will require you to attend a focus group that will last approximately **1 hour**.

Participants will receive \$20 for their time and expenses.

Focus Group Dates

November ##, 2012 November ##, 2012

November ##, 2012

November ##, 2012

December ##, 2012









Title of Study: A study of female participation rates in fantasy sports
This study has received ethics clearance through the Brock University Research Ethics Board (file #10-223)

Research Study: Female Fantasy Sport Consumption
Ben Blain
Dept. of Sport Management, Brock University.
bb07tg@brocku.ca

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Appendix C Informed Consent

Informed Consent **Date:** October 1, 2012

Project Title: A Study of the Lack of Female Participation in Fantasy Sports

Principal Investigator (PI):

Ben Blain, Masters of Arts candidate Department of Sport Management Brock University [343-369-0150; bb07tg@brocku.ca]

Faculty Supervisor:

Dr. Craig Hyatt Associate Professor Department of Sport Management Brock University (905) 688-5550 Ext. 4382; chyatt@brocku.ca

INVITATION

You are invited to participate in a study that involves research. The purpose of this study is to develop an understanding as to why there is a lack of female, big league sports fans participating in fantasy sports.

WHAT'S INVOLVED

As a participant, you will be asked to participate in a focus group. You will be expected to partake in answering questions that have been posed by the researcher and be actively involved with the overall discussion of the focus group. Present at all focus groups will be an audio recorder which the research team will use in order to transcribe the data collected from the focus group at a later date. Participation will take approximately one (1) hour.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND RISKS

The benefit(s) of participation includes receiving \$20 for the time and expenses that were incurred through participation in the study and the opportunity to give the participants the ability to contribute to the overall body of knowledge within the field of sport management. The potential risks of this study

include the possibility of uncivil comments.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information you provide will be considered confidential and grouped with responses from other

participants. Given the format of this session, we ask you to respect your fellow participants by keeping all information that identifies or could potentially identify a participant and/or his/her comments confidential. Data collected during this study will be stored on the researcher's password protected USB data storage device and will backed up on an identical password protected USB data storage device. When the data collected from the focus group(s) is printed, it then will be stored in a locked filing cabinet at the researcher's home office. Data will be kept for two years after the completion of the study, at this time the data will be shredded and recycled. Access to this data will be restricted to the research team, which includes: Ben Blain, Dr. Craig Hyatt, and Jenn Buchanan Olsen)

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you wish, you may decline to answer any questions or participate in any component of the study. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time and may do so without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

Results of this study may be published in professional and/ or academic journals and presented at conferences. Feedback about this study will be available from Ben Blain via e-mail once the research study has been completed.

CONTACT INFORMATION AND ETHICS CLEARANCE

If you have any questions about this study or require further information, please contact the Principal Investigator or the Faculty Supervisor (where applicable) using the contact information provided above. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board at Brock University (**09-131 HYATT**). If you have any comments or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Ethics Office at (905) 688-5550 Ext. 3035, reb@brocku.ca. Thank you for your assistance in this project. Please keep a copy of this form for your records.

CONSENT FORM

I agree to participate in this study described above. I have made this decision based on the information I have read in the Information-Consent Letter. I have had the opportunity to receive any additional details I wanted about the study and understand that I may ask questions in the future. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time.

Name:		
Signature:	Date:	

Appendix D Compensation Release Form



A study of the lack of female participation in fantasy sports

Through signing this release form I acknowledge the following statements:

✓ I have participated in a focus group regarding female participation in fantasy sports. ✓ I have received twenty dollars (\$20) for my time and expenses that I have incurred through participation in the aforemention focus group.

Name (Can I use full name)	Date	Signofuro
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Appendix E Focus group questions for non-fantasy sport participants

Opening

1. Let's take some time to get to know each other a little bit. Please tell us about yourself-maybe your name, hometown, occupation, family status, etc.

Introduction

- 2. Everyone here is a sports fan. Tell us how you became a sports fan.
- 3. What are your favourite big league sports and teams?
- 4. One of the things I'm interested in is understanding how sports fan consume sports. By "consume", I'm interested in hearing about the thoughts, feelings, and behaviours experienced by fans. Who would like to tell us about the thoughts, feelings, and behaviours you experience as a fan of your favourite sports or team?

Transition

- 5. One activity some fans of big league sports participate in is playing fantasy sport, where (brief explanation of fantasy sports). What do all of you think of when I say "fantasy sport"?
- 6. Has anyone (else?) had any experience either playing fantasy sports or interacting with someone who did?

Key

- 7. Everyone here is a fan of big league sports, but none of you play fantasy sports at this time. Why not?
- 8. What would it take to get you interested in playing fantasy sports? *Ending*

9. My purpose here today was to try to understand why female sports fans might not be interested in playing fantasy sports. We've had a great discussion. I think I've learned X, Y, & Z. Would everyone agree?

10. Does anyone have any last thoughts they'd like to add about the topic of fantasy sports?

Appendix F Thank You Letter

Thank you for your participation in the Fantasy Sports focus group! Your input will be very valuable to us in our efforts to improve the academic information that is available regarding fantasy sports. As a respondent, the full report will be available to you at the conclusion of the study by emailing the principal researcher at bb07tg@brocku.ca.

Once again, thank you for your time and effort,

Sincerely,

Ben Blain Masters of Arts Candidate Department of Sport Management Brock University

Dr. Craig Hyatt Associate Professor Department of Sport Management Brock University

Jennifer Buchanan-Olsen BSM, 2014 Department of Sport Management Brock University

Appendix G About the Researcher

Growing up I was always involved in both sport participation and sport fandom.

This love of sports directed me to pursue an undergraduate degree in Sport Management. It is here that I was introduced to fantasy sports by a roommate and fellow sports fan.

Soon I was involved in fantasy sport leagues for multiple sports and began to consume a much larger amount of sports information in order to make informed fantasy sport decisions. As I was beginning a Masters of Sport Management and attempting to decide on a thesis topic, fantasy sports naturally seemed an ideal topic to research. Currently I enjoy having fantasy sports as a routine aspect of my sports consumption habits and foresee continually participating in fantasy sports in the future.