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Getting Deep: Experiences of New Zealand Bodyboarders

by

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Abstract

Since the mid 1990s, a growing body of literature on lifestyle sports has produced fresh insights into the nuances, esoteric terminology and social dynamics in an array of lifestyle sport cultures. While surf culture has gained considerable attention from both sociologists and historians, the voices of bodyboarders have been minimal. Reflecting perceptions held by many in mainstream society, the literature on surf culture tended to marginalize bodyboarding participants, deeming the activity fit for children or teenagers. Therefore, this project addresses the gap in academic literature on surf culture by adopting a socio-cultural, qualitative approach to give voice to bodyboarders, by revealing some of the complexities within bodyboarding culture, and revealing power relations operating between surfers and bodyboarders in the surf.

As a three-time world amateur champion female bodyboarder of both Maori and Samoan heritage, I was particularly interested to understand experiences of gender and ethnicity in relation to bodyboarding. Therefore, I conducted semi-structured interviews with eight bodyboarders living in New Zealand. To analyse data from the interviews, I employed Bourdieu's theoretical concepts of habitus, field and capital to explore bodyboarding with the intent of presenting fresh perspectives relating to masculinity and femininity, and experiences of Maori, Pacific Island and New Zealand European bodyboarders. The participants revealed embodied characteristics of the bodyboarder as well as a variety of strategies used to negotiate space in the surf field. The experiences of female participants resonated with current literature where opportunities to gain respect were limited based on their marginal position in the male-dominated lifestyle sport culture. While some female participants successfully negotiated space within the surf field, male bodyboarders revealed other difficulties due to the hyper-masculinity of stand-up surfing culture, and the marginal position of bodyboarders.

In specifically examining the experiences of Maori and Pacific Island participants, I argue that a unique form of cultural capital exists in which respect, courtesy and fairness were given more value than demonstrations of physical capital. Adopting a socio-cultural approach to analyse the operations of power in the surf field, and particularly how gender and ethnicity affect the experiences of New Zealand bodyboarders, this research project brings "new value to identities and experiences that are marginalized and stigmatized by the larger culture" (Denzin, 2002, p. 486).

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I dedicate this to my late father James Stewart Wells, who passed away during the writing of this thesis.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

As the waves splash against my shins, Piha's warm black sand sinks through my toes and the salty summer off shore breeze blows my sun bleached mane over my tanned face. My feet tingle from sprinting through the burning sand to the shoreline and as my breathing and heart beat begin to slow the hiss of the ocean becomes more prevalent than the drumming in my ears. As I place my bodyboard on the sand, I watch some children playing on boogie boards in the whitewash between the flags, before taking a surreptitious glimpse towards the lifeguards. Thankfully they're preoccupied with people on the other side of the beach; they won't hassle me today. I am starting to tire of them telling me to 'be careful' paddling out into the dangerous waves.

I sit on the wax stained deck of my board and stretch my legs out as I look towards the heaving West coast ocean. I count approximately thirty people in the water, and momentarily consider finding another place to surf instead of battling the crowd. Then another mountainous five foot set comes roaring through. I 'mind' surf the wave and visualise riding along the unbroken sections of the wave performing manoeuvres. I decide to paddle out and jostle my way onto a wave with everyone else. I perform my stretching ritual while fixated on the surf constantly looking for a spot to paddle to. Ritual over, I pull the heel strap of short rubber body board fins over my fin socks, fasten the fin savers tightly to my ankles, strap on my bicep leash and stand up letting my board dangle from my arm. I watch the ripples and foam in the rip by the ditch move rapidly out to sea and decide to catch the moving water to conserve my energy.

I walk backwards into the water, board under arm and shiver a little from the slight chill in the water and anticipation. The water from the rip pulls against my legs so I turn and launch myself belly first onto the board and allow the rapidly moving water in the rip pull me out to sea. As I near the pack gathered by 'The Bar' I put on my confident no-nonsense face and pull the water powerfully and confidently as I paddle into the line-up. I get a few curious and concerned looks from some surfers and nervously

note that no other females or bodyboarders are in the water. As usual, the majority are white surfers; I see a couple of brown short board surfers and assume one is Maori from his tamoko (Maori tattoo). For a moment, I feel a bit self-conscious, but then remind myself that I've surfed all around the world so don't need to feel intimidated by this pack of surfers. I ignore their stares by keeping my head down, and take up a respectable position behind the leaders in the pack. And then, we wait.

Looking out to the horizon, I see a swell moving towards us. I start kicking slowly in the direction of the rolling mounds. Other surfers also start paddling towards the swell. The first wave gets closer and three surfers ahead of me who are in position to catch the wave turn and paddle. The surfer closest to the whitewash gets right of way, stands up and zooms past as I duck dive under the wave to move out of his way. The other two surfers who didn't catch the wave are now behind me. The next wave arrives and again three surfers turn and paddle. The surfer closest to the whitewash gets the wave. Suddenly, the surfer who had the wave falls off his board while attempting a manoeuvre, and I find myself in the perfect position to catch the remainder of his wave. I quickly turn and paddle with all my strength to get up to speed. The surge of the wave lifts me up and, with one final power kick, I launch myself onto the face of the wave and feel the momentum and power of the wave propel me forward. I quickly glance to the right and, seeing I have right of way, point the nose of my board towards the middle of the steep mountain of water ahead of me. I yell 'Yup' to call off a couple of surfers who were also paddling for the wave. This wave is mine.

I see a vertical section ahead of me that looks like it's going to start pitching powerfully. Instinctively, I angle the nose of my board down and accelerate to the bottom of the wave. My stomach gets butterflies from the sudden drop, and with anticipation and excitement I scoop upwards from the bottom and head up the steep face straight towards the breaking section. As I hit the surging water, I push off and extend my arms towards the shore, simultaneously rotating and look over my left shoulder. The force of the water pitching, coupled with the momentum and speed of my bottom turn, throws my entire body out of the water and, as time slows, I'm

launched high up into the air. I hear someone yell 'Woooo hooooo' as I complete a full loop and land heavily on my board back onto the face of the wave. Ahead of me a line of surfers are paddling to get out of my way; I note some are smiling, another has his arms up in the air cheering for my manoeuvre.

With a huge grin on my face I pull off the wave and begin the triumphant paddle back to the line up. As I pull at the water with my hands, I make sure I keep my head down slightly. I arrive back at the pack and begin to renegotiate my place in the line up. "Nice wave," says one surfer. "What was that move?" asks another, I get a head nod and eyebrow raise from others. "Uh, it's called a roll," I reply timidly and casually take my spot in the line up again. I no longer feel conscious of my brown, female body lying on this body-board. With our eyes toward the horizon, we wait together.

This experience was one of many that led me to question the sport of bodyboarding and the meanings it holds for different people. Gender and ethnicity are clearly aspects of my identity that affect how I experience the sport of bodyboarding, which contributed to this investigation of the gendered and cultural dimensions of other New Zealand bodyboarders experiences. During my many years sitting in the waves watching and observing others surfing, along with my post-surf reflections, I continued to wonder: How do others read my brown surfing body? How do I negotiate space within this space dominated by white, male stand-up surfers? Does sex and ethnicity matter in the surf? While I am able to access waves and negotiate space amongst my wave-riding peers, why am I so often the only female bodyboarder, and almost always the only brown female bodyboarder? How do my perceptions of 'otherness' influence my bodyboarding experiences? It was only through engaging with the

sociological literature on sport, gender, culture, and ethnicity that I started to ask broader questions about other bodyboarders experiences.

To begin this investigation into the sport and culture of bodyboarding, it is important to first construct a base of knowledge from which to build and present the themes that will be integral to this body of work. Therefore in this chapter, I will first outline my background in this topic followed by a history of wave riding along with the context of surfing that will provide the foundation upon which the following chapters will build. Finally, a brief outline of the themes presented in each chapter will be provided to help explain the overarching purpose of this research.

A Life of Surfing

I was drawn to the water from an early age. My initial inspiration emerged during my family visits to stay with my Nana (Grandmother) in Punaruku, a small village 30 kilometres North East of Whangarei in New Zealand. The landscape contained many water features including creeks, rivers and the ocean. My father's family, who are Maori hailing from the Nga Ti Wai hapu (a New Zealand Maori tribe from the far North), would spend countless hours on the water fishing, diving and swimming and the passion for being in, and on the water inevitably rubbed off on me. Countless summers would involve swimming in the creek at the foot of the hill where my Nana lived, and swimming in the waves at Oakura Bay which was approximately 5 kilometres away from Punaruku. One of my earliest childhood memories of the ocean was the exhilarating feeling of weightlessness when jumping as the force of a wave would go past me and break on the shore.

My first experience catching waves was under the guidance of an older male cousin who at the time was ranked in the top five knee boarders in New Zealand. He and his family lived in Oakura, and their house was less than 500 metres from the beach. They had an array of bodyboards and knee boards so it was here that I was given my first opportunity to ride a bodyboard. From that point on, my love of bodyboarding and stand up surfing grew exponentially. In high school my parents conceded to my passion for wave riding and purchased a warehouse 'boogie board' that saw me through my high school years of irregular beach visits. When I began my undergraduate studies at Brigham Young University in Hawaii I purchased my own Waimea-Pro bodyboard and flippers. It was in Hawaii where my skills for bodyboarding and stand up surfing were honed as a result of surfing regularly with Hawaiian locals at surf breaks that included world renowned breaks such as Waimea, Pipeline and Sunset beach. During these years, I placed fourth at my first University competition where I was the only female in a field of twelve.

After graduating and returning to New Zealand I entered and won my first National Bodyboarding title which also meant I was selected as the sole female bodyboarder on the New Zealand Surf Team to compete at the World Surf Games (the Olympics for Surfing) in Huntington Beach, California. This experience of winning a National title and competing at the World Surf Games became the first of several additional opportunities over the space of ten years. Over this time I was fortunate to bodyboard

at Teuahapo'o, a world renowned surf break in Tahiti, and compete in a range of different countries such as Ecuador and Portugal.

During this ten year period I was strongly encouraged by my boyfriend, who later became my husband, to pit my skills against the best in the world by competing at a World Womens Bodyboarding Tour event. After placing seventh overall at my first event on the Gold Coast, I decided I would take my bodyboarding skills to the next level and aim for the World Womens' Amateur Bodyboarding Title. It was during my second year competing as an amateur in the World Womens Tour that I secured the World Amateur title, which I then repeated for the next two years.

Since 2005, I have also been involved in the organization of the sport of bodyboarding within New Zealand as President, and later as an executive member on the Bodyboard Surfing New Zealand (BBSNZ) Executive Committee. Over the next few years, I worked toward rekindling the communication between the bodyboarding and surfing communities by also working with Surfing New Zealand (SNZ). In so doing, I helped repair the previously damaged relationship between the two organizations. During this time I also became a qualified ASP (Association of Surfing Professionals) surfing judge and was able to observe competition procedures used by SNZ and implement them into the BBSNZ competition structure. After organizing a course to qualify New Zealand riders with the International Bodyboarding Association (IBA) judging qualification, the BBSNZ tour was at its most professionally constructed structure. It was at this time that a consistent bodyboarding tour with sponsorship and positive

outcomes for competitors was established (reserved representative spots at Pipeline and the World Surfing Games).

Over the past two decades I have had numerous experiences that have influenced how I feel about the sport of bodyboarding, and my identity inside and outside of the sport. Some of the aspects that influenced and affected me related to issues of gender, culture and ethnicity, as well as discrimination from stand-up surfers based on the type of surf craft I had chosen to ride. Drawing upon an array of international and domestic literature on the gendered and cultural dimensions of sport, I became increasingly interested in learning about and investigating the experiences of other New Zealand bodyboarders, in particular issues regarding power and access to riding waves. Therefore, the aim of my research is to give the bodyboarding community within New Zealand a voice through the sharing and collaboration of experiences through a sociological academic lens.

Surfing and Bodyboarding

The most common word associated with the act of wave riding is 'surfing.' The problem with the term 'surfing' is that it holds multifarious meanings in society today, and its use depends on the assumptions of the individual using the word, or the body of knowledge being used to interpret the term. For example, enter the word 'surfing' into an online search engine and options related to web surfing, channel surfing and recreational surfing will appear. Moreover, the recreational or sporting form of surfing is an umbrella term often used to refer to anyone who rides a wave, regardless of the wave-riding craft used (e.g. surfboard, bodyboard, kneeboard). Due

to the varied uses of the term 'surfing,' it is necessary to contextualise how 'surfing' will be used throughout this research.

Within the sporting world, surfing commonly eludes to “the act of standing on a board and sliding across waves” (Barr, 2005, p. 9). However, even this definition can be misconstrued as individuals who ride the waves on bodyboards, knee boards, surf skis or using their own body also use the term 'surfing' to describe the act of participating in their sport or leisure activity. There are many times when I have indicated that I'm 'going for a surf' and people who don't know me well assume that I'll be stand-up short board surfing, as this tends to be the most common understanding of the term among the broader public. Hence, to clarify the context and use of the word surfing in my research, the term 'surfing' will be defined as the act of riding waves.

Taking into consideration the numerous ways in which an individual can surf on the waves, it is also important to differentiate and define the types of surfing I will be discussing. In this research project I will be exploring stand-up surfing, as described in the previous paragraph by Barr, and bodyboarding which is lying in a prone position whilst riding the waves (Stroh, n.d.). The stand-up surfing I will be analysing is not the sport where riders are standing on their board the entire time whilst holding a paddle (this is the increasingly popular activity of Stand Up paddle boarding or SUPing), but rather the sport where the rider paddles in a prone position then gets to their feet to ride the wave. It is also important to note that stand up surfing has at least two categories; short board and long board surfing. The main difference between these two

modes of surfing relate to the length of the board and the types of manoeuvres that can be performed on each. With short board stand up surfing, the manoeuvres tend to be aggressive and more explosive, while long board stand up surfing, or longboarding is typically a more relaxed and fluid style, emphasising grace and flow over speed and dynamism (Stranger, 2011). Hence, the majority of sociological literature that I will be drawing upon for this project relates to the short board form of stand-up surfing.

Wave Riding History

Stand-up surfing and body boarding have the same historical roots. According to Finney and Houston (1996), “no one knows who first realized the possibilities of riding the swells ...[but] simple board-surfing...was practised throughout the Pacific Islands” (pg. 21). In Finney and Houston’s (1996) book titled *Surfing: A History of the Ancient Hawaiian Sport*, illustrations of wave-riding craft in the late 1800s included individuals standing, lying prone and even sitting on boards of varied lengths whilst riding a wave. This showed that even in the earliest surf history records, wave riding was performed in many ways. One of the first boards that resembled the modern day bodyboard was a ‘Paipo’ board or belly board which was between 2 to 4 feet in length (Finney & Houston, 1996). It wasn’t until the early 1900’s, however, when Hawaiian based American competitive swimmer and waterman, Duke Kahanamoku, helped project stand up surfing by introducing the sport to places such as Australia, and mainland America (Osmond, 2010; Walker, 2011). This initial introduction was the first among a series of events and agents that

helped develop the popularity of stand-up surfing. While stand-up surfing and surf culture were catapulted into the limelight, bodyboarding was largely left behind and remains relatively unmentioned in most popular surfing histories. Over the next hundred years, the short surfboard has been redesigned and reshaped to suit the varied wave riding preferences, and the competitive side of short board surfing has been boosted and propelled into the limelight by mainstream media since the 1960's (Booth, 1994; Osmond, 2010, 2011; Pearson, 1979).

The first modern day bodyboard was created in 1971 by Tom Morey, a surfboard shaper who had moved from California to Hawaii. Morey shaped the first body board out of polyethylene foam and quickly found himself selling thousands. In fact, by 1977 Morey was producing 80,000 boards a year that were mostly sold in the United States (Borte, 2009). The introduction of the bodyboard and prodigious influx of sales into the surfing fraternity wasn't necessarily deemed a positive move, as mentioned by Stranger (2011) who described that "the popularity of bodyboarding ... added considerably to overcrowding" (p. 73). Nonetheless, the ease and fun with which a novice to the beach could enjoy catching waves on a bodyboard appealed to the masses. Equally enticing was the low cost associated with purchasing such a board (Barry, 1997; Higdon, 1990; Lebrecht, 1990). With accessibility and cost being taken out of the equation regarding participation in surfing, it was no wonder the number of bodyboarders continued to grow during the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s. While many continued to participate during the holidays to the beach, others became highly committed to the practice of

bodyboarding and dedicated considerable time and energy to developing and learning new skills. These 'hard core' participants began pushing the boundaries of what was popularly considered bodyboarding by creating aerial and dynamic manoeuvres that led to the establishment of a competitive bodyboarding scene.

The first recorded professional bodyboard competition was held at Huntington Beach in 1979, a mere eight years after the creation of the bodyboard. The following year another international bodyboarding event was held at Pipeline in Hawaii where the foundation was laid for a regular competition that is still contested today (Borte, 2009). The extreme side of bodyboarding now has a formal well established organisation and tour under the banner of the International Bodyboarding Association (IBA) where events are held at surf breaks all over the world (Taylor, 2012). However, despite the increased participation and formal competitive structure, bodyboarding continues to hold a marginal position within the broader surf culture where short board surfing continues to dominate.

Chapter Summary

While there are extreme uses of the bodyboard in the sport of bodyboarding, this project will be focusing on the everyday experiences of committed, though not necessarily competitive, New Zealand bodyboarders. Even though there is a plethora of social science research on experiences of stand-up surfers (Booth, 2001; Ford & Brown, 2006; Stranger, 2011), only one article sheds light on the experiences of bodyboarders (Waitt & Clifton, 2012). Furthermore, very little research on

lifestyle sports has been presented from the perspective of non-white participants.

Thus, the structure of this project will begin with a literature review in Chapter 2 on lifestyle sports and surf culture which will point out the gaps in literature that this project aims to address. Chapter 3 discusses the research design including the methods and theoretical approach I adopted to develop an understanding of the complexities of New Zealand bodyboarders experiences. Here I also discuss Maori and Samoan ways of being that strongly influence this body of work. In Chapter 4, I expand further upon my use of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's concept of field to construct and present the surf field through the perspectives of New Zealand bodyboarders. Gendered experiences on the waves are put under scrutiny in Chapter 5 where I examine the ways female and male bodyboarders negotiate space in the surf field. I also investigate how the activity of bodyboarding influences the participants' understandings of femininity and masculinity. In the final analysis chapter, I focus on New Zealand bodyboarders experiences of ethnicity and culture. In each of the analysis chapters, I draw upon Bourdieu's theoretical framework to help shed light into the workings of power within surfing culture in New Zealand, and how bodyboarders negotiate space in the hierarchically organized surf culture in which they typically hold positions of less status and respect purely because of their prone positioning. In the concluding Chapter 7, a summary of the purpose and major findings of this project will be presented as well as opportunities for future research. I also illustrate the need for more intersectional approaches to studying the experiences

of those in the bodyboarding and surfing cultures more broadly. As I explain, aspects of gender and ethnicity cannot be separated as they combine and intersect to influence the identities and experiences of New Zealand bodyboarders.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter I briefly review socio-cultural literature related to lifestyle sports, with a particular focus on identity and how this is related to gender and ethnicity. I begin by offering a brief introduction to the key concepts of gender, race and ethnicity, culture, before reviewing how these concepts are employed in the action sports literature. In so doing, I will focus on research on board sports closely related to body-boarding, particularly surfing, windsurfing, skateboarding and snowboarding. By taking an intersectional approach to identity through the use of gender and ethnicity and then investigating how this identity is constructed through leisure sports culture and space, I will show how my research on the experiences of New Zealand bodyboarders addresses a gap in sport sociology.

In the field of sociology social identity is commonly understood as “how we locate ourselves in the society in which we live and the ways in which we perceive others as locating us” (Bradley, 1996, p. 24). The importance of identity is mentioned by Woodward (1997), who points out that “Identity gives us a location in the world and presents the link between us and the society in which we live” (p. 1). So, although identity is an individual’s perception of where they fit, it is important because it helps a person understand who they are and their perceived location in the world. According to Wagg, Wheaton, Brick and Cauldwell (2009), our identity comes from numerous sources including sex, gender, ethnicity, social class, nationality, sexuality, sport, to name a few, with some sources of identity holding greater status in different contexts. For example, an individual’s national identity might seem more relevant when travelling

overseas and less significant upon returning to their home country. Alternatively, one's identification with a particular sports team might be more important when attending a game against a rival team, and less important when picking his/her child up from school.

The body is often a key space in which individuals perform or display their identities, and read others. Identity is a multidimensional concept, but in this chapter I have chosen to focus on two dimensions, gender and ethnicity. These two aspects interest me in the sport of bodyboarding mostly because I am female and of Maori and Samoan ethnicity, and as I commenced my literature review I quickly recognized a gap in the literature on action sports as to how gender and ethnicity intersect in different sport and physical cultural spaces. Inspired by my own observations in the surf and on beaches in New Zealand and around the world, I am interested in finding out how gender and ethnicity affect other bodyboarders experiences and understandings of identity. Additionally, if I widen my scope too much by including multiple aspects of identity, I fear I would not be able to provide enough depth in each area for a robust analysis. This is, of course, an acknowledged limitation of intersectional scholarship (Choo & Ferree, 2010; McCall, 2005).

Gender studies approaches have been popular across an array of fields of research ranging from education, history and sociology. Historically, studies on gender emerged during the political period of the 1960s when feminist scholars and activists became concerned by gender and sexual inequalities in various social spaces (e.g., female reproduction rights, the work force, education). One such inequality existed in the

failure of historical narratives to tell 'her-story' and this led to the development of women's history (Osborne & Skillen, 2011). These developments sought to give women a voice in 'his-story' which eventuated in gender studies that gave greater consideration to power inequalities in various spheres of contemporary social life (e.g., family, work, sport). Given that gender identity permeates through all aspects of life such as culture, ethnicity, and employment, and is context specific, it is no wonder that research to understand these perspectives and experiences is on-going, with different disciplines engaging a wide array of methods and theories to examine the complexities of gender in contemporary society. However, regardless of the field in which gender is interpreted there are some key features underpinning much of this research that need to be briefly noted.

A key distinction is between the concepts of sex and gender. While these terms are often mistakenly used interchangeably in everyday dialogue, clear distinctions are necessary when engaging in research. Whereas sex refers to the biological dimensions of our male or female bodies, gender refers to how society reads and makes meaning of our bodies as 'masculine' or 'feminine' (Coakley, 1998). Gender as defined by Wagg et al. (2009), "refers to the social roles and identities typically ascribed to one sex or the other in any given human society" (p. 87). Others have discussed gender as a performance in which individuals engage in masculine or feminine practices and behaviours that are then read and interpreted within particular social groups and contexts. Butler's work (1999) was integral to thinking about gender as a performance,

stating “that identity is performatively constituted by the very “expressions” that are said to be its results” (p. 33). For example, a young woman in contemporary New Zealand society might wear make-up, heels and a dress to a family wedding because she understands this is the ‘appropriate’ femininity in this context, but the next day she might perform a different gender identity when she goes to her rugby training practice.

A plethora of research has examined the gendered dimensions of sport. Some have examined sport as a masculinizing experience, and investigated the ways men make meaning of their own and other male bodies through their sport participation and consumption (Dworkin & Wachs, 2000; Messner, 1989; Pringle, 2005). Others have focussed on women’s experiences in the traditionally masculine space of sport, paying close attention to the ways women have been marginalized in sports (particularly those that most challenge the maleness of sport eg. Boxing, rugby and other traditional male team sports), and how some women negotiate the masculine and feminine dimensions of their identities in various sporting spaces. As some scholars suggest, although most action sport were created by men, for men, they are less entrenched in traditional gender norms and thus may offer new spaces for different gender relations between male and female participants (Laurendeau & Sharara, 2008; Thorpe, 2005; Wheaton, 2002). Within these studies questions of power relations (and imbalances) or participation within varied sporting environments are asked, and reasons for on-going inequalities toward women and some men are also investigated.

In my project I aim to draw attention to the experiences of male and female bodyboarders in an effort to understand the role gender plays in formation of masculine and feminine identities in bodyboarding. I am particularly interested in the ways male and female bodyboarders negotiate space in the typically hyper-masculine surf line-up, and how they perform (or challenge) particular traditionally-defined 'masculine' or 'feminine' behaviours in and out of the water. For example, how do male bodyboarders negotiate assumptions (among other surfers) that bodyboarding is less masculine than stand-up surfing? Or, how do female bodyboarders navigate space in the often male-dominated line-up? Such general questions led me to articulate specific research questions such as, what are your experiences surfing among groups of male short-board surfers? And, how do male short-board surfers react when you surf near them? As I attempt to answer these questions, I will draw upon a plethora of recent literature on gender, sport and physical culture.

Gender, is of course, just one dimension of our identity as ethnicity also plays an important role in an individual's sense of self and belonging. In everyday conversations, ethnicity is often associated with the term 'race'. But, in sociology the preferred term is ethnicity "as it avoids the fixed and dubious categorisations that are associated with race" (Craig & Beedie, 2010, p. 141). To clarify and explain why ethnicity is the preferred term, both race and ethnicity need to be defined. Craig and Beedie (2010), define race as referring "to a set of social relationships that permit individuals and groups to be assigned various capacities and competencies on the basis of a number of biologically identified features"

(p. 141). Adair (2008), further explains that race is “applied to skin color and stereotypical assumptions about identity, status, and physiology associated with racialized appearance” (p. 2). On the other hand, ethnicity, “refers to cultural features that may be handed down from one generation to the next” (Deane & Davis, 1987, p. 286). Adair (2008) supports this definition when explaining that ethnicity “has fundamental links with ancestry but not biology: [such as] family, language, religion and nationality” (p. 2). Therefore, race relates to physical categories such as skin colour and any accompanying assumptions, whereas ethnicity encompasses socialising factors such as language, family and religion. It is important to note here that ethnicity does not always relate to ancestry. For example, I have a cousin whose ancestry is New Zealand European, yet he claims his ethnicity as being Samoan because he was raised as a Samoan, and embodies Samoan culture. Hence we see that ethnicity plays out differently for individuals and groups of people and as such, it is very difficult to define.

New Zealand is a multi-ethnic society that is predominantly made up of peoples of European, Maori, Asian and Pacific descent. A snapshot of the population in New Zealand indicates that the people of European descent make up 67.6% of the population followed by Maori at 14.6%, Asian at 9.2% and the lowest of the top four being Pacific peoples at 6.9% (Statistics New Zealand, 2006b). It is important to note that while the New Zealand census reports allow people to select multiple ethnicities, there exist homogenised groups of people, such as those of European descent, whose individual preferences are not listed in the options available (British,

Irish etc.). As such, it is important to acknowledge the different terms individuals use to identify themselves. For the participants of European descent in this study, the terms they used to identify themselves were New Zealander, or New Zealand European. Hence, in consideration of the participants, I will use New Zealand European when referencing them. However, I will also use the term 'Pakeha' (the Maori term for people of European descent) in the context of literature relating to Maori and Maori individuals.

While New Zealand European are the dominant ethnic group in New Zealand, there is a strong emphasis on maintaining and preserving indigenous Maori practices including language, culture, traditions and pedagogies. Research on Maori is diverse and ranges from politics (O'Sullivan, 2008), arts (Ryan & Higgins, 2006; Skinner, 1916), and education (Fitzpatrick, 2011d; G. Smith, 2011). Of particular relevance to this study is the growing body of literature on Maori and sport. Hokowhitu (2008), is a Maori academic who has studied the perceptions and stereotypes surrounding Maori physicality and sporting participation. He points out that many physical educators assume that "Maori and Pacific people are positioned as practical and physical" (Hokowhitu, 2008, p. 81), and he provides examples of both Maori and Pakeha assumptions that Maori and Pacific people are only good at sport and are unable to excel in other areas. This perception does not sit well with Hokowhitu (2008) who believes that it limits potential and unfairly stereotypes Maori and Pacific people. Furthermore, Hokowhitu (2008), questions the social perceptions associated with the Maori and Pacific body as being violent and

dysfunctional and encourages educators to let go of these assumptions “to enable an openness to different ways of conceiving the world” (p. 89).

Before discussing assumptions surrounding Pacific Island people, it is important to gain an understanding of the meaning of ‘Pacific Islanders’ or ‘Pacific Island people.’ An explanation is provided by McFall-McCaffery (2010) who explain, ““Pacific” is not homogeneous, but represents a diverse and distinct range of cultures and languages. Pacific ethnic groups speak different languages and have different cultural practices and customs” (p. 2). Hence Samoans, Tongans, Fijians, Niueans, Tokelau are all very distinct, yet in New Zealand are categorised under the terms ‘Pacific Islanders’ or ‘Pacific Island people.’ While I personally do not condone the homogeneity of the terms ‘Pacific Islanders’ and ‘Pacific Island people’ on an individual level, collectively this term can hold a lot of power when looking to unite a group for a common cause. Therefore, it should be noted that in this project the use of Pacific Islanders, Pacific Island people, and the actual island an individual’s ancestry comes from (Samoans; Tongans) will be referred to interchangeably.

The assumption that Pacific Island people are naturally good at sport is also discussed by Schaaf (2006) in his research on elite Samoan male rugby players. The purpose of this particular study was to investigate the motivations of three elite Samoan athletes to determine why they chose to participate in sport at this level. Moreover, he argues that the Samoan players interviewed revealed the importance of family and religion, which must be considered by coaches working with Samoan athletes. Schaaf (2006) also encourages coaches to reconsider biological

assumptions about players potential which may be unfairly limiting their opportunities based on racial stereotyping. One of the participants in this research shared his experience of being racially discriminated when he was at school. Schaaf (2006) explained that, "Some teachers suggested he would end up only playing rugby and not advancing further than year eleven. People struggled to accept that he had both rugby skills and academic prowess" (p. 47). So here we see the stereotyping of the Pacific Island body where it is only useful for sport. Although not directly related to bodyboarding, Hokowhitu (2008) and Schaafs' (2006) articles present assumptions that are attributed to Maori and Pacific Island people in New Zealand society. As I will reveal in Chapter 6, some of these stereotypes follow the Maori and Pacific Island participants into the surf, and as a result they are forced to negotiate these using varied strategies.

One of the important aspects mentioned in the 2006 census report is that numerous New Zealand residents identify with more than one ethnicity. This represents the diversifying of ethnic groups within New Zealand society and in turn creates varied levels of 'belonging' within an ethnic group. Bell (2004) critiques the mixed ethnicities of Maori-Pakeha through a cultural studies lens and presents some discussions that can also be applied in a sociological context. Through her dissection of the Maori and Pakeha political landscape, Bell (2004) describes the complexities and difficulties of individuals who occupy an 'in-between' position. Acknowledged in this chapter are the "tensions experienced by the individuals as they negotiate their identities between the Maori and Pakeha worlds" (Bell, 2004, p. 129). Having a mixed ethnic heritage

myself, Maori and Samoan, I empathised with the discourse in this article as I regularly experience feelings of inadequacy and tension when in the presence of Maori and Samoan individuals. As I will reveal in Chapter 3, there are opportunities and constraints in occupying two different ethnic groups. The majority of participants in my study also have mixed ethnic backgrounds so in this project I will be investigating how, and if, their ethnicity affects their participation in a sport that is dominated by New Zealand Europeans. Some of the questions I aim to address include, how do female and male bodyboarders of Maori and/or Pacific Island ethnicities negotiate space in a sport dominated by New Zealand European men? And, what ethnicity do you associate with when bodyboarding if you have mixed ethnicities, but look Pakeha? To tackle such questions I will employ a diverse range of literature relating to ethnicity and various ethnic groups.

Contextualising Themes

Alternative, lifestyle, or extreme sports, such as skateboarding, BMX, mountain-biking, wakeboarding, inline skating, and snowboarding have been forging a place in Westernised society since (at least) the 1960's. Many alternative youth embraced these new activities because they appeared so radically different to traditional sports which were becoming increasingly competitive, hierarchical and authoritarian. In contrast to traditional sports such as rugby, football and tennis, there were no coaches and no strict training schedules, rather these new sports seemed to celebrate physical play, self-expression and creativity. Researchers have increasingly focussed on the sociological and historical aspects of

various extreme sports (Atencio, Beal, & Wilson, 2009; Booth & Thorpe, 2007; M. Donnelly, 2006; Wheaton, 2004), revealing both commonalities and differences in the development of particular sports in different contexts. According to Wheaton (2010), research on alternative lifestyle sports is relatively new but also exciting as each sport has its own set of nuances, esoteric terminology and culture. In the *Encyclopedia of Extreme Sports*, Booth and Thorpe (2007) also look at numerous sports by compiling literature that discusses varied aspects surrounding the different types of sports. Scholars have engaged in in-depth investigations of various extreme sports cultures including skateboarding (Atencio, et al., 2009; Beal, 1996; Borden, 2001; Kelly, Pomerantz, & Currie, 2005), snowboarding (Anderson, 1999; Heino, 2000; Thorpe, 2011), windsurfing (Dant & Wheaton, 2007; Wheaton, 2000a; Wheaton & Tomlinson, 1998) and surfing (Booth, 2001; Daskalos, 2007; Diehm & Armatas, 2004; Evers, 2004; Ford & Brown, 2006; M. Henderson, 2001; Olivier, 2010; Rinehart, 2005; Rodwell, 1999; Waitt, 2008). In so doing they have focussed on an array of sociological themes and concepts relating to various dimensions of identity (M. Donnelly, 2006; P. Donnelly & Young, 1988; Wheaton, 2000a; Wheaton & Beal, 2003), such as gender (Beal, 1996; Kelly, et al., 2005; Thorpe, 2005), ethnicity (King, Leonard, & Kusz, 2007; Kusz, 2007), and culture (Edensor & Richards, 2007).

In this section I will briefly examine sociological, historical and geographical literature relating to gender, ethnicity, and culture in windsurfing, skateboarding, snowboarding and surfing, to show how they assist in supporting the purpose and structure of my research. The

relationship between surfing, skateboarding and snowboarding has been linked to the similar technique used when participating in all three sports “they all use one board and a sideways stance” (Heino, 2000, p. 178). Continuing, Heino (2000) points out that this similarity “is the argument used to align the groups; yet, the stronger connection is not in technique but in the resistance of their predominantly youth cultures to the dominant culture [and] also in the meaning of the activity itself” (p. 178). It is important to point out that while there are many other alternative lifestyle extreme sports, I have chosen the above sports as the key sociological themes used to understand and research each of these sports have a strong connection to this socio-cultural investigation of bodyboarding.

Extreme, Alternative and Lifestyle Cultures

The terms ‘alternative’, ‘lifestyle’, and ‘extreme’ are often used interchangeably, yet can hold different meanings to researchers, participants and the general population. Understanding and defining the parameters within ‘extreme sport’ becomes quite challenging as some of the characteristics used are also inherent in traditional sports. For example, Sagert (2009), points out that “extreme sports athletes are able to express themselves creatively by adding new spins, twists, jumps or stunts to their performance . . . [yet] this is also true to a degree with gymnasts, ice skaters, ice dancers, and high divers” (p. 18). Continuing, Sagert (2009), explains, that although not one single characteristic can define extreme sports, there is a loosely used group of characteristics that relates to all forms of extreme sports. These characteristics include;

an element of danger; are generally individualistic attempts to master an activity, often through unexpected or creative ways, with these individuals oftentimes interested in breaking records or exceeding previous limitations of human endeavour; and are closely connected to a young and alternative subculture (p. 20).

Similarly, Booth and Thorpe (2007) have also stated that “Extreme sports are about taking risks, pushing the limits, breaking the rules, and-at least sometimes- about having fun” (p. 9). Sagert (2009) additionally states;

that an extreme sport is more extreme than traditional sports in the amount of danger inherent in the activity, whether the danger comes from speed, height, tricks performed, physical exertion required, or something else entirely. Moreover, in extreme sports, uncontrollable variables often are involved in regards to the weather or other factors in the natural environment (p. 7).

Another term that tends to be used within the extreme sporting environment is ‘alternative.’ In modern times the term ‘alternative’ often refers to being different to the majority. This concept of being ‘different’ or distinct from others is reiterated by Rinehart and Sydnor (2003) who state that “Alternative sports are often articulated by their originators and media as moving beyond the old-world sport order” (p. 11). The culture in the alternative landscape as described by Rinehart and Sydnor (2003) is one that often exalts the tattooed macho male image who butts against conformist attitudes. Despite their differences, the terms extreme and alternative are inextricably linked and often used interchangeably when describing the extreme sport environment.

On the other hand, when adding the term 'lifestyle' to this body of scholarship, a different level of interpretation begins to take shape. Wheaton (2010), explains that "Lifestyle sports are a specific type of alternative sport, including both established activities like skateboarding through to newly emergent activities like kite-surfing" (p. 1059). In simple terms, Wheaton (2010), explains her use of the term lifestyle as "the term used by many of the participants, who describe their activities as 'lifestyles' rather than as 'sports'" (p. 1059). Lifestyle sport participants do not always participate in competitions, but often dedicate considerable time and resources into pursuing their activities. As Wheaton (2010) and others have explained, many lifestyle sport participants organize their entire lives around participation. For example, a committed surfer might move to a small beach town with good waves and take-up a job as a surf instructor, or start their own surf-board shaping business, so that they are closer to the surf, and can thus access the waves when the wind, tide and swells are right. Similarly, a lifestyle or 'core' snowboarder might move to a ski resort town and work as bartender or waitress so he/she can spend the day on the slopes (Thorpe, 2011). With these examples in mind, it is no wonder that "Participants identify themselves through recognizable styles, bodily dispositions, expressions and attitudes, which they design into a distinctive lifestyle, and a particular social identity" (Wheaton, 2010, p. 1059). Furthermore, "the meaning of these lifestyle sport activities for the participants is found in their creative and self-actualization potential, through which the individual loses him/herself in 'transcendence of the self'" (Wheaton, 2010, p. 1059). Being a participant in the sport of

bodyboarding the term 'lifestyle sport' as defined and developed by Wheaton (2010), accurately describes my long term involvement in bodyboarding. Indeed, I have made many decisions to ensure that I am able to access the surf when it is 'pumping,' and holidays are typically planned to destinations that have good surf. Additionally, through participating in bodyboarding the emotions I experience when completing an aerial or acrobatic manoeuvre certainly do relate to feeling a sense of transcendence. Moreover, as a highly committed and competitive bodyboarder, my experiences in this sport played an important role in my identity construction as both a female and Samoan/Maori athlete.

For this research project I will be using the concepts related to 'lifestyle' as defined by Wheaton (2010). The majority of participants in this research participate in bodyboarding as part of their lifestyle and their participation is based on developing their skills or just enjoying being in the surf. All of my participants relate to bodyboarding as being an integral part of their identity, yet the majority do not put themselves in situations where they are pushing their physical and psychological boundaries in 'extreme' environments. Given that the ocean is unpredictable at times and can be dangerous if certain precautions are not taken, the majority of participants in my study try to match their own ability based on the conditions of the surf and tend to not surf in conditions where they will be at a high risk of injury or death. Although there are certainly extreme forms of bodyboarding where participants put themselves at risk on purpose by surfing in big waves on shallow shelves of reef, this is not the form of bodyboarding practised by the majority of my participants.

Delving further into the construction of lifestyle sports, Wheaton (2010) states that they “are attracting an ever-increasing body of followers and participants, from increasingly diverse global geographical settings” (p. 1058). Continuing, she explains that contemporary lifestyle sport participants;

have a broad range of interests and experiences, from the ‘outsiders’ who experience activities as media consumers, or who occasionally experience participation via an array of ‘taster’ activities being marketed through the adventure sport and travel industries, to the ‘hard-core’ committed practitioners who are fully familiarized in the lifestyle, argot, fashion and technical skill of their activity(ies), and spend considerable time, energy and often money doing it (Wheaton, 2010, p. 1058).

Furthermore, the pace at which these lifestyle sports are growing is beginning to take over the growth of traditional sports in many westernised societies (Wheaton, 2010). The advent of the internet, the popularity of online video networks such as you-tube, mega events such as the X Games and the Olympics, movies such as Blue Crush, and the multi-billion dollar extreme sports industry, have all played a role in the proliferation of select lifestyle sports around the world, particularly surfing, skateboarding and snowboarding. What then becomes interesting are the lived experiences of the diverse individuals who participate in lifestyle sports and the approaches employed by sociologists and other researchers to make sense of their participation within the broader socio-cultural context.

Cultures of Risk and Stoke

A common thread that is woven through many lifestyle extreme sports is that of risk (Booth & Thorpe, 2007; Sagert, 2009). Socio-psychological research on why people participate in activities that involve elements of risk or 'sensation seeking' activities is well documented (Chirivella & Martinez, 1994; Diehm & Armatas, 2004; Stranger, 1999; Zuckerman, 1983, 2006) and these researchers seek to understand and explain why participants put themselves into what non-participants may perceive as 'life-threatening situations.' In relation to extreme sports, psychologists Self, de Vries Henry, Findley, Reilly and Erin (2007) explain that the attraction of extreme sports for risk-takers is that their actions in these environments are not questioned, but instead revered and as a result they feel a sense of belonging. Continuing, Self et al. (2007) suggest that people engage in risk taking for a myriad of reasons that might include neural, physiological, social, psychological or cultural influences. So, while the unique style, identity and culture of lifestyle sports may attract and unite individuals, according to sport psychologists, there are also elements within individuals that may influence them to take part in particular styles of participation.

Integral to discussions of risk in lifestyle sports is the notion of perceived risk. Adopting a sociological approach towards risk taking, Booth and Thorpe (2007) explain that individuals will constantly re-assess and recalculate what they view as risk. For example, "what appears high risk at one moment might seem perfectly safe the next-and vice versa" (Booth & Thorpe, 2007, p. 181). This statement holds a lot of value in

surfing and bodyboarding due to the changing tides and increase or decrease in swell which constantly affects the environment, and in turn alters the risks quite dramatically. Skill level, experience and knowledge of environmental elements also plays an important role in risk calculation and novice participants can sometimes over-estimate their ability which in turn puts them in life threatening situations. As I explain later in this thesis, this is particularly true in relation to the surfing experiences for visitors to dangerous beaches on the West Coast of New Zealand, such as Piha. So, perception of skill mastery can cause drastic variations in perceived risk and actual risk which in turn greatly affects the experiences of participants.

Perhaps one of the most obvious reasons for participating in lifestyle sports is the 'fun' or 'stoke' of the activity. As researchers have revealed, snowboarders and surfers often mention 'fun' and or 'stoke' when describing their experiences. Jake Burton equipment manufacturer of snowboarding explains that "Snowboarders are dead serious about having fun," (Burton, 2003, as cited in Rhinehart and Sydnor, 2003, p. 402); Terje Haakonsen a professional snowboarder describes his feelings about why he snowboards "It's just a joy, the joy of . . . playing (cited in Booth & Thorpe 2007, p. 184). Adopting a cultural studies approach, Evers (2006) offers the first scholarly analysis of the affective experience of 'stoke': "If one is very stoked, they experience a fully embodied feeling of satisfaction, joy, and pride. You will tingle from your head to your toes" (p. 231). The feeling of 'stoke' is regularly sought by hard core participants and perhaps explains why some dedicated individuals continue to seek out more challenging situations.

Cultural Hierarchies in Board Sports

In the process of investigating lifestyle sports, Donnelly (2006), expressed concern that much of the research to date has focused on the experiences of highly proficient and dedicated participants to the exclusion of less committed participants. According to Donnelly (2006), lifestyle sport researchers have failed to include “a whole range of subcultural participation and participants beyond the forms of authentic participation” (p. 219). She mentions that only the voices of the “hard core participants” are heard through much research that has been undertaken in extreme leisure sports. As a ‘hard core’ participant myself, it initially seemed natural to assume that the most committed participants would have the most in depth knowledge and understanding of a sport, and thus would offer insightful perspectives on the culture. However, Donnelly (2006) highlights another viewpoint from which to understand lifestyle sports. She argues that extreme sport cultures are highly fragmented consisting of various groups who participate in different ways, ranging from novice to professional athletes. She believes all these voices and experiences are important and challenge researchers to go beyond the core participants understandings of these sports. Before and following Donnelly’s (2006) arguments, some lifestyle sport scholars have examined the perspectives and experiences of participants from various positions within lifestyle sport cultures such as windsurfing (Wheaton, 2000a; Wheaton & Tomlinson, 1998) and snowboarding (Sisjord, 2009; Thorpe, 2011).

As previously discussed, bodyboarding has a wide range of casual participants due to the ease with which one can participate, for example a

novice can enjoy the sport from their first time in the water (Borte, 2009). On the other hand, the 'hard core', highly committed, or lifestyle bodyboarder enjoys the sport by increasing or perfecting a repertoire of manoeuvres or by pushing physical and mental boundaries through tackling bigger or heavier waves. Taking this into consideration, Donnelly's (2006) point holds merit for me as a researcher as there will definitely be a range of participants in the sport of bodyboarding and thus a rich pool from which to gain understanding.

Regardless of the level which an individual participates in an action sport, there are constant questions of identity and authenticity (P. Donnelly & Young, 1988; Edensor & Richards, 2007; Evers, 2004; Thorpe, 2004; Wheaton & Beal, 2003). Dant and Wheaton (2007) explain that "Subcultural capital involves distinctions between insider and outsider – 'us' and 'them' – but also helps make sense of the status hierarchies within the culture, recognizing the ways in which the social determinants of class, age, gender, sexuality and race are all employed in these hierarchies" (p. 11). In regard to windsurfing specifically, Wheaton (2000a) discusses subcultural identity as being something that is derived "from the multitude of social relationships we are engaged in and the resulting roles we perform." (p. 257). She continues by explaining that with identity, people look for the similarities and differences they have with others in an effort to determine where they feel they belong (Wheaton, 2000a). So, although individuals may participate in the same sport, there are elements that separate them in hierarchal structures where some participants are deemed 'insiders' while others are 'outsiders' even though

they all participate in the sport. For example, insider status for windsurfers includes “Beach Cred,” which is where the participant achieves credibility through ability and a “go for it attitude” (Wheaton, 2000a, p. 258). Thus, portraying high levels of skill and fearlessness can put a windsurfing participant as an insider or authentic participant of the sport and clearly distinguishes them from the less committed windsurfers and ‘the beach babes’ (Wheaton, 2002).

A similar hierarchal structure exists in skateboarding where participants can be categorised based on skill, frequency of participation and dress style. Kelly, Pomerantz and Currie (2005) split participants in their study into three categories, including the ‘hardcore’ or serious skaters, the ‘skaters’ and the ‘skater affiliates’ (p. 231). Although this particular study looked at a broad range of participants, it focussed on teenage female skateboarders in British Columbia, Canada (Kelly, et al., 2005). The stories that were collated assisted in highlighting aspects that affect the female identity when participating in sports that are male dominated. Experiences shared by some of the young women showed the varied ways in which identity was forged in their sport along with portraying the culture of skateboarding (Kelly, et al., 2005). Many of the girls mentioned that being a skater showed a form of independence and individualism away from the feminine norm which they enjoyed, yet they also felt “scrutinized and judged more quickly and harshly by some skater boys” (Kelly et al., 2005, p. 239). Atencio, Beal and Wilson (2009) further address gender perspectives when mentioning that the “men we spoke to considered the ‘girls’ to be outsiders to the street skateboarding social

field” (p. 11). Despite recognizing the maleness of the skateboarding community, the ‘hardcore’ skater girls considered themselves to be authentic participants. Authenticity for these girls was based on active participation and commitment to the practice of skateboarding, and they established their sense of identity by contrasting their commitment to the sport with the non-participating girls who embraced ‘emphasized femininity’ and accepted a more marginal role in the culture as girlfriends (or girls seeking the attention) of male skateboarders (Kelly, et al., 2005). Hence, gender plays an important part in formation of identity within lifestyle and extreme sports and this plays a distinct role in the perceptions and experiences of participants.

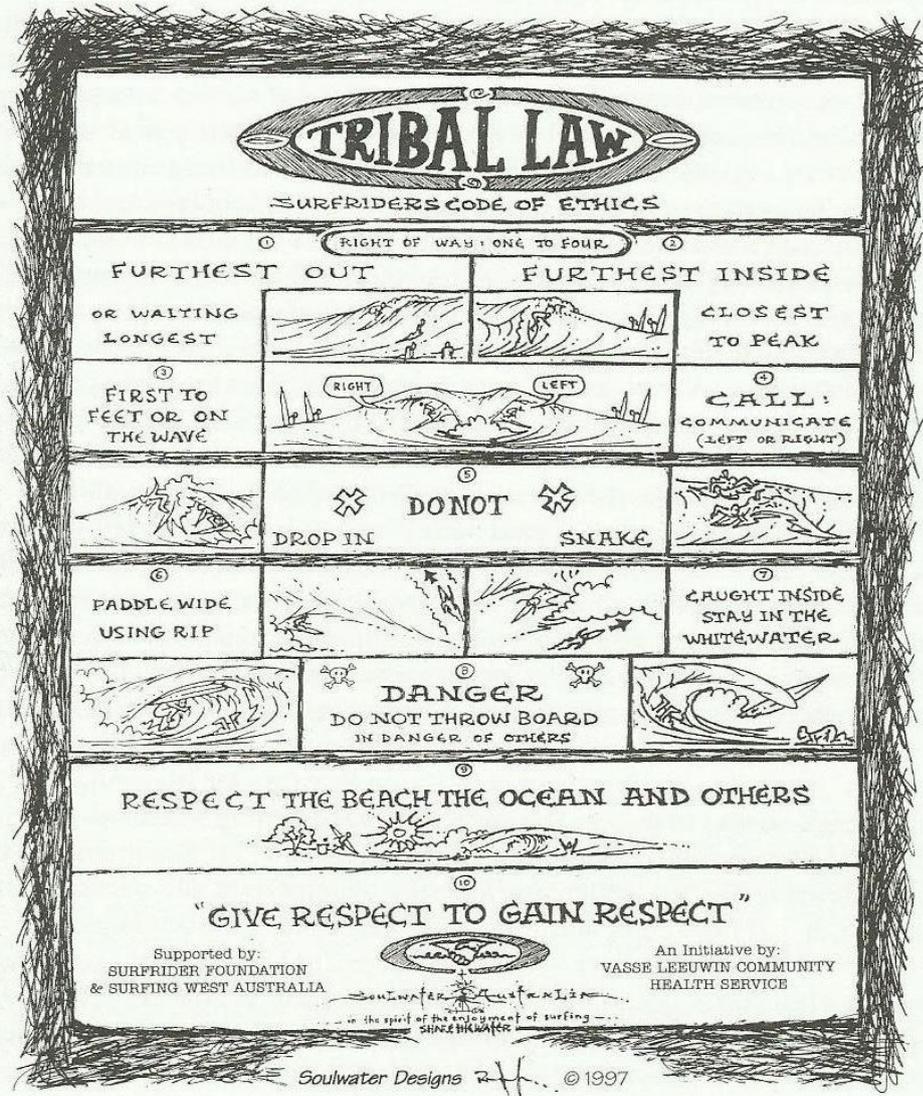
Surfing also has a hierarchal structure that spans from age and skill level, gender, surfing mode, and geographical area. A five year study was conducted by Daskalos (2007) on a group of eight local surfers who surfed at two adjoining breaks in the San Diego, California, area in the United States of America. The surfers began surfing during the 1970’s and 1980’s and were able to voice their opinions on the changes that had taken place during their lifetime in the sport (Daskalos, 2007). A major concern that surfaced was the breakdown of the previously established social context in surfing in recent years. In the past the younger, less experienced novice surfers had to ‘pay their dues’ by catching the smaller waves, sitting on the inside where waves break less frequently, and basically being at the bottom of the food chain in terms of wave size and quality. According to Daskalos (2007), nowadays, the large number of novice participants showed no respect, and many young surfers are very

talented so refuse to accept this pecking order. The surfers in this study “claimed that newcomers were ignorant of the social context into which they were intruding and were “trying to bring in status from land” to the break” (Daskalos, 2007, p. 163). Although the surfers in Daskalos (2007) were frustrated by the new set of rules (that no longer benefitted them), they were unable to establish the old order of respect so had to conform by the new, more aggressive set of rules.

In relation to respect, Young (2000) a former professional surfer from Angourie Point in Australia, presents a ‘tribal law’ of surfing (Figure 1): “Respect the beach, the ocean and others,” and “Give respect to gain respect” (p. 8). The illustration further describes the surfers code of ethics that includes, “Right of way, one to four,” “Do not Drop in or Snake” and “Danger – do not throw board in danger of others” (Young, 2000, p. 8). The purposeful or accidental breaking of rules in the surf can often end up in altercations. In his book *Surf Rage*, Young (2000), an accomplished surfer, describes his experience of being assaulted by another surfing local, Michael Hutchison, at their home break. The relationship between Young and Hutchison was amicable on land but not in the water as Hutchison would take off on every good wave, “something that isn’t done according to the unspoken rules of surfing” (Young, 2000, p. 18). The situation came to a head when a misunderstanding of surfing rules being broken between Hutchison’s son and Young resulted in Young being violently beaten by Hutchison to the point of near death (Young, 2000). Hence, rules that are broken in the surfing culture can sometimes end in altercations, and in this case, one that eventually drove a family to move

Figure 1: Tribal Law Poster from Stranger, M. (2011). *Surfing Life: Surface, Substructure and the Commodification of the Sublime*: Farnham, Surrey, Burlington, VT: Ashgate (p. 62). Courtesy of Robert Conneeley.

Illustration 3.2 Tribal Law poster



AN IDEA BORN IN THE WATERS OF MARGARET RIVER.

the "Tribal Law- Surfriders Code of Ethics" is a community developed project aimed at reducing surf related injuries, and encouraging the return of 'RESPECT' amongst surfers. A project endorsed by Leading Community, Business, Environmental and Sporting groups, it requires only one more supporter..

You...

WE ARE VERY LUCKY TO BE SURFERS - SHARE THE WATER

Above: Image courtesy of Robert Conneeley.

away from the area.

A different view of cultural hierarchies in the surfing culture is that of 'the band,' or group of friends who go surfing, 'the tribe' or the community that share a common break or culture, and finally 'the nation' which is the combination of all tribes and is more of a global structure that encompasses all aspects pertaining to surfing including media and retail (Stranger, 2011). Within this structure Stranger (2011) describes the levels, how they can overlap, particularly with band and tribe, and how they shape the social structure of the surfing culture. An example of how these hierarchies overlap could relate to a band, or group of friends who frequent a local break. While not all the people at the local break fit into the group of friends, there is still camaraderie among the locals or 'tribe' at the break. When someone who is not a local decides to surf at this break the hierarchy would come into play where the non-local would be sitting at the bottom of the food chain in terms of catching waves.

Sub-Cultural Identity

When introducing the concept of sub-culture it is important that the use of 'sub' be defined. According to Ford and Brown (2006), there are two understandings associated with the word sub. Firstly, the meaning of the prefix sub is often associated with being underneath or having a lower status. The second understanding and one that this study will draw upon relates to "the level of analysis which is below the macro level, focusing on the everyday meanings, interpretations and interactions taking place" (Ford & Brown, 2006, p. 60). When describing identity, Kelly et al. (2005)

explains that it “is always in the process of formation but never fully formed; that is, it is a site of negotiation infused, in turn, by other dynamic discourses” (p. 230). Therefore, the use of sub-cultural identity in this research relates to the inner workings of each individual, the socio-cultural factors that influence them, and the subliminal factors that help form identity.

Within lifestyle sports sub-cultures, the shared norms, values and styles are often influenced by the physical geographies, and the cultural and social influences within the local, national and international sporting culture. For example, although skateboarders in New York might wear different clothing, and adopt slightly different terminology and jargon than skateboarders in Sydney or Tokyo, skateboarders the world over ascribe to a common sense of values. In skateboarding, some of the cultural aspects that are described by Atencio et al. (2009) include creating an “urban identity that invokes freedom, non-conformity and engagement with risk” (p. 6). This is further reinforced in Kelly et al. (2005) who state that skating has an “emphasis on individual self-expression and nonconformity” (p. 238). Hence we see that skateboarding culture embraces individuality and non-conformity which is consistent and typical of youth culture.

Snowboarding shares some parallels to surfing and skateboarding cultures, and has been described as encompassing “embodied freedom, hedonism and irresponsibility”, at least during the early years (Humphreys cited in Thorpe 2004, p. 184). The embodiment of snowboarders was also highlighted through distinct “taste and style choices and . . . the symbolic practices of clothing, language and bodily deportment” (Thorpe, 2004,

p.185). In an earlier study of snowboarding culture, Heino (2000) further supports this point when stating that “It is not just the discipline or rationalization of the body when engaged in sport but the presentation of the body for others” (p. 179). Furthermore, in relation to snowboarding, Thorpe (2004) states that “The practices of dress, lingo, bodily deportment and other less visible commitments are linked to definite systems of dispositions, contribute to status differences and, thus, have social and political significance in these groups” (p. 184). Therefore, the embodiment of language, dress and presentation practices within the culture of a sport, play an important role in distinguishing core participants from less committed participants, which can in some cases affect participants’ sense of identity both within and beyond the sport.

Ethnicity in Lifestyle Sports

Another aspect that affects the experiences, cultural demographics and dynamics within lifestyle sport communities is ethnicity. Heino (2000) raises some interesting points when stating that “Skateboarding is accessible to those with lower incomes and has been embraced by more people of color than snowboarding. The snow slope is still often strikingly White, whether skiing or snowboarding” (p. 188). So, given the assumption that non-white people may fit a lower socio-economic demographic, their participation in sports such as snowboarding might be limited due to the relatively high financial expenses involved with participation. While this idea might be valid, it still doesn’t explain why non-white participants who do have the income choose not to participate. The visibility of white lifestyle sport participants in the media and in the surf,

slopes or parks, and the relative invisibility of female participants and participants of different ethnicities, continues to influence the perceptions of extreme sports as designed by and for white males.

In relation to race, Kusz (2007) explains that race has a multiplicity of meanings and categories that vary across cultures as well as through each cultures history. In terms of 'whiteness,' Kusz et al. (2007) explains that not all extreme sports participants are white yet the ethnicity portrayed in the media through stories, articles, competitions and even on X-treme paraphernalia are of white males. He argues that although extreme sports did not aim to portray the privileged white perspective, it was still a surreptitious way of exerting white dominance particularly in the United States (Kusz, 2007). To this day the extreme sports participants whose stories are told through the media are typically white males, which in turn show white dominance indeed.

Research on the sport of surfing was initially conducted by white male scholars (Evers, 2004; Ford & Brown, 2006; Daskalos, 2007; Waitt, 2008; Stranger, 2011), however there is a growing number women authors who are helping counter the popular perception of surfing being for white males (Comer, 2010; Corner, 2008; Olive, McCuaig, & Phillips, 2013). Despite this, to date, the only sociological research article on bodyboarding is from a white male perspective (Waitt & Clifton, 2012). Very few of these researchers on surfing acknowledge that the perspectives of 'non-whites' exists yet in the historical section of some, the Hawaiian culture has been attributed to have the historical roots of surfing. Walker (2011), an accomplished Hawaiian surfer, produced some differing

points relating to surfing through his book *Waves of Resistance; Surfing and History in Twentieth-Century Hawai'i*. This is the first account of the history of surfing that is portrayed through the stories of Hawaiians and where the research is conducted by a Hawaiian. One of the notable historical differences was that the sport of surfing had never stopped in Hawaii and thus was not 'brought back to life' so to speak by some Californian surfers, as it is often presented in popular histories of surfing. Walker (2011), provides evidence through Hawaiian historical records that "although fewer people surfed in the late 1800s than in centuries prior and after, he'e nalu [surfing] was neither extinct, nor even nearly extinct" (p. 30).

The voices of the Hawaiian surfers in Walker's (2011) book also present different perspectives to experiences in the surf compared with those written primarily by white males about and for other white males. For example, a highly publicized event occurred in Hawaii on October 3rd 1976 where Rabbit Bartholomew, a competitive Australian surfer, was beaten by a group of Hawaiian locals. According to Gosch (2008), the lives of Rabbit and his surfing companions were at stake during this time period largely due to an article named 'Bustin down the door' that stated Rabbit had come to take over the Hawaiian surf. The article enraged the local Hawaiians who in turn threatened the lives of Rabbit and his friends. However, Walker's (2011) book argues that "several Hawaiians later said that Australians' fears of Hawaiians attacking them with guns and knives were greatly exaggerated" (p. 135). Furthermore, Walker (2011) mentions that it was the brash disrespect shown from Rabbit when he harassed a

Hawaiian surfer Barry Kanaiaupuni that led to his beating on October 3rd. Differences in the culture were also acknowledged where Australians were expected to be the sportsman/hero so they often portrayed competitive and brash attitudes, but in Hawaii, “it’s kind of if you’ve done the job well, you really don’t have to go shouting it from one end of the place to the other” (Walker, 2011, p. 136). Hence, in this situation, the Hawaiians certainly viewed the same experience differently than the Australians.

Another example of differing views of surf history is presented in a documentary that attempts to raise awareness of the whiteness of surfing in the United States of America. The documentary is directed by Woods (2011), and aptly named *White Wash*. In this documentary, experiences shared by the African-American surfers and the history of how they have been kept off the beaches and out of the surf for many years portray a very different view on surf history in America, one that has not been documented until recently. The surfers who were interviewed for this documentary shared their experiences of how they have had to negotiate discrimination in the surf by white people, and out of the surf by black people. Despite battling the challenges of stereotypes that ‘black people don’t surf,’ the surfers in this documentary continue to participate, enjoy their time in the surf and ensure that this lifestyle sport remains part of their current history (Woods, 2011). What is reiterated through Walker (2011), and Woods (2011), is the need for other perspectives and interpretations of events and experiences to be researched from perspectives other than white, male researchers.

Forsyth and Hiene et al. (2009), investigate 'The Cultural Turn in Sport' in psychology and explain that this way of thinking "signalled a shift away from traditional understandings of culture as a social form of organization, toward an understanding of culture as a social process whereby people create meaning from everyday life and construct identities for themselves based on their lived experiences" (p. 184). Hence, cultural identity is linked to ethnicity and in turn, surfing sub-culture is linked to lifestyle sports culture. So although Gosche (2008), Walker (2011), and Woods (2011), provide insight into the surfing culture between Hawaiians and Australians, and American and African-Americans', there remains a void in sociology on the experiences of New Zealand surfers, both from white and non-white perspectives. Hence, the purpose of my research is to provide more insight into the experiences of New Zealand bodyboarders by also questioning how non-white participants negotiate their ethnic identities in spaces often dominated by New Zealand European participants. In so doing, I engage recent literature on the experiences of Maori and Pacific Island athletes in other sports in New Zealand such as Hokowhitu (2007) and Schaaf (2006).

Interactions in Shared Spaces

Many lifestyle sports take place in natural (e.g. the waves) and built (e.g. skateboard parks) spaces used for multiple purposes. When access to such spaces becomes limited due to crowding, or when individuals with different motives interact, tensions can arise. For example, snowboarders and skiers share the ski resorts, including lifts, cafes, bathrooms, car parks and the slopes; and surfers, bodyboarders, kite-surfers, and goat boaters

often share the same surf breaks. Although it is expected that all groups share the space in which the sport is participated, complications can arise when one sport or group is deemed dominant over another. In relation to use of the ski slopes, the dominant culture in the late 1980s and 1990s was perceived to be skiing which led to tensions between skiers and snowboarders. As Heino (2000) explains, "Snowboarders clashed with skiers in style of dress and body presentation, equipment and language" (p. 178). Thorpe (2004), and Heino (2000), both relate the opposition between snowboarding and skiing to the different cultures inherent in both the activities. For example, in relation to clothing, snowboarders wore "baggy clothing, [such as] low riding pants with exposed boxer shorts" (Yant, 2001, as cited in Thorpe 2004, p.186) while skiers take "the form of an all-in-one body suit, often designed in bright fluorescent colours and somewhat homogeneous in style, shape and design" (Edensor & Richards, 2007, p. 106). So while both snowboarding and skiing are in the same arena, a division between the two based on cultural differences existed during the late 1980s and 1990s.

Edensor and Richards (2007), also discuss the differences between snowboarding and skiing by comparing the clothing, movement patterns and sensual experiences between the two. Adding to the discussion on differences between the two sports it is mentioned that "there have been numerous studies of conflicts between leisure enthusiasts who share the same spatial resource" (p. 98). Edensor and Richards (2007) conclude by stating that "The conflicts between skiers and snowboarders are part of a broader, uneven process in which the competing performances of diverse

styles of movement attempt to claim space, most notably in the sphere of leisure” (p. 112). However, regarding the conflict between snowboarders and skiers in the 1980s to 1990s, Thorpe (2011) explains that “in some local fields and among some groups (e.g., freestyle skiers and snowboarders; big mountain skiers and snowboarders) these divisions are dissolving” (p. 117). She describes the growth of freestyle skiing (which shares many commonalities with snowboarding culture) as contributing to changing attitudes among snowboarders and skiers in many locations (Thorpe, 2011). The key point here, is that such tensions are dynamic and as such, can change over time. These studies also highlight the importance of commonly used leisure space and styles of movement in affecting experiences of participants.

This tension is also manifest between the sports of surfing and bodyboarding where both sports share the same leisure space, yet each has a very distinct style of riding the waves. The most obvious difference between the two is that bodyboarding is usually performed in a prone position, lying down and surfing is performed standing up. Despite this difference, participants in both sports enjoy and experience the feeling of riding a wave. However, there are definite differences between the two that can lead to conflicts in the waves and on the beach. Waitt and Clifton (2012) are among the first researchers to portray perspectives of the bodyboarding fraternity in Illawarra, New South Wales, Australia. Through their shared stories the bodyboarders in this study discuss the dynamics that occur between themselves and surfers. One participant states that “[As a bodyboarder] you get less respect than a surfer, especially

shortboard surfers” (Waitt & Clifton, 2012, p. 10). Another participant explains:

there’s a lot of ignorance surrounding bodyboarders, thinking that we only surf small waves, which is crazy. We actually surf heavier waves than anyone just because it’s physically possible, that is a bodyboarder can get further and deeper into the wave (Waitt & Clifton, 2012, p. 11).

Short board surfers perspectives are also mentioned when Waitt and Clifton (2012) explain that “shortboarders would argue bodyboarders bring shame on surfing by lying prone” (p. 10). Additionally, Stranger (2011) states shortboard surfers perspectives when explaining that “Bodyboarders are derided by surfboard riders as ‘gut sliders’, ‘shark biscuits’ and ‘speed bumps’” (p. 73). While tension between the two sports has been recorded, more research needs to be conducted to fully understand the true implications of the differences between both groups. Hence, my project seeks to explore these issues from the experiences of New Zealand bodyboarders.

Chapter Summary

Literature relating to lifestyle sports is relatively new and the experiences of participants are topics of interest to scholars. What is of particular interest are the reasons individuals choose to participate in these types of sport, and why some people are willing to adjust aspects in their lives, such as work or holidays, to ensure they are able to participate. This chapter has searched through literature relating to lifestyle sports, board sports, hierarchies, identity and ethnicity with the intent on situating this

project within current literature. What has been established through this process is that while bodyboarding fits some of the cultural aspects presented in board sport literature, there is an opportunity to provide insights and depth into the sport through the experiences of a range of participants. Additionally, an ethnic perspective relating to Maori and Pacific Island participants is an area that remains to be addressed and is a gap in literature that this project aims to meet in Chapter 6.

Chapter 3: Research Design

Scholars working in the social sciences and humanities employ a plethora of methods and methodologies to understand and explain the social phenomena under investigation (Amis, 2005; Sparkes, 2000; Tobin & Begley, 2004). Trying to understand what is being researched and how it relates to society is a very complex task particularly when there are so many social, psychological, and historical aspects involved in any given social situation. For example, using surfing as a sport to research, a social scientist could look at the imbalances of power between men and women, or how minority groups negotiate space in the surf, or the embodied experience of catching a wave. For a physiologist researching surfing the factors they might investigate could include heart rates of the surfers, or the amount of torque at the knee joint when performing a turn, or the amount of metres paddled during a competition. While the physiologist uses quantitative methods of gathering and analysing data by isolating individual physical aspects, such as heart rate, or measurements of force, the social scientist will more likely draw from an array of qualitative methods from which to select, such as interviews, observations, and analysing bodily dispositions to name a few. Also, when a social scientist interprets the data, a number of theories could be used to provide the framework to do this. While the choices seem countless for the social scientist, there are certainly established ways of selecting methods and theories to frame research. Hence, the process of selecting and using methods that fit the research questions being asked and the social

aspects under investigation need to be justified and explained through a robust discussion and dissection.

For a clearer understanding of the sociological paradigm from which this project stems it is important that I firstly define paradigms, and the ontological and epistemological assumptions underpinning this research. Henderson (1991), describes a 'paradigm' as being "a world view.... [It] is a fundamental model or theme which organizes our view of something" (p. 10). Similarly, Sparkes (1992), defines a paradigm as, "a general perspective, a way of breaking down the complexity of the real world" (p. 12). Thus, a paradigm is a set of values and perspectives through which a person sees the world. It is something that can't be "proven or disproven" (Sparkes, 1992, p. 12), it is not tangible, but it exists and should be recognised and acknowledged by researchers. Henderson (1991), describes the purpose of paradigms as providing "a framework for conceptually or theoretically looking at the world and the assumptions made about it" (p. 21).

The question of ontology revolves around "the nature of existence, that is, the very nature of the subject matter of the research" (Sparkes, 1992, p. 12). Hence, ontology is the way that a researcher views what is real. Some researchers believe that reality is formed on the outside of individuals and is physical and tangible, and some believe that reality is formed within a person's mind and in the way they think and make meaning of the world around them. A person's ontological position or perception of reality influences their epistemological standing. The epistemological question refers "to questions of knowing and the nature of

knowledge” (Sparkes, 1992, p. 13). In other words, how is knowledge gained or expressed, and how does one determine reality? Hence, if a researcher believes that reality is external to an individual, they would see knowledge as being empirical and therefore factual and objective. On the other hand, if reality were believed to be internal, the knowledge constructed would be intangible and subjective.

In research, there are at least three main distinct paradigms; Positivist; Interpretive and Critical (Lincoln, 1995; Schrag, 1992; Sparkes, 1992). They each have their own set of values and beliefs that determine the ontological and epistemological views. As a general rule of thumb, positivists approach research with a scientific view. They “aim to construct general laws or theories which express relationships between phenomena” (Abercrombie, Hill, & Turner, 2000, p. 269). In the process of constructing laws, the positivist often isolates and observes one aspect of an issue. For example, as described above, isolating measurement of heart rate in surfers prior, during and after surfing might be a positivist research project. On the other hand, interpretive research

suggests that all knowledge is socially constructed . . . [and that] the social world is a meaningful place, a world full of active subjects . . . [so] research should attempt to understand the meaning of events, not their causes (Oliver, 1992, p. 106).

For example, as described above, interviewing participants about their experiences of catching waves might be an interpretive research focus. The critical paradigm has “two major strands . . . One is closely associated with positivism while the other relates to interpretivism”

(Sparkes, 1992, p.36). The main difference between the interpretive and critical paradigm, is that the critical researcher is intent in understanding how power operates within society, privileging some over others, and they seek for ways of creating social change and empowering the oppressed (Sparkes, 1992). So referring back to my example of surfing above, observing differences in power between male and female participants to better understand how to improve women's participation could be a critical research topic.

It is when we compare and contrast the three paradigms, and the specific ontological and epistemological views held by researchers working within each paradigm, that the three become clearer. Positivist researchers, who generally have a scientific approach to research, have an external-realist ontological view, as they believe that reality is tangible. A positivist's epistemology is objective because if something is tangible it can be broken down, observed piece by piece, and a universal truth or fact can be established. Interpretive researchers have an internal-idealist ontological view because their reality is established within a person's mind in the cognitive thought processes of the individual. Because the nature of reality is internal, an interpretivists epistemology is subjective as "there can be no separation of mind and object since the two are inextricable linked together – the knower and the process of knowing cannot be separated from what is known, and facts cannot be separated from values" (Sparkes, 1992, p. 27). In my view, reality and therefore knowledge, is constructed through the experiences of individuals in social contexts hence, I agree with Sparkes (1992) who points out that many forms of reality exists within

the minds of individuals. Consequently, this research project draws upon a qualitative interpretive framework and my intentions are to use an intersectional approach in understanding how gender and ethnicity influence the experiences of New Zealand bodyboarders.

This particular study focuses on bodyboarding as a lifestyle sport through the perspectives and experiences of eight New Zealand bodyboarders. The jointly constructed knowledge and specific experiences of my participants form the crux of this research from which I aim to provide a fresh perspective on participation in a lifestyle sport that has yet to gain scholarly consideration. With the aim to construct knowledge around the identity of bodyboarders in New Zealand, I conducted one-on-one semi-structured interviews with eight participants. The interviews lasted from sixty to ninety minutes in duration, with questions relating to gender, ethnicity and lived experience within the bodyboarding culture. I will introduce my participants in a latter section of this chapter, but in the meantime it is important to note my vested interest in this topic through my extensive and intensive experience in the sport of bodyboarding as outlined in Chapter 1. It is also important to note that my experiences as an insider to this sport are woven through this project as a co-constructor of knowledge.

In relation to co-constructing knowledge with the participants in this project, it is important for me to discuss and acknowledge strengths and limitations of insider positioning as a researcher. These factors will influence this body of work and so I must employ a reflexive approach to ensure the limitations are addressed and minimised where possible. In

Babes on the Beach, Wheaton (2002) identifies strengths and limitations that resonate with my experiences in this project. Much like Wheaton (2002), I approached this project with pre-conceived notions of what I expected to find in a sport that I had participated in for decades. However, adopting a sociological gaze as a core participant took considerable practise, and like Wheaton (2002), I found it challenging negotiating the multiple roles and identities that existed as a researcher, bodyboarder and friend. My experiences also resonated with Thorpe (2011), where being immersed in bodyboarding culture for so long meant that there were taken for granted aspects such as embodied experiences, and terminologies that I needed to contextualise and explain for readers with little to no knowledge of the culture. Despite these challenges, there were certain benefits of being an insider for this research project. For example, I had quick and easy access to participants whose experiences ranged from hard core to weekend warrior, and I could also draw upon my lived experiences to support some of the concepts presented. Also, after reading literature surrounding lifestyle sport and the themes I am investigating in the project, I have been able to view the culture of bodyboarding through fresh perspectives. Thus in some respects, like Wheaton (2002) and Thorpe (2011), I feel that my 'insider' status gives me a deeper understanding of this sport and as a result am able to contextualise the responses provided by the participants.

In this chapter I will begin by explaining why this research is important to lifestyle sports, followed by a discussion on Maori and Pacific Island ways of knowing. I will also reflexively explain my participant

selection and explain why semi structured interviews best suited this body of work, along with the steps I took to ensure the safety and confidentiality of my participants. Finally, I will provide an overview of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical concepts of habitus, field and capital, which I argue are valuable for analysing my data, despite Bourdieu not considering aspects of race and ethnicity beyond the French context. Here I will explain how this theoretical framework will assist in presenting my findings.

Purpose

The boom of lifestyle sports in the western world has vast and far reaching implications in the sporting industry as of late. Wheaton (2010), provides evidence of the growth of lifestyle sports when stating "it is clear from the available sources, such as sales of equipment, market-research surveys and media commentaries, that participation in many types of lifestyle sports continues to grow, rapidly outpacing the expansion of most traditional sports" (p. 1058). More and more people are leaning towards participation in sports that can be shaped around individuals' lives and consequent lifestyles. For example, people who participate in lifestyle water sports such as windsurfing, surfing and bodyboarding choose to do so at their own time and pace as opposed to structured team sports such as basketball or touch rugby where times and places are dictated according to the organiser. It is the increased research into understanding participant experiences in various water sports, in particular bodyboarding, that this project wishes to make a valuable contribution.

As discussed in the literature review chapter, the sport of bodyboarding has gained very little scholarly attention to date. Therefore, as an avid bodyboarder I want to provide fresh sociological insights into the culture and reveal some of the nuances within the lifestyle sport of bodyboarding. In my view, the experiences of participants in bodyboarding have been misrepresented in previous research that has focused on stand-up surfing culture and typically defined body-boarders as marginal participants with very little status within the surfing hierarchy (Ford & Brown, 2006; Stranger, 2011). Thus, this project aims to create space for the voices of body-boarders and provide insight into the idiosyncrasies within the culture, particularly in a New Zealand context. Along with providing insight into bodyboarding culture, I also examine the experiences of Maori and Pacific Island participants, along with men and women's experiences in the surf. Through this study I aim to provide different ways of understanding the lifestyle sport of bodyboarding, as well as highlight the need for an intersectional approach to research on lifestyle and action sports.

Methodology

Attempting to reflexively source a methodology that is consistent with the ontological and epistemological assumptions underpinning this project has been quite a challenge. My struggles to find a suitable methodological approach lay largely in my own multi-cultural identity. As an indigenous female researcher I do not occupy one space, but rather three simultaneously; the academic, the Maori, and the Samoan. The academic in me wants to ensure that what I write is 'correct' based on what has been

conducted by past researchers, and to make sure that I follow the 'rules of engagement' when delving into social research of this nature. However there are other stronger impulses within that compelled me to search for deeper meaning, to pull away from what I know as an academic and delve into my lived experiences as a Maori Samoan woman who bodyboards. I feel aligned to the position expressed by Smith (1999): "People now live in a world which is fragmented with multiple and shifting identities, that the oppressed and the colonized are so deeply implicated in their own oppressions" (p. 97). The perspective from which I have experienced the social world, that is a combination of Maori, Samoan and European world views, has not been investigated in sociology and this initially left me feeling less authentic and validated. However, the challenge of reflexively seeking a methodology consistent with my ontological and epistemological assumptions which are informed by my mixed ethnic sporting identity, has prompted me to deconstruct my own mixed identity and to seek an alternative methodology. In so doing, I identified similarities and differences in Maori and Pacific Island methodologies, and considered how these different approaches offer me the opportunity to re-shape or select factors within both that will help reflect my intentions within this body of work. Some may argue that this is a pick-and-mix style methodology, but it is one that sits well with my ontological and epistemological beliefs as a Maori, Samoan, female, bodyboarding researcher.

In this section I will first outline my position as an emerging social researcher, followed by a brief discussion of the value of decolonizing methodologies after the cultural turn. I will also investigate Maori and

Samoan ways of being by highlighting aspects of Kaupapa Maori Research Methodology (KMRM) and Talanoa (a Tongan research methodology that draws parallels with Samoan ways of being) that resonate with my work.

It is important to begin by stating upfront that my undergraduate qualification is a Bachelor of Science completed through Brigham Young University Hawaii. Coming from a positivist undergraduate qualification where there was clearly a right and wrong way of conducting research made it difficult, but exciting, for me to venture into the more diverse and holistic realm of sociology. Although I am only beginning my journey as a sociological researcher, I have been exposed to concepts and ways of viewing society that have changed the way I position and view myself within New Zealand society. Smith (1999), explains that

the struggle for validity of indigenous knowledges may no longer be over the *recognition* that indigenous peoples have ways of viewing the world which are unique, but over proving the authenticity of, and control over, our own forms of knowledge (p. 104).

Through the process of deconstructing my experiences and ways of knowing, I have come to accept that a methodology or theory that fits who I am and what I represent does not yet exist. While the purpose of this research is not to delve solely into Maori-Samoan ways of being and knowing (as I am also interested in other aspects of my participant's identities and lived experiences as bodyboarders), I feel it is important to note that there is an opportunity for further research in this area. It is also important for the reader to understand how my experiences, ontological

and epistemological views, are ingrained in this research in order to have a deeper understanding of my perspective within this research, as well as some of the concepts I aim to investigate.

As previously highlighted in Chapter 2, Forsyth and Hiene et al. (2009), view cultural identity as consisting of socialising factors that individuals use to help form identity based on their own individual experiences. This way of understanding and reshaping the cultural world resonates with my epistemological and ontological perspectives, as it is through the lived experiences of my participants that I aim to construct cultural significance for bodyboarder, as well as non-white participants in a white dominated sport. Gendered experiences in terms of what is expected from males and females and the assumptions that arise are also aspects of interest I wish to investigate. Furthermore, as previously discussed, having an 'insider' positioning in the sport of bodyboarding, will offer a vantage point in terms of identifying key themes and sources.

Maori and Samoan Ways of Being

Occupying multiple world views, in particular Maori and Samoan ways of being, holds diverse benefits for me in this study. Firstly, critically reflecting upon my own mixed ethnic identity raised my awareness and facilitated my understandings of my participant's from mixed ethnicities and identities, and how these might affect their sporting experiences. Relating to my previously defined use of the term 'race,' I acknowledge the use of 'ethnic' identity rather than 'racial' as more useful terms in the context of this research. While I could also use 'cultural identity' for this project, it is important to differentiate between 'cultural identity' in leisure

sport, and 'cultural identity' in terms of ethnicity. Therefore, for this project I will adopt the use of 'ethnic identity' when referring to ethnicity as it will avoid confusion. As a result of the mixed ethnic identities of myself and some of my participants, I have made a concerted effort to address these experiences throughout this project. Secondly, I am able to draw upon ways of knowing and understanding from both Samoan and Maori world views. It is important to note at this stage that although I am not strictly following either a Maori or Samoan research methodology throughout my project, my practices throughout this research and my interactions with participants reflect the cultural practices presented in them. These ways of knowing and being differ from that of Western researchers and it is important for me, as an indigenous researcher, to present this knowledge and multiple ways of being, to help readers understand the world view from which this project is being constructed. These ways of knowing and being are embodied in who I am, which is where my research into Maori and Samoan methodologies helped construct and inform my overall research design by providing a framework from which to engage.

While occupying multiple world views can hold benefits, there are also disadvantages that need to be addressed. Smith (2012), points out that "For some indigenous students one of the first issues to be confronted is their own identities as indigenous" (p. 137). I strongly resonate with this statement as my own identity was one of the major issues I initially faced with this project, being an indigenous Maori and New Zealand-born Samoan woman. From my experience, not knowing or practising the language and culture of Maori or Samoan made me feel like an outsider

with my extended family and people who related mostly to the Maori or Samoan cultures. There are assumptions within Maori and Samoan cultures where if you are Maori, you speak and understand all things Maori, or if you are Samoan you should speak the language and live by the cultural values. In 2012 I attended a Maori research symposium at which Doctor Charles Royal (2012), explained that “Te Reo is important because it is the pathway into the Tangata Whenua World View” (Personal conference notes, 2012). This notion is also true in the Samoan culture. I have had numerous experiences where I have identified myself as Samoan or Maori, and individuals have tried to speak to me in Te Reo (Maori language) or Samoan. But when I explain that I don’t speak the language there is often a change in their countenance, and I often feel they relook at me through pitied eyes. In fact, I have often heard my Samoan relatives refer to me as being “fia palagi” (white) (Keddell, 2006), or “Maoli” (Maori), thus identifying that I was culturally different than them. Prior to engaging in this sociological research, I felt devalued and ‘less’ of a Maori or Samoan in these situations. However, this project has empowered me by bringing to light new ways of constructing identity by helping me to understand that while I may not speak the Maori or Samoan language, there are other cultural practices and ways of viewing the world that encompass who I am and how I fit within each of these respective cultures. Royal (2012) also stated in his address that the opportunity exists to create a “New lens encompassing new solutions and possibilities for our people” (personal conference notes). While the focus of my project is not to expand on these theories and create a new lens, it is important

that readers of my work understand exactly where I come from; a Samoan, Maori female who practices Samoan and Maori cultural ways yet also engages in a Westernised society. I also believe that with the numerous multiple cultural identities in contemporary society, many future researchers are going to be faced with dilemmas such as mine. In reference to where the Western society fits in research, Smith (2012) explains that “Imperialism frames the indigenous experience. It is part of our story, our version of modernity” (p. 21). So, while I aim to present my Samoan and Maori worldviews, I acknowledge that my Westernised ways are also part of my story. This entire research process is testament of this.

My research into Kaupapa Maori methodology has enabled me to take a stance on my position as a Maori and Samoan researcher. Rolleston (2011), explains the following about Kaupapa Maori;

It is seeing the world from a Maori perspective, unconstrained by Western ideals, attitudes or societal structures. Kaupapa Maori can only be truly understood by a person whose wairua, or essence, is Maori. Kaupapa Maori does not require the person to be fluent in Te Reo Maori or an expert in Tikanga Maori although it is fundamentally about Te Reo Maori and Tikanga Maori. It is a knowing, a feeling deep within oneself [. . .]. It is about whanau, hapu and iwi [. . .]. It is a profound understanding of *being* Maori (p. 6).

So, while I am not fluent in Te Reo (the Maori language), and am not an expert in Tikanga Maori (Maori protocols), I am Maori, and my life experiences as Maori are validated in this fact. Furthermore, Pihama,

Cram and Walker (2002) explain that Kaupapa Maori “challenges, questions and critiques Pakeha hegemony. It does not reject or exclude Pakeha [white European] culture. It is not a one-or-the-other choice” (p. 33). Bishop (1999), speaks of Kaupapa Maori Research as being ultimately for Maori, by Maori and in collaboration with Maori. While my research does not fit entirely into the Kaupapa Maori model, given that some of the participants are not Maori and the research is not just for Maori, it leans towards a critique of Pakeha hegemony within the sports of bodyboarding and surfing, and also a critique of the lack of scholarly consideration given to non-white participants experiences of lifestyle sports, such as bodyboarding. Indeed, almost all of the current surf cultural research has focussed on the participation of white men and women (Ford & Brown, 2006; Olive, et al., 2013; Stranger, 2011). Through this research I will add to the research conducted by ‘Pakeha’ and white scholars of surfing and other lifestyle sports, by using the experiences of my participants, intertwined with my own knowledge and experiences.

Being Maori also impacts on the way that I conduct myself and is therefore present through the gathering of knowledge and interactions with my participants. In her latest version of *Decolonizing Methodologies*, Smith (2012), presents a list of “Kaupapa Maori practices” (p. 124) that resonate with the methods and behaviours that are inherent in how I operate and were thus implemented when interacting with my participants. The list of Kaupapa Maori from Smith (2012), includes the following:

1. Aroha ki te tangata (a respect for people)

2. Kanohi kitea (the seen face, that is present yourself to people face to face)
3. Titiro, whakarongo ... korero (look, listen ... speak).
4. Manaaki ki te tangata (share and host people, be generous).
5. Kia tupato (be cautious).
6. Kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata (do not trample over the *mana* of people)
7. kia mahaki (don't flaunt your knowledge). (p. 124)

I will provide examples of how these principles were implemented in the interviews and participant selection section of this chapter.

Another perspective from which I view the world as previously mentioned, is through Samoan ways of being. While it would be easy to clump my 'being Samoan' under a Pacific Island umbrella, my experiences with Samoan, Tongan, Niuean and other Pacific Island cultures highlights a need for an understanding to be reached for those who read this project. As previously mentioned in chapter 2, Pacific Islander is a term that is used to identify people whose ancestry originate from one of the many Pacific Islands (McFall-McCaffery, 2010). As such, it is important to note that the culture, language and customs practised differ from one group to the next (McFall-McCaffery, 2010). When taking these ways of knowing into the research field, it is important to acknowledge that, "researchers whose knowing is derived from Western origins are unlikely to have values and lived realities that allow understanding of issues pertaining to knowledge and ways of being...[from]...Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, Tuvalu or the other Pacific nations" (Vaiioleti, 2006, p. 22). While I do not wish to delve

into the diverse nuances of each ethnic culture, I feel it is important to note that they are very different and where possible, should be identified as such. Culturally sensitive research should also give consideration to the unique differences within and across Pacific Island cultures and also acknowledge the Western influences upon urbanised Pacific Island ethnic groups. For example, Samoans born and raised in Samoa have different ways of knowing and being compared to Samoans born and raised in New Zealand, and Samoans born and raised in New Zealand, have different ways of knowing and being compared to Samoans raised in America. It is therefore important to note that, 'being' Samoan can hold different meanings depending on where you were raised (Keddell, 2006; Schaaf, 2006).

Tuagalu (2009), a New Zealand born Samoan, discusses Samoan ways of knowing in his Masters thesis in which he researched the perceptions of a young group of people in Samoa. In terms of Samoan ways of knowing, Tuagalu (2009) highlights three principles that exist in "Samoan epistemology" (p, 35). These include:

"(a) Samoans are strongly connected to their community or collective; (b) Samoans are strongly connected to their spiritual, mental, physical and emotional worlds, values and beliefs; and (c) knowledge is collectively owned" (p. 35)

From my own lived experiences, I also recognize these principles running through the Samoan culture in New Zealand. You need only traverse through the streets of Otara, which has a demographic of 79.2% Pacific people that are mostly Samoan (Statistics NewZealand, 2006a) and count

the number of churches within the community to realise the importance religion has in the Samoan culture and community. Schaaf (2006), also points out that “Many Samoan expect their people to achieve, not for personal gain but in order to glorify God, and for the good name of their aiga [family] and Samoa” (p. 43). These values and beliefs are also prevalent in my worldview where my successes bring honour to my husband, family, religion and community.

One particular common practise in the Samoan community is family gatherings accompanied by copious amounts of food along with the sharing of stories mixed with loud boisterous laughter. Sometimes the family gatherings are organised to celebrate rites of passage such as a baptism or a significant birthday, and other times they are called just to bring everyone together. Regardless of the purpose of the event, food is often used to show love, respect and appreciation for the people attending the occasion. It is also standard practise that a plate of food be prepared for attendees to take home. In fact, when going to pay respects at the home of a Samoan family who have lost a loved one, each person will be given a plate of food to take home. This is also practised in Maori culture at formal events, such as a Tangi (funeral). Once the respects have been paid in the Wharenuī (main meeting house), the manuhiri (guests) are ushered into the Wharekai (eating place) to be fed. In some of my interviews I used this method of using food and sharing stories coupled with laughter as I believe it helped lessen the awkward formalities often created in an interview setting. I also used food as a gesture of respect to

thank the participants for taking time out of their schedule to assist me in my research endeavours.

In my experience the Samoan culture is also built around showing respect for the elders as reiterated by Tavana (2002) who states that in Samoa, “much of the way traditional knowledge functions is guided by core cultural values of respect for the elders and the *matai* system” (p. 20). This is also common practise in Samoan communities in New Zealand where the elders in some religious institutions are highly esteemed and thus showered with gifts and money particularly at weddings and funerals. While I have experienced this way of life through my extended family, and through my husband’s family, my mother did not teach me to follow these traditions to the letter of the law. Despite this, there remains an innate sense of respect for my elders and a sense of belonging when among Samoan people even though I do not fully understand the language. This value of respect is also part of Maori practice, *Aroha ki te tangata*, and was one I used when interviewing my participants. The sense of belonging that I feel with the participants in this project also includes friendship, mutual understanding and respect of being a bodyboarder despite ethnic differences.

Talanoa, is described in its simplest form “as a conversation, a talk, an exchange of ideas or thinking, whether formal or informal” (Vaioleti, 2006, p. 23). One of the attributes of Talanoa that resonates with my research is that “It requires researchers to partake deeply in the research experience rather than stand back and analyse” (Vaioleti, 2006, p. 24). My position in this research does not allow me to stand back and analyse,

rather my rich lived experience in bodyboarding and 'being' Samoan Maori has enabled me to "partake deeply" (Vaiotele, 2006, p. 24), in this project. As a result, I have embraced my own past and present lived experiences and relationships with other bodyboarders as an integral part of my research design. While some components of Talanoa match my research, such as the conversation and exchange of ideas during the interview, I also approached the interview process with specific intentions as a researcher. Hence although the full use of Talanoa was not implemented in this research, there some elements in this project that are consistent with this approach.

A key factor that was highlighted in both Kaupapa Maori and Talanoa was the building up and establishment of relationships. In regard to relationships, Bishop (1999), explains that "Establishing and maintaining whanau (whakawhanaungatanga) relationships, *Kaupapa Maori Research* which can be either literal or metaphoric, within the discursive practice that is Kaupapa Maori, is an integral and ongoing constitutive element of a Kaupapa Maori approach to research" (p. 3). The participants I invited to be part of my project were all people with whom I had already built long-standing relationships with. I have either travelled extensively or lived with my participants and believe that this added a mutual feeling of trust and honesty in the interviews. While bodyboarding is the key component to some of my relationships with the participants, others ranged from being family members or childhood friends. These well established relationships helped the conversation flow freely from the start and I felt that the

participants seemed honest and open about their perspectives and experiences as a bodyboarder.

Interviews and Participant Selection

This research seeks to understand the lived experiences of New Zealand bodyboarders, and to give voice to those who have for too long been absent from the literature. Reflecting a feature in my Maori world view, “kanohi kitea (present yourself to people face to face)” (Smith, 2012, p. 124), it was important that my research method included face to face interviewing. My reasoning for choosing an interview method aligns with Amis (2005), when stating that “Interviews offer a depth of information that permits the detailed exploration of particular issues in a way not possible with other forms of data collection” (p. 105). To gather the depth and quality of information required for this project it was important that each participant was interviewed individually to ensure their individual voices and experiences in the sport of bodyboarding were not influenced by others. Hence, interviewing in a focus group would not have suited this project as there would be potential from some more vocal participants to overshadow the voices of others.

The criteria I used to select the participants for this project related to the themes I was endeavouring to investigate, primarily; gender and ethnicity. I was also interested in co-creating knowledge around the culture of bodyboarding using the voices of the participants in this study. Hence, first and foremost, I created a table with the headings name, gender, ethnicity, bodyboarding experience and city in which the participant lived. I then began to list individuals who I believed would be

able to articulate their experiences and provide different perspectives related to the topics I aim to investigate. My objective was to invite four males and four females where at least two of each gender had either Maori or Pacific Island ethnicity. I also decided to invite people I had known for at least five years as I believed the pre-established relationship would allow for more free flowing conversation and honest answers. Having surfed with each of the participants, I could also 'triangulate' their comments by reflecting on their behaviour in the surf and compare these with their perspectives. Accessibility was also important so I only included participants who lived around Auckland, which is where I also reside. Once I had created my participant list I contacted each person through email, phone or in person and asked if they would be willing to participate in my project about bodyboarding. Fortunately each person I contacted was more than willing to participate so times and dates to meet were negotiated and set.

Prior to the interview I ensured that each participant was aware that they would have the opportunity to decline to answer any question they felt uncomfortable with, to read and comment on their transcripts, and have the right to withdraw their comments up to a specified date. I also emailed or handed the forms and information sheet to each participant before the interview to allow them the opportunity to read and then ask questions about their role in this research project. The rights to privacy and process of confidentiality were revisited at the start of each interview at which time each participant was given the opportunity to decline participation. Each participant also chose their own pseudonym as well as read and signed

the appropriate documentation permitting me to use their information. Participants were also informed that I would be taping the interview on a Dictaphone and that I would transcribe it and then email a copy for them to read. I was also diligent in letting participants know that they had the opportunity to edit information transcribed in the interview once they were emailed through for them to check. Finally, I ensured that participants knew that they were unable to withdraw from the project after the 1st of August, 2012 due to the volume of work that would have gone into the research by this date.

Although my relationships were well established with the participants in this study, it would be remiss to not reflexively discuss the implications these pre-established relationships could have on the interview process. Smith (2012), explains that “insider researchers have to have ways of thinking critically about their processes, their relationships, and the quality and richness of their data and analysis” (p. 138). When critically reflecting on the interview process, I was very aware of the formalities involved when interviewing and needed to acknowledge the difficulties my relationship with my participants could pose when switching from the role of a friend to the role of a researcher. The balance of power in terms of the direction of conversation was inevitably initiated by me as the researcher and making sure that this was done in an unthreatening, humble manner was important. In reference to insider research, Smith (2012) explains that “It needs to be humble because the researcher belongs to the community as a member with a different set of roles and relationships, status and position” (p. 140). During the interviews I was

also aware to not use unfamiliar or academically inclined words. In reflection, I realised I was implementing “kia mahaki (don’t flaunt your knowledge)” (Smith, 2012, p. 124). To shift the power to the participant as mentioned by Manderson, Bennett and Andajani-Sutjahjo (2006), I encouraged the participant to choose the venue for the interview. So although the date and time were negotiated, I assured my participants that it would be no problem for me to travel any distance to meet them at a venue of their choice.

Interviews of any sort tend to lean toward a formal setting wherein the interviewee can sometimes feel scrutinized and possibly less forthcoming about some topics. A strategy that I used to manage conversations, particularly around the more sensitive topics such as ethnicity, racism and sexism in the surf, was the use of humour. For example, when I sensed that the participant felt uncomfortable through their body language, I would insert quips or remarks about a funny situation we had experienced together. Through laughter and humour the mood of the interview was lightened and the participant seemed more relaxed in answering questions. I used this strategy in particular with the New Zealand European participants who initially seemed a little uncomfortable answering questions relating to Maori or Pacific Island people. So although the previously established relationships existed with all of the participants, I was very aware of the world views that I represented (Maori, Pacific Island and female) and was conscious of how they might be perceived by the participants. While I was able to use my role as a friend, and fellow bodyboarder to create a non-threatening

environment during the interview, I also ensured a certain level of professionalism was maintained through re-focussing questions when the conversation would go on a tangent. Hence, I was mindful to use a humble approach and basic rules of courtesy, including not interrupting or making assumptions about a situation. I believe these strategies assisted in creating a non-threatening interview environment for my participants. Reflectively, this practice mirrored the Kaupapa Maori practice of “Titiro, whakarongo ... korero (look, listen ... speak)” and (Smith, 2012, p. 124).

Knowing my participants and their idiosyncrasies was also beneficial for me as a researcher as I was able to read their body language during the interviews. For example, with a few of my participants I was able to see when concentration levels were beginning to decline so I would insert a personal question to rejuvenate the conversation or ask if they would like anything else to eat. During some of the interviews, I felt that I needed to provide a gesture of thanks for the time and knowledge the participants provided me, so the use of food became the medium for this. Tuagalu (2009), defines this behaviour in the research process as “reciprocity [where there is an] exchange and interaction of gifts” (p. 37). In the Maori culture this is seen as “Manaaki ki te tangata (share and host people, be generous)” (Smith, 2012, p. 124). I also felt that the food helped ease the formality that comes with participating in an interview as well as assisting in filling silent ‘thinking’ gaps for participants as they mulled over a question.

The questions that I asked were based on the themes of gender and ethnicity and also related to understanding of the dynamics within the

culture of bodyboarding. Assumptions around short board surfers and bodyboarders were also discussed, and participants were encouraged to share their views and stories relating to these topics. While the themes were set prior to the interviews, the questions and direction of each interview varied where the participants were free to follow their own chain of thought and present their ideas in their own words. Some of the questions posed to participants also helped them reflect on their own assumptions.

The entire selection, interview, transcribing and analysis process needed to be extremely reflexive on my part. Having insider knowledge and negotiating varied roles, between indigenous researcher, bodyboarder and friend blurred lines of engagement but also highlighted areas of strength by being able to view the sport of bodyboarding from different angles. In relation to adopting a reflexive approach to ones research, Manderson et al. (2006), explain that “the researcher not only directs collection and analysis of research data but is also part of the cocreation of knowledge” (p. 1318). I therefore need to acknowledge that although participants provided their perspectives through interviews, I analysed this knowledge through my own epistemological assumptions and in conversation with sociological theory.

Participants

The participants in this research range in ethnicity, age, gender and skill in the sport of bodyboarding. Each participant in my study selected a pseudonym which I have used to maintain their confidentiality. Manderson et al. (2006) explains that “no two interviews are alike: Each is the unique

outcome of the characteristics of the individuals” (p. 1319). To introduce my participants I have selected an item of conversation from their interview that gives the reader a glimpse of their character and uniqueness. I will also provide a brief explanation of my relationship with each participant as these factors played a role in the interview process in terms of shared experiences.

Sueanne (Female, Samoan/Maori)

Sueanne is the one participant I have known the longest and as a result we have had many holidays and surf trips together. Sueanne has been bodyboarding recreationally for over 20 years and usually surfs at South Piha which is a 45 minute drive from Auckland city. Since I introduced her to the sport of bodyboarding in 1992 she embraced the Piha beach culture and now owns a caravan in the local caravan park. Although Sueanne lives in an apartment in Auckland City she stays in her caravan at Piha whenever the weather permits as well as during summer. In reference to her bodyboarding ability, she states, *“Well, I’ve always said one thing. I’ve got more balls than skill.”*

Charley (Female, Pakeha/NZ Maori)

I first initiated Charley into the sport of bodyboarding at Raglan when she was 19. She is a close friend who was always willing and happy to keep me company on my sporting antics. We would play squash till early hours of the morning, roller blade the car parks of Mount Wellington as well as go on bodyboarding and snowboarding trips. Although she was often afraid to go out in big waves, she trusted my judgement and would even

be happy to compete when I talked her into it. When asking Charley about an exciting experience she had bodyboarding, she explains, *“Well, it’s sort of exciting mixed with scary but it was actually catching the rip at Piha. You know, jumping off the rocks, getting in the rip and going hurray hard nuts before the next wave came.”*

Ngailia (Female, Pakeha/NZ Maori)

Ngailia is a good friend of mine who I lived with at a boarding house in high school then later on at university in Hawaii. We would spend countless days surfing the beaches and reefs of Hawaii so have shared some amazing waves and experiences. She has been bodyboarding since 1992 and has a good repertoire of manoeuvres under her belt. Quite frequently Ngailia would watch me paddle out in big surf as her ‘guinea pig’ and if there wasn’t too much paddling, then she would follow me out. She would say, *“If the amount of work exceeds the amount of fun then I won’t go out. If it looks like I’m going to die and going to be scared then I’m not going to do it. I’m just doing it for fun so I won’t push myself if it’s scary. I do it for pure fun.”*

Chica (Female, 29 years old, New Zealand European, PE Teacher)

“If I’m paddling for a wave and I’m on the inside and I’m gonna get it, if someone else is paddling for it, that might annoy me, just a little bit. Like I’ll get the wave and they’ll pull down it and I’d be like ‘Oi!’ If you call for it, I’d be annoyed if they didn’t get off straight away.” I first met Chica several years ago when she attended a bodyboarding coaching clinic I was running for girls. From the start I knew that she had the ability to become

an outstanding bodyboarder as she had a natural affinity for the water through competitive lifesaving. As predicted, with a bit of basic coaching Chica rapidly catapulted her progression into the New Zealand bodyboarding scene. Over the last few years Chica and I have travelled together to national and international competitions, have shared some amazing waves and experiences and as a result have built a strong friendship.

James (Male, Samoan/Niuean/Tongan/Fijian)

James has been bodyboarding for 11 years and is currently a full time athlete. I have known James for 12 years and during that time he played an integral role in the resurgence of competitive bodyboarding in New Zealand. His competitive yet humble nature led the first New Zealand Bodyboarding team to their only win against the Australian team comprising of the male and female pro World Champions. James also coached me through the world tour and was the pivotal reason for my achievement of three Amateur World titles. When asked what he thinks about the sport of surfing he explains, *“Surfing is one of those funny sports where no one sees what other people do, so everyone walks around thinking that their wave was better than everyone else. But in the gym, everyone can see a dude bench 200kgs.”*

Jaffa (Male, New Zealand European)

“Bodyboardings very much laid back. The top guys in the world are just super approachable you can just talk to them, have a bbq with them, kick back and have beers and it’s no problem and they’re willing to just chat to

you and get along and they're just really humble." Jaffa has been bodyboarding for many years and on occasion does stand up shortboard surfing. He is a foundation member of Bodyboard Surfing New Zealand (BBSNZ) and has been at the heart of the New Zealand competitive bodyboarding scene for over two decades. His involvement in bodyboarding ranges from running the BBSNZ tour, judging at International Bodyboarding Association (IBA) events to running an online bodyboarding shop. I got to know Jaffa when we were running the BBSNZ tour in 2005. Throughout that time we forged a good friendship as we both pitched in to lead the tour and coach teams of bodyboarders at the Australasian National Titles.

Andrew (Male, 24 years old, New Zealand European, Building Apprentice)

"I really like challenges, and surfing seemed like more of a challenge and more competition because there were so many more people doing it. But then I did that for a while and kind of realised it wasn't what I wanted from waves. I wanted big waves that scared me. That I could get deep on and get big ramps and do big airs." Andrew lives at Piha and has been surfing and bodyboarding for over eleven years. Of all my participants he is the most successful in the competitive scene and one of the most hardcore. He won his first Open Mens National title when he was 16 and also won the Under 18's division at his first Australasian National Titles event. I travelled with Andrew as part of a team to a number of national and international competitions and through these experiences we became good friends. We would also do surf trips to breaks that were often quite

sketchy. To this day he still seeks out steep, powerful big waves often on a jet ski with his boss who is also a bodyboarder.

Bolo (Male, 33 years, Cook Island/Samoan, Community Liaison)

I met Bolo in 1999 when he was studying sport and recreation at Manukau Institute of Technology. He loved the water and was one of the few people I knew that could swim 60 metres underwater on one breath. Bolo has never competed in bodyboarding and never had the desire to do so. He would be what you would consider a 'soul surfer' who would go bodyboarding whenever he could and in any conditions even on a shoe string budget. In relation to a scary bodyboarding experience he had he says, *"I remember one storm it was huge at O'Neils, and I went around the back, the first left and we jumped out from the rocks and it was huge. Seriously I can't remember how big it was. I remember just in that moment being in the air, jumping off the rock going, I've just committed suicide."*

Theoretical Approach: A Bourdieusian approach to Bodyboarding

Within the surfing culture there are numerous types of participants with varied experiences who can add value and understanding to the social environment in the surf. Despite this, the majority of research on surfing related activities has been conducted by stand up surfers who often marginalize and trivialise the experiences of bodyboarders. As such, voices and experiences of adult bodyboarding participants are virtually non-existent in lifestyle sports literature. Therefore, in the process of selecting an appropriate theoretical approach for this project it was

important to use an approach that would allow me to investigate the ways power operates between various groups of wave riders (in particular bodyboarders and surfers), and the ways individuals make meaning of the hierarchal structures within the culture. I was particularly interested in how some participants accept these divisions between surfers and bodyboarders, and the dominance of white, male, stand-up surfers, while others resist or negotiate space within and around these unequal power dynamics. Pierre Bourdieu's theories on habitus, field and capital have been used to understand hierarchies and the distribution of power within various societies and social groups, as well as point out nuances within sporting cultures (Kay & Laberge, 2002; Thorpe, 2010). Hence, in this sub-section I will firstly provide a brief overview of Pierre Bourdieu's work and then explain how the concepts of habitus, field and capital will be used in this project.

According to Tomlinson (2004), and other social scientists, "Pierre Bourdieu was one of the most influential social theorists of his generation, both in his home country France and throughout the international sociological community" (p. 161). Bourdieu's concepts are widely used because they are malleable to suit the varied social environments across a wide range of fields. Bourdieu's concepts have been used in many areas of study including education (Albright, 2006; Bourdieu, 1971; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Lingard, Rawolle, & Taylor, 2005; Zembylas, 2007), cultural studies (Garnham & Williams, 1980; Pileggi & Patton, 2003; Santoro, 2011), and sport sociology (Atencio, et al., 2009; Bourdieu, 1988; Brown, 2006; Clement, 1995; Hills, 2006; Kraus, 2006; Mennesson, 2012;

Thorpe, 2010; Thorpe, Barbour, & Bruce, 2011). Bourdieu himself was interested in sport and also offers various analyses (Bourdieu, 1988; Brown, 2006). As such, Bourdieu has been “credited as one of the [few] mainstream ‘fathers’ of sociology to take sport and the body seriously” (Wagg, et al., 2009, p. 102).

A number of action and lifestyle sport scholars have used Bourdieu’s theoretical framework to shed light on the ways power operates within action sport cultures, privileging some groups while marginalizing others. Some of this work has been instrumental in my own theoretical thinking. For example, in *Snowboarding Bodies in Theory and Practice*, Thorpe (2011) uses Bourdieu to study snowboarding literature. More specifically, Bourdieu is used to examine the conflicts and power relations between skiers and snowboarders during the 1980s and 1990s, as well as point out “how distinctions among snowboarders, expressed as differences in embodied tastes and styles, contribute to their individual and group identities as well as the structuring of the snowboarding culture” (Thorpe, 2011, p. 110). Ford and Brown (2006) also use Bourdieu to study surfing culture. In their view, Bourdieus’ “conceptual framework is particularly useful because it provides an explanation of the body as constituted in surfing practice and also contextualizes the value of the practical body in an embodied cultural economy of surfing practice” (p. 122). Here I build upon this work and seek to offer a fresh insight into the value of Bourdieu’s work for revealing the nuances within bodyboarding culture and the intersectional identities of New Zealand bodyboarders experiences.

In the final part of this chapter, I provide an overview of Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field and capital. It is important to note that although these concepts are interrelated, they need to be separated and individually defined first to help understand how they are inextricably linked. Reay (2004) explains how the concepts are related when stating that "it is through the workings of habitus that practice (agency) is linked with capital and field (structure)" (p. 432). Bourdieu (1986) also provides insight into the relational structure of habitus, field and capital when presenting the following formula: "(habitus)(capital) + field = practice" (as cited in Thorpe, 2011, p. 110). While these examples of how habitus, capital and field are linked may seem confusing at first glance, the following overview of each should define and clarify how they fit this project.

Habitus

Habitus is defined as "our 'cultural unconscious' or 'mental habits' or 'internalised master dispositions' which lead to particular perceptions and actions" (Houston, 2002, p. 157). Habitus is not just the way we think and the way we do things, it is our entire being in terms of how we dress, speak or act. These practices learned from a young age from parents, family, teachers and peer groups, are repeated over and over and as a result, these embodied practices become common-sense and thus often difficult for many of us to critically reflect upon. In other words, habitus refers to the socialising structures that explain why a person acts a certain way in different social environments (Reay, 2004). In reference to social structuring, Bourdieu (1984) explains that "The habitus is not only a structuring structure, which organizes practices and the perception of

practices, but also a structured structure” (1984, p. 170). Hence, habitus can be viewed from many perspectives. For example, a researcher might investigate surfing culture through the physical embodied dispositions and habitus among a group of surfers that frequently surf at the same surf break. On the other hand, a researcher may decide to extensively follow one surfer and seek to understand a single persons habitus.

In this project, the habitus I aim to investigate and present is that of the bodyboarder. While Ford and Brown (2006) and Stranger (2011) have presented surfing culture from the perspective of stand-up surfers, the bodyboarder is yet to be understood. Hence, the habitus of the bodyboarder and how they learn to become ‘a bodyboarder’ through the enculturation into the sport such that the ways they dress, the lingo they use, and the ways they organize their lives around the surf, become embodied and common sense. I am particularly interested in how the value systems accepted by bodyboarders influence how they negotiate space in the line-up. Through the experiences of my bodyboarding participants, intermingled with my own, I aim to provide insight into the bodyboarding habitus. It was identified by Reay (2004), that “there is a need to expand habitus to explore how gender and racial differences are linked to circumstances that can occur within and across cultures and social classes or ethnic groups” (Reay, 2004, p. 436). So in this project, it is not only the bodyboarder, but the gendered experiences of male and female participants, and the cultural experiences of Maori, Pacific Islander and New Zealand European, that I seek to reveal using Bourdieu’s habitus theoretical structure.

Field

Bourdieu (1985) describes social spaces “as a field of forces, i.e., as a set of objective power relations that impose themselves on all who enter the field” (p. 724). Within fields, members of the group consciously or sub-consciously vie for position through the accumulation of power or capital (Bourdieu, 1985). The fields that exist in organised sport, such as touch rugby, come with a pre-determined set of rules that are based on the play of the game. However, it is not the set rules of the sport that field investigates, but rather the underlying negotiations and perceptions between players and team members that establish the unspoken rules that structure hierarchy within the group and allocate status, respect and power to some participants based on their performances on and off the sports field. Thus, it is important to note that field is more than just a social space. It includes the social interactions and perceptions of individuals along with the rules that are operating within that space as well as the struggles for power and respect from others in the group.

In surfing culture, there are “structures (surfing associations, etc.), rules, knowledge, practices and crucially *people*, as it is *within* and *through* people that surfing knowledge and practice are brought together, ‘lived’, given value and ultimately transmitted to other people” (Ford & Brown, 2006). The waves are a social space where hierarchies are played out among wave riders whether they are on the same or different types of surf craft. Ford and Brown (2006) discuss the hierarchies among stand up surfers when explaining that “The field of surfing therefore, is comprised of a number of sub-fields, all of which give value to the practised, surfed

body in subtly different ways and these manifest themselves through surfing styles” (Ford & Brown, 2006, p. 128). Although in the context of this statement, Ford and Brown (2006) were scrutinizing the differences between competitive and soul surfers, it can also be used when comparing riders of different surf craft.

The strategic advantage that is battled for in the surfing field is access to the best waves. While this may seem relatively trivial to non-surfers, the passion, vigour, frustration and anger expressed by participants as they symbolically and physically ‘fight’ for waves, reveals the significance of this battle to wave riders. While outsiders to surfing culture might over simplify access to the best waves as being the first one to catch the wave, there are globally accepted, unwritten laws and rules of how to catch a wave. When rules are not followed, consequences can often result in fighting, and at times individuals may be forced to leave the surf (often by local rule ‘enforcers’). As stand-up surfing is seen as the dominant mode of surfing in the waves, it is often assumed by stand up short board surfers that they have right of way to waves (Evers, 2004; Stranger, 2011; Waitt & Clifton, 2012; Waitt & Warren, 2008). In this particular study, I am interested to explore how bodyboarders negotiate space in the line-up, get access to waves, and gain respect among surfers and among each other. This project will explore how the rules of the surf operate through the eyes of a bodyboarder and how bodyboarders negotiate space in the surf field that privileges stand up surfers, along with the perceptions New Zealand bodyboarders have of stand-up surfers.

Capital

A third key concept of Bourdieu's framework is capital. Houston (2002) explains that while field represents a struggle for power and hierarchal positioning, capital is characterized where "the outcome of the struggle will be determined by the amount of capital (or resources) possessed by competing actors in a given field" (p. 158). Therefore, in various social fields, hierarchies are determined by what an individual has accumulated in terms of capital. It is important to note that different fields privilege different types of capital. For example, in an educational setting, a person would hold more capital depending on the level of education he or she has attained. Hence, a person who has a Masters Degree would have more capital, and therefore higher status than another who has completed a Bachelors Degree. However, if the same two people surfed, and the person who completed the Bachelors degree had a much higher level of skill and ability, then in this field, the individual who completed the Bachelors degree would be ranked higher on the hierarchal ladder. Thus, the rules of field and types of capital in each field change accordingly.

In the surfing field the form of capital that is most highly respected is physical capital. In this case, it relates to displaying high levels of ability and in some circumstances, putting oneself at risk. Physical capital therefore equates to the size and type of wave being ridden along with the risk involved on the wave (Ford & Brown, 2006). This also relates to one's ability to manage their fear in dangerous situations. Manoeuvres are also linked to physical capital and individuals who are able to execute technical manoeuvres with style, will gain the respect of their peers, which in itself is

a valued form of capital in surfing culture. Hence, the bigger the wave and the more critical the ride or manoeuvre, the more capital gained from one's peers, as demonstrated by the bodyboarder performing an invert manoeuvre in Figure 2. Ford and Brown (2006) explicate that "The



Figure 2: New Zealand male bodyboarder performing an invert manoeuvre.
Photo courtesy of photographer: Chris Garden

precise degree of *value* or physical capital that a surfer athlete, soul surfer or any other kind of surfer may possess will differ in relation to the various subsectors of the field of surfing they occupy and the current value of these subsectors" (p. 127). In regard to the subsectors or subfields in surfing, such as long boarding or bodyboarding, Ford and Brown (2006) stress that each holds a different distinct form of capital which is a reflection of the habitus of that particular style of wave riding. For example, a 360 degree spin is a manoeuvre that is regularly performed by competent bodyboarders. It involves the rider completing a 360 degree turn while riding a wave. To a person who does not bodyboard, a 360 degree spin performed in the whitewash using the hand to get momentum

may be deemed high, yet among bodyboarders it is seen as cheating and ranks low in terms of gaining physical capital. It is these subtleties in habitus, field and physical capital that this paper seeks to address for bodyboarders in New Zealand and in turn provide new perspectives for research into surf culture.

Chapter Summary

Houston (2002), states that “The interrelationship between habitus, field and capital helps explain how culture affects people, and how they reproduce their taken for granted worlds” (p. 159). Bourdieu’s theoretical framework has the potential to facilitate the aims of this project of understanding New Zealand bodyboarders lived experiences in the surfing field. Through investigating and presenting the habitus of New Zealand bodyboarders, researchers can begin to understand the ways they gain access and capital in the field of surfing. The type of physical capital within the culture of the bodyboarding community and within the surfing field will also be explored and in so doing provide more concrete insider knowledge for scholars interested in surf culture research.

Bourdieu’s concepts will be used to provide an insight into how different ethnic groups as well as males and females negotiate space in a predominantly white, male environment. While Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus, field and capital were helpful in providing a theoretical structure for this research project, it was necessary to mould his concept of habitus to explore ethnicity. The challenge with using habitus to explore ethnic and racial differences is also mirrored by other scholars such as Reay (2004), who pointed out that Bourdieu’s work did not directly address

ethnicity or race. Also, the habitus has been viewed as quite a constrained concept that does not make space or allowances for differences between individuals with similar backgrounds (Hills, 2006). Furthermore, Bourdieu's world view does not resonate with that of mine as a Maori, Samoan female. Despite these constraints, the use of habitus in this project enables an exploration of the individual experiences and the meanings these hold for each person. Specifically, I use habitus to reveal embodied experiences relating to gender and ethnicity, and explore how these play out in the surf field (Reay, 2004).

Chapter 4: The Bodyboarding Field

It's the bodyboarders versus surfers thing; bodyboarding is the poor cousin. You know, if you can't stand up you're nothing. If you can stand up on a surfboard and you're rubbish, you're still better than the best bodyboarder in the world, because you can stand up and all they can do is lie down. That said, it's got a lot better. When I first started, it was almost like guys wouldn't even give you a chance and now guys will talk to you in the line up and stuff, but there's still definitely that division and it goes one way. Bodyboarders are always pretty good with surfers. I'll always chat to surfers in the line up, but surfers will quite often give you a dirty sideways sort of look when they see you, and it's just because you're riding a bodyboard, nothing else. They know nothing about your personality, they don't know who you are, they don't know anything about you, they're judging you one hundred percent on what you're riding out in the ocean. They just automatically make a judgement based on what you're riding. And I guess it's as bad as racism or sexism, cos you're forming an opinion based on ultimately the way that you look, or something that you're doing. I've never really thought about it like that, but I guess that's how it is and it's just something you kind of deal with. Jaffa (edited for clarity)

In this chapter I examine key themes, such as those revealed in the above comments from a long-time bodyboarder interviewed for this project. In particular I aim to investigate the various ways power operates in the waves and the hierarchal relationships between various wave-riders. Here I focus primarily on the experiences of bodyboarders and how they make sense of these hierarchal relationships. To facilitate this analysis, I draw upon Pierre Bourdieu's concept of field to explain how the surf field is structured, and how the rules of the field are learned, embodied, reinforced, and ultimately accepted as common-sense among most wave

users including bodyboarders. Engaging Bourdieu's work here is particularly valuable as it reveals how bodyboarders accept their marginal status within the surfing field, opting to negotiate space around surfers rather than to challenge the rules of the surf field. In this sense, I see the value in Bourdieu's understandings of how power operates within cultural fields, and how power relations are reproduced through everyday practices such as bodyboarding.

This chapter consists of four sections. Firstly I discuss the surfing field followed by the surf craft hierarchies. Following this I present insights from my data to illustrate the habitus of bodyboarders and how bodyboarders learn and negotiate the rules of the surfing field. Finally I offer a brief conclusion of the surf field and the operations of power that exist on and through bodyboarders everyday experiences in the waves.

The Surfing Field: Hierarchies in the Waves

As briefly introduced in the previous chapter, field is a concept used to explain the social space occupied by groups involved in shared activities, and the power relations within and between groups. Bourdieu (1984) explains that a field, "provides the small number of distinctive features which, functioning as a system of differences . . . allow the most fundamental social differences to be expressed" (p. 226). As such, a field might be a family, a high school, a university, a local beach community, or a transnational bodyboarding culture. Clearly, the scope of field varies depending on the social group and how the researcher defines the group under investigation. Thus, it is necessary to clearly explain how I am

using the concept of field in relation to surfing, and particularly bodyboarding.

In reference to the beach, Matthewman (2004) explains that the beach “is positioned as a site of escape, leisure, and new identity formation. As a result of this special status it is literally awash with meaning” (p. 73). The beach certainly does hold different meanings to people and as such is filled with social arenas where interactions and therefore social forces and principles play out. In surf culture, identities are constantly undergoing scrutiny and hierarchal power battles are being negotiated in and out of the surf. Hierarchal struggles for access and/or status that take place in surf culture can occur on the beach, in stores surrounding beaches and even in the car parks of beaches. In these places, economic capital can sometimes take precedence. For example, people who have the most recent surfing equipment or clothing could be ranked higher than others who have outdated, old or worn equipment. On the other hand, people who have new equipment could be viewed lower on the hierarchal structure as they could be perceived by surfers as beginners. Preston-Whyte (2002) points out that “surfing space is constructed through the mediation of social practices and social processes” (p. 308). Due to the varied spaces and social practices that can be investigated in surf culture, it is important to understand that the field this research will focus on is in the surf, that is, the space between the ocean and shore where the waves break. In the surf, I am interested in understanding the hierarchal interactions and how power is distributed between bodyboarders and stand up surfers.

One of the themes frequently explored by surfing scholars is gendered experiences. For example, Ford and Brown (2006) investigate gender power relations in the surf and how power dynamics related to different masculinities and femininities play out in surf culture, and Stranger (2011), provides an insight into gendered relations through his discussions on how women negotiate space in the surf field. Other surfing scholars (Waite, 2008; Waite & Warren, 2008), present masculine perspectives of short board surfing, and Waite and Clifton (2012) investigate the dynamics of pride/shame among a group of young bodyboarders. Further insight into bodyboarders gendered experiences will be discussed in Chapter 5, but I feel it is important to note that gender roles are negotiated differently in hierarchal structuring and distributions of power within the surfing field.

In relation to non-white participants experiences in the waves, Walker (2011), a native Hawaiiin surfer and scholar, provides his perspective on surf culture and in doing so provides insight into experiences of non-white surfing participants. *Whitewash*, a documentary directed by Woods (2011), also presents experiences of non-white participants. In this documentary African American surfers share their experiences in surf culture and discuss the social hierarchies they overcame to participate in a sport dominated by white males. To date, very little academic literature addresses surf hierarchies or experiences among non-white ethnic groups and this is a topic I will address in Chapter 6.

A number of scholars have investigated the hierarchal structures in the surf. In particular, Ford and Brown (2006) identify young, male, short-board riders as having the most status and respect in the surfing field, with female surfers, older surfers, longboarders, bodyboarders and surfski riders typically holding positions of less respect. Stranger (2011) discusses the hierarchal relations between the various types of wave riders and also places young, male, short-board riders as being at the top of the pyramid in the surf followed by bodyboarders and long boarders. It is important to note that Ford and Brown (2006), and Stranger (2011) approach their research from a position of academics who also surf short boards, which may explain why they have provided little room for the voices or experiences of wave riders other than young, male short board surfers. This project aims to add to the research on surf culture by providing a fresh perspective through the voices of New Zealand bodyboarders, interspersed with critical reflections on my own past and present lived experiences as an elite Maori and Samoan female bodyboarder. To provide a base for readers to understand the experiences of a bodyboarder, this chapter will use Bourdieu's field theory to reveal how bodyboarders make sense of the hierarchal structuring of the practices of surfing waves, and how some negotiate space to claim capital and power in the field, while others accept their position on the margins of the field with little access to capital and quality waves.

Field of Waves: Surf Craft Hierarchies

With the guys I surf with, I'm pretty much the only bodyboarder. They've got girlfriends that surf, and friends that surf, and I find it

quite funny the way they think of bodyboarding. Like we were at the beach this year and one of the guys, a guy that can't surf at all, still [hassles me] about being a bodyboarder. He has no idea that I travel the world and judge the best male bodyboarders in the world and have been around bodyboarding forever and a day. It was a little bit of tongue-and-cheek when he goes, 'Ooooh why didn't you bring your gut slider out here' or whatever else from a guy that can't even stand up. I think it's just hilarious. Jaffa (edited for clarity)

This experience is one that many of the bodyboarders interviewed for this project have become accustomed to both in and out of the water. In fact all of my participants related similar situations where they were less respected for being a bodyboarder. Charley reiterates this point when she comments *"I would tell people that I surf then have to correct them and say that I bodyboard and they would say, 'oh, that's not surfing.'"* While it may seem a regular occurrence for bodyboarders, it is an encultured practise that I will investigate later in this section to help readers understand how bodyboarders address situations such as these. However, I will first discuss how bodyboarders negotiate space in the surf in relation to the type of board being ridden.

Hierarchies and power relations between bodyboarders and short board surfers are interchangeable and often depend on physical capital gained when entering the surf. In support, Waitt and Warren (2008) explain that "Each time a surfer enters the ocean they begin a complex process of negotiation through their bodies to configure and stabilise their subjectivity through making connections with the surf conditions and people" (p. 360). Stranger (2011), an avid Australian short board surfer and scholar explains that "The shortboard is the dominant surfcraft and is

used for high performance, high energy surfing” (p. 72). Stranger’s (2011) initial views of bodyboarding are portrayed when relating it to overcrowding at surf breaks. He explains that much of the overcrowding at beaches with bodyboarders is due to the popularity of this activity based on the ease with which it can be performed by novice water goers (Stranger, 2011). Continuing, he describes tensions between surfers and bodyboarders pointing out that “Surfboard riders have reacted aggressively to this invasion of their territory” (Stranger, 2011, p. 73). Despite the initial introduction of bodyboarding being negative, Stranger (2011) identifies that there is a competent bodyboarder community and gives a glimpse into how some bodyboarders negotiate space in the surf in some areas of Australia. For example, he explains that in some areas of Australia where there are more bodyboarders than surfers, bodyboarders dominate the break. Furthermore, he describes the multiple perspectives of bodyboarders, pointing out that “for some bodyboarders, surfboard riding is seen as a step up in the surfing hierarchy, while for others their group solidarity and conflict with surfboard riders has provided the basis for a separate status structure” (Stranger, 2011, p. 75).

While I resonate with some of the perspectives presented by Stranger (2011), and appreciate that he acknowledges bodyboarders in his book, I argue that some of the points mentioned do not offer a true reflection of bodyboarding culture, and in so doing, misrepresent the complexities within the sport. It is possible that Strangers’ comments fit Australian surf culture, but from my experiences, both in New Zealand and overseas, along with experiences of my participants these comments do

not resonate with our views. For example, I am particularly concerned by Stranger's (2011) assertion that "It is rare to find core bodyboarders over the age of 25. By this age they have either stopped surfing altogether, adopted a 'recreational' pattern, or made the transition to surfboard riding" (p. 75). This quote assumes bodyboarders only participate in this activity because they do not have the skills to stand-up surf, or because they are not committed to the activity. Stranger does not include interviews with bodyboarders in his extensive ethnographic study of Australian surf culture, thus such statements are based on assumptions that I find very problematic. Indeed, in the international competitive arena many of the male and female participants are over 25 years old. In fact, of the riders listed in the 2012 Top 10 bodyboarders on the Mens' World Tour, only two are under 25 and the oldest, Mike Stewart, who is viewed as the king of bodyboarding, is nearly 50 (Taylor, 2012). In New Zealand the majority of core participants are also over 25 years old, not to mention that all participants in this study are also over 25 years of age. Throughout this section I aim to provide insight into the hierarchies perceived by bodyboarders in New Zealand and in the process add to the body of knowledge surrounding bodyboarding.

In terms of where bodyboarding fits in the generalised hierarchy of surf culture, all of my participants agreed that it was certainly not at the top of the surfing field. James explains;

In terms of surfing hierarchy, yeah probably surfers would be the top, males and females. Long boarders would be second, kayakers and

stand up paddlers now, knee boarders and bodyboarders, I think they'd be kind of the same.

Jaffa reiterates this point stating, *“when you're in the water, it's very much like it's almost as if surfing is at the top of the pyramid, and bodyboarding is at the bottom, or part way down.”* Scholars who have investigated surf cultural hierarchies concur that short board stand up surfing is the hegemonic method of wave riding (Stranger, 2011; Waitt & Clifton, 2012; Waitt & Warren, 2008). While these observations about the generalised version of surf hierarchies are common and mostly accepted by both surfers and bodyboarders, the interactions in the surf between bodyboarders and surfers play out differently, as will be discussed in forthcoming sections of this chapter.

An interesting and valid point raised by participants in this study related to surf conversation in social settings. While this study focuses on the interactions in the surf, the assumptions of individuals who do not bodyboard are also relevant as they emphasize how participants in this study address stereotypes associated with bodyboarding. James explains:

Like it was funny cos when I was in Samoa a couple of people were talking about surfing and they were all going, 'oh yeah, I'm going to go for a surf in Gisborne, I've never been there,' and I just mentioned 'Oh, you know there's some good breaks there, like Gizzie Pipe, Makarori, Pines'. Then they were like, 'Oh do you surf?' and I was like 'Oh nah I bodyboard.' And then I kinda could tell they just switched off. It's like, two things you know like, they

acted like surfing was better than bodyboarding and the other thing was they've never been or have never seen high performance bodyboarding.

As this quote illustrates, some surfers accept as common-sense that bodyboarding is an activity requiring less skill and thus less deserving of respect. Many of the bodyboarders I spoke to expressed frustration at such opinions, but few attempted to challenge the basic assumptions underpinning the basic structure of the surf field. Understanding this stance is an embodied feature of the bodyboarders in this project which I will address shortly.

Despite the frustrations of being marginalised for riding a bodyboard, the more experienced bodyboarders in this project pointed out that not all short board surfers reacted negatively towards them. James explains, "*The really good [stand up surfers], are down to earth. It's the [stand up surfers] that aren't really that good who buy into the stereotypes of bodyboarders and the superiority complex.*" Andrew and Jaffa, who both also ride stand up short boards, provided similar experiences where the more experienced stand up surfers tended to give bodyboarders respect. I too have experienced positive acknowledgement for bodyboarders from some of New Zealand's top short board surfers when competing as part of the New Zealand Surf Team at the World Surfing Games in Ecuador 2004. The short board surfers were cheering for the high performance bodyboarding that was on display at this event and they also enquired about the difficulty of manoeuvres being performed. One of the surfers, who has been in many issues of *Kiwi Surf Magazine*, even

tried his hand at bodyboarding after which he acknowledged that it was really quite different to catching a wave on a surfboard. Thus we see a division in the type of stand up surfer who marginalises bodyboarders. The less experienced 'weekend warrior' (a participant who surfs infrequently generally lacking a high level of skill), surfer tends to treat bodyboarders with little to no respect yet the hard core stand up surfers who compete are more understanding and respectful towards bodyboarding as a high performance sport. Unfortunately, there are more 'weekend warrior' stand up surfers in New Zealand and as a result, it is likely bodyboarders will continue to be treated with less respect.

In regard to the physical skills required for surfing and bodyboarding, Chica provides a bodyboarders perspective;

Surfers have got their hard tricks that they find hard, and bodyboarders have got their own set of tricks and things that are hard, it's just different. I definitely do think it's easier to learn how to bodyboard, because you actually don't have to stand up. But once you get to a high level of trimming, it's actually hard to do stuff after that. Like doing a cut back on a surfboard is probably just as hard as trying to roll on a bodyboard. It's just different.

Ngailia, whose husband stand up surfs, believes that the negativity towards bodyboarding is based on how surfers think: *"They think they're cooler because they can stand up. I think it's just a mentality they all have. They think bodyboarding is sub-par to surfing. I think it's equal. It's a totally different sport."* Most participants resonated with Ngailia and Chicas' perspectives of bodyboarding being a totally different sport but

had given up justifying and explaining what bodyboarding was to people who weren't familiar or passionate about the sport.

It is plausible at this point that people who read this project are wondering why bodyboarders accept the degrading stereotypical comments given from some stand up surfers and people who do not know about bodyboarding as a sport. This is where Bourdieu's theory of habitus and embodiment is useful to help the reader understand how bodyboarders learn and accept their position in the surfing hierarchy. When they first started bodyboarding participants in this study would argue against the stereotype of bodyboarding being a marginalised sport. After years of constantly fighting to justify the sport, many suggested that over time it became less important to challenge surfers on their assumptions. In regard to the negative comments received from individuals that don't bodyboard Jaffa responds, *"I've just heard it a million times [and now] it's just like water off a ducks back."* This less argumentative approach toward individuals who are not aware of high performance bodyboarding demonstrated that the participants in this project accepted the stereotype of bodyboarding being perceived as a less respected sport even though they believed otherwise. The consensus among the participants in this project was that people who didn't know or try to learn about bodyboarding were ignorant and that it wasn't their job to educate them on the nuances of the sport. Much like many marginalised groups in society, over time the bodyboarders in this project had learned to accept and tolerate the ignorance of others regarding their sport. Nonetheless, even with the acceptance and tolerance, some bodyboarders occasionally make an

effort to educate individuals who are not familiar with high performance bodyboarding. For example Bolo states:

When I say, I'm gonna go out for a surf, people think, 'oh you stand up surf?' I go nah, I boogie board. And then they go 'ahhh'. So then I'm thinking, oh are they thinking I'm just like one of those guys that just catch the wave with the whitewash you know? So I make it my duty to actually show them.

The females interviewed in this study presented some different views on how they address stereotypes related to bodyboarding and the majority of them chose not to let it bother them. For example, when asked how she reacts to stand up surfers when in the surf Charley states, *"I just ignored them. Didn't make any difference who was there. I didn't know them, I'd just wait my turn."* Gendered experiences of bodyboarding will be discussed in Chapter 5, however, I believe it is important to note in this section that males and females addressed the hierarchies between bodyboarding and surfing using different strategies. As I explain below, bodyboarders' claims to a respected position in the surf field depends largely on their ability to access parts of the wave less available to stand up surfers. Prior to this, I will firstly describe how individuals become enculturated into the sport of bodyboarding (and in so doing, often learn to accept their marginal position in the line-up) as it will set the scene for understanding how bodyboarders access capital in the surfing field.

Becoming a Bodyboarder: Learning the Rules of the Field

The basic rules organizing the surf field are not dissimilar to the rules on the road in that they are there to ensure safety for all users. However, a

major difference between the surf and the road is that on the road, paid police officers reinforce the rules, yet in the surf the rules are policed by the participants themselves. This social construct in the surf field can lead to conflict as illustrated in Chapter 2 through the experiences of Nat Young (2000) in his book *Surf Rage*. Stranger (2011), explains that there is “one rule of surfing etiquette recognized globally which states that the surfer who catches a wave closest to the breaking part of that wave (the furthest ‘inside’) has the right to surf it alone” (p. 59). This means that no other person can try to catch the wave once the individual who had right of way has caught the wave. When another person catches a wave that is already occupied, he or she is said to be ‘dropping in.’ Numerous confrontations in the surf relate to this rule being broken even though the interpretation of it is sometimes confusing.

In my experience, Stranger’s (2011) explanation of the global rule, being closest to the inside, is not always as easy to police as it sounds. Take for example, a surfer who was out furthest who had caught a wave that had not started to break. As the surfer was riding the wave another surfer could catch the wave and be nearest the breaking part of it. In this situation it is confusing as to which surfer had priority in the wave, the surfer who had caught the wave first, or the surfer who was closer to the breaking part of the wave. In stand up surfing and bodyboarding competitions there are set rules but when surfing for leisure, there are differing perceptions on how the social rules of the surf should be implemented. This point is reiterated by Stranger (2011) who explains that “it is difficult to interpret who should have the primary right to a wave using

Tribal Law (see Figure 1 p. 37) - the furthest out, first to their feet, furthest inside or the person waiting the longest" (p. 63). James, one of the participants in this study explains *"There's no rules, it's not against the law, but it's that unspoken etiquette that you wait your turn, you don't steal all the waves, you're respectful."* This statement resonates with Stranger (2011) who explains that despite the various interpretations of the rules of the surf, "a common theme of showing mutual respect underpins them" (Stranger, 2011, p. 63). In this section I will employ Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and field to help readers understand the enculturation of bodyboarders from novice to core in the surfing field, and how such rules are learned through interactions with peers both in and out of the surf.

The socialization process that occurs from novice to core bodyboarders always begins with the act of learning to participate. As depicted by Stranger (2011) and Higdon (1990), bodyboarding is the quickest approach to begin enjoying the waves. Unlike short board surfing which has a steep learning curve, basic bodyboarding is able to be learned almost immediately. Participants in this study reiterate that anyone can catch a wave on the first day bodyboarding, yet it takes years of practise to learn how to perform the various acrobatic manoeuvres. In the upcoming paragraphs I draw upon Bourdieu's concept of habitus to describe the dispositions and ways of being a bodyboarder. In particular I focus on aspects of habitus "that generates meaningful practices and meaning-giving perceptions" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 170) within the surf field.

I have taught over 500 novice bodyboarders in the past 10 years, some of whom are friends and family, others are students of Manukau

Institute of Technology School of Sport, as well as youth at my church. Many of these novice bodyboarders display fears relating to sharks, rips and drowning, and are less concerned with the learning the etiquette of the surfing field. It is not until they gain confidence to paddle out past the breakers, however, where the application of the rules first becomes relevant. Once a novice bodyboarder has reached a point where they are confident surfing among experienced bodyboarders and stand up surfers, I will ensure they are aware of the rules prior to paddling out past the breakers. I also teach the novice bodyboarder by maintaining close proximity and advising them where to position themselves among a group of surfers, which direction to paddle out of the way, and even when to paddle for a wave. Hence, from my experience, some novice bodyboarders learn the rules of the surf through the advice of more experienced bodyboarders and surfers. The participants in this study were introduced to bodyboarding through friends who either bodyboard or surf and for them, surf etiquette was learned and practised with their friends while in the surf.

Other novice bodyboarders are literally thrown in the deep end as described by Bolo when sharing an experience where he took his nephew bodyboarding for the first time at Piha when the surf was big. *“He was a real shit head so I took him out the back [of the breakers] and set him up for the biggest smash in his life. That changed him for the rest of his life cos now he lives for bodyboarding.”* In this case, Bolos’ nephew was forced into a situation where he was afraid of drowning and according to the account provided, even cried and wanted to go back to shore. Bolo

exerted dominance in this situation and explains, “*I still tease him to this day. I go, remember that time [when you first started bodyboarding and you cried]? He goes, oh shut up.*” I have heard other experiences where the shock treatment integration into bodyboarding has occurred but this usually occurs with males. This example highlights an approach used by some male bodyboarders as a form of gaining respect for bodyboarding using fear to enhance the danger and thrill of the experience. Moreover, this example reveals the power relations and hierarchal structure based on age and experience within the bodyboarding sub-field.

For many short board surfers and experienced bodyboarders, frustration toward novice bodyboarders is based on them getting in the way or dropping in. Stranger (2011) elucidates this point when explaining that many novice bodyboarders “don’t learn the etiquette of surfing before venturing out to compete for waves” (p. 73). Due to the behaviour of many novice bodyboarders, core bodyboarders are sometimes treated with very little respect when they paddle out to surf among stand up short board and long boarders. The following comments from Jaffa are insightful here:

A lot of surfers think that bodyboarders are guys that paddle out, get in the way, drop in, don’t really know what they’re doing, and I guess many surfers just lump everyone in that same group. I think that’s probably the way they look at it, like you’re just a full blown kook, you can’t stand up, you’re just on a bodyboard, you don’t know what you’re doing. Jaffa (edited for clarity)

To address this perception, core bodyboarders employ a variety of strategies to negotiate space and gain respect. Jaffa explains, “*I’d try to*

get a wave and just prove to them, 'oh look I'm not a full blown kook'." As defined by Waitt and Clifton (2012) a 'kook' is "a derogatory surfing term for someone who lacks surfing skills" (p. 7). Other strategies mentioned by participants included initiating conversation with people in the surf as an "ice-breaker", taking up respectful positions in the surf where they would not be interfering with the main group of surfers, while others would surf in a less populated spot to avoid contact with anyone. There were also some interesting gendered and ethnic responses that will be explored in Chapters 5 and 6.

While the general perceptions of short board surfers toward bodyboarders have been investigated by some scholars (Stranger, 2011; Waitt & Warren, 2008), the perceptions of bodyboarders toward surfers and perceptions of themselves as bodyboarders is yet to be examined. Here, I employ Bourdieu's concept of habitus to help understand the embodied practices of bodyboarders and some of the norms and values that become accepted as common sense through the prolonged process of enculturation into the culture of bodyboarding. Bourdieu (1984) explains, "The perception of the social world is itself the product of internalization" (p. 170). Here, perceptions of bodyboarders are what I aim to explore to help provide further understanding of how they view themselves in the surf field in relation to one another and to stand-up surfers.

From my extensive national and international experience with bodyboarding over the past twenty three years, I would describe the New Zealand bodyboarding community as inclusive, friendly, playful and at

times embracing the eccentric personalities of some participants. When asking participants for characteristics they would use to identify a bodyboarder, each participant found it easier to describe the embodied and stylistic characteristics of a short board surfer than it was to describe a bodyboarder. Charley explains;

Stand up surfers they all look the same. They all do the same thing, and they're a very similar type of person. You know, whenever you think of a surfer you see bleach blonde hair, you know, and the jewellery or the swagger and the clothes and that sort of thing.

Also, according to my participants, although some short boarders can be friendly as previously mentioned, the majority were perceived as arrogant, snobby and disrespectful. *"I think it's just a mentality they all have. They think boogieboarding is sub par to surfing"* (Ngailia). On the other hand, bodyboarders were described as being more laid back, friendly and quirky. The statement, *"You could probably pick what a bodyboarder isn't as opposed to what a bodyboarder is,"* (Jaffa) was the general consensus among the bodyboarders in this study. Andrew explains, *"Bodyboarding is kind of a sport that attracts the stranger folk. It's hard to put an image on it because everyone is kind of like an outcast sort of, you know everyone's sort of one way or another."* Continuing, he points out that some bodyboarding brands embrace the 'outcast' identity with names like 'No Friends' and 'Rejected.' Waitt and Clifton (2012) provide similar perspectives when stating the bodyboarders view themselves as, "oppositional – transgressing cultural norms in the surf and their everyday

lives” (p. 8). These ‘odd ball’ non-main-stream characteristics attributed to bodyboarders by bodyboarders signify differences in taste and perception where perhaps it is almost cooler to be different. This way of thinking could explain why some bodyboarders are happy to accept marginal positions in the surf field rather than challenge the stereotypes and assumptions of their surfing peers.

In bodyboarding circles there tends to be a sense of camaraderie stemming from common experiences of being marginalised in the surf field. This feeling is reiterated by Chica who states, “*Lots of surfers think that bodyboarders aren’t as good, so when you see another bodyboarder it’s kind of like they’re on the same wave length.*” James expands on this concept by explaining, “*You’ll get a bodyboarder who’ll come out and I’ll feel excited. Oh it’s another bodyboarder, I don’t know him, I don’t know who he is but it’s another bodyboarder.*” Charley also points out that if she sees a bodyboarder in the surf she tends to gravitate towards him or her even if she doesn’t know who they are. Bourdieu is useful here to help understand the mutual understanding among bodyboarders. He points out that with people who have similar tastes there are ways of knowing, understanding and appreciating the nuances associated with that practise (Bourdieu, 1984). Thus knowing the feeling of being marginalised in the surf, understanding the manoeuvres and difficulties associated with performing them, and just knowing the embodied experience of riding a bodyboard could explain why the participants in this project felt more comfortable around other bodyboarders.

Camaraderie is often quite strong between large groups of bodyboarders particularly when they surf together. An experience where the comradeship was strong among a group of New Zealand bodyboarders occurred after a competition in Gisborne where there were over twenty bodyboarders at one particular surf break. The feeling in the water was electric with excitement and the bodyboarders were cheering and supporting each other when someone caught a big steep wave. It was different to the competition experience where the focus was on being the best and it was very different to the environment at surf breaks that are inhabited by stand up surfers. In this situation, everyone was in the water enjoying the steep, hollow waves that were breaking in shallow water. Events of this particular surf session were captured on video and to this day the bodyboarders who were there still remember the positivity surrounding this experience. James reflects, *“Everyone was really cool and we all knew each other outside of the surf so there was a really good vibe in the water. The waves were so much fun too, perfect for bodyboarding.”* The combination of everyone knowing each other, being New Zealand bodyboarders and dominating a surf break added to the affability of that occasion. In my view this experience highlighted a sense of freedom from judgement and bias from a society that marginalises bodyboarding as a sport. We were able to perform our sport unconstrained and at the same time gain validation from peers who understood the difficulties and bravery associated with catching steep, hollow waves in shallow water.

While there are situations where there is a sense of camaraderie among bodyboarders, there are also battles for power and position between bodyboarders while in the surf. Vying for prominent positioning from which to catch the best waves often involves paddling around other people or paddling ahead of others to maintain your position in the line-up. This 'paddle battle' so to speak, occurs regularly in the surf particularly when there are a lot of surfers and when the waves are few and far between. In these situations bodyboarders and surfers with the most athleticism in terms of paddling speed and power and knowledge of the local break, tend to catch the most waves as they are better able to maintain their 'right of way' positioning. For the other people in the water, frustrations can sometimes arise when a select few become greedy. James shares his perceptions of situations like this;

It's like when you go fishing and your quota is like 9 and people go and take 50, that's where it goes wrong. It's not a rule set per se, it's an attitude. You can have all the rules in the world, but if you don't have the right attitude to police them for yourself, it doesn't really mean anything.

It was interesting to note that Bolo also shared similar views in regard to waiting your turn and not catching every wave that came through even though you could. Interestingly, this point wasn't raised by any of the other participants, which made me reflect on aspects that made them different from the other participants, as well as what was similar about these two participants. Both James and Bolo are large Pacific Island men so it is possible that their shared views related to their cultural

perspectives and how people should behave in social settings such as the surf.

Negotiating space in the surf for people who share surfing spaces includes finding strategies or methods to address wave riders who drop in. While the reasons people drop in on waves range from not being seen to lack of respect, it is nonetheless a common occurrence as a bodyboarder. Andrew explains, "*I've noticed when I'm on my surfboard as opposed to bodyboarding the amount of times you get dropped in on is far less.*" All participants in this study acknowledged that getting dropped in on was commonplace and they would use different strategies to address this. Andrew describes a strategy he uses when short board surfers drop in on him;

The best way to do it is to push boards. Cos when they're trying to get up if you push it sideways they just fall in the water. So you're deeper than them, they're trying to take off, you just push their board away and they fall in the water and then you carry on. And then you get a barrel then they don't drop in on you again.

After enforcing the rules, Andrew noticeably points out the physical capital gained in his statement where he describes his physical ability to ride a barrel (a tunnel of water). Despite Andrews' frustration at being dropped in on by stand up short boarders, he would not verbally confront the perpetrator but instead chose to display his physical capital and let this speak for itself. Other participants, particularly the females, also expressed frustration at being dropped in on, but they typically chose not to do anything about it. Chica was the only female in this study who would

openly tell a person to stay off her wave by calling out to them if they started paddling for a wave she had already caught. James and Bolo however, reacted differently where both mentioned that they sometimes spoke to individuals who dropped in on them. James explains, "*They dropped in on me and after the wave finished I just had a word to them. Like, I've dropped in on people and I've apologised. People have apologised to me, it's no big deal you know.*" It is interesting to note that both James and Bolo are Pacific Island men who were not afraid to address situations where there were infringements or conflicts in the surf. The differences in approaches between Chica, James and Bolo suggest that gender and ethnicity might impact on bodyboarders' perspectives and experiences which I will explore in more detail in chapters 5 and 6.

All participants agreed that people who don't know about bodyboarding believe that surfing was the cool thing to do as opposed to bodyboarding. Jaffa explains, "*I don't think there's probably [one] bodyboarder that bodyboards because it's cool. I think it's the complete opposite.*" It was interesting to note that the bodyboarders in this study acknowledged their short board surfing counterparts in terms of difficulty in the performance of the sport. In fact, although they loved bodyboarding, those that did not surf short boards acknowledged their respect for the sport and admitted their own lack of experience with short board surfing. For example, after mentioning that you can't do many tricks on a surfboard Sueanne admits, "*that's my, lowly, know nothing about surfing opinion.*" This apologetic approach was one that I noticed through conversations I

had with female participants, and it began to expose some possible gender differences which will be investigated further in Chapter 5.

Contrasting opinions existed between participants in regard to how bodyboarders really felt about their marginal status in the surf. For example, Andrew states, *“I don’t think bodyboarders care about what people think of them. Whereas surfers might.”* In contrast, Chica points out, *“I think they’re like ‘oh I don’t care about stand ups and what they say,’ but I think they kind of do care, like I think deep down they still want respect like everyone else does.”* James reiterates this point and explains that bodyboarders have an inferiority complex particularly when they go surfing. James states that the reason for feeling inferior is related to *“how surfers treat bodyboarders. It’s in the media [surfing magazines and websites], just derogatory names like dick dragger, shark biscuit, you know, so without even knowing the surfers or the person, bodyboarders go into a situation with that on their head.”* Interestingly, throughout Andrews interview he used examples where he would be demonstrating his physical ability and love of steep hollow waves to show that his position in the surf was above some stand up surfers. So while some participants may genuinely not care about what people think about bodyboarding, the remarks and comments shared during the interviews acknowledged the stereotype of bodyboarders being less respected than surfers and in a sense supported the point raised by Chica that everyone wants respect.

Despite the lower position in the surfing hierarchy, bodyboarding participants had varied reasons for staying loyal to the sport and as I will

discuss later on in this chapter, bodyboarders can also access capital and therefore power when in the surf. Chica explains:

It was probably the people that kept me in the sport because, everyone was so friendly and easy going that it was easy to. You felt welcomed so you wanted to stay in it, you felt like you kind of belonged and that they want you there.

These comments reveal the friendliness that is characteristic of the bodyboarding community. Chica also compared her competitive bodyboarding experiences with surf lifesaving and explains that the people who bodyboard were much friendlier than those in surf lifesaving. From a male perspective, Jaffa explains, *“I think a lot of guys do it because it’s a thrill, like a massive thrill. Like the waves you can ride are crazy.”* With this study, all participants expressed the enjoyment they got from participating in bodyboarding. They do it for the joy of the physical experience and not necessarily to be better than anyone else or to be seen as the ‘cool’ people. For most of the bodyboarders interviewed in this project, they seemed to assume that short board surfers were more ego and status-driven in their participation. However, for some of the more competitive and elite body boarders in this project, gaining the status and respect from their bodyboarding and surfing peers was an important factor in their participation. Thus, the binary that my participants identified between intrinsically motivated bodyboarders and ego-driven surfers seems overly simplistic, and reveals more about the tendency for groups to distinguish themselves from others via an array of taste and cultural

practices (Bourdieu, 1984). Additionally, these comments and perspectives reveal characteristics within the sub-culture of bodyboarding.

Getting Barrelled: Bodyboarders Claim to Capital in the Surf

Regardless of the surf craft being used, one of the most exhilarating experiences for serious wave riders involves riding big waves and getting barrelled, or in non-surf speak, being entirely covered in a tunnel of water while riding a wave. The experience of paddling into a mountain of water, speeding down a steep slope and being propelled into a huge tunnel of water (called a barrel or tube) is something that only a wave rider can embody (see Figures 3 and 4). Highly committed and proficient surfers and bodyboarders will conduct extensive research and go to great lengths to search for and access waves that can provide the best opportunities for 'getting barrelled.' Waitt and Clifton (2012) reiterate this experience when explaining that "Riding inside a hollow barrel or tube as part of a breaking wave is the ultimate thrill for both shortboarders and bodyboarders" (p. 7). Drawing upon Bourdieu's concept of capital, the longer one rides inside a big barrel, the more status, respect and thus symbolic capital gained. If the rider exits the barrel without the curtain of the wave breaking even more respect is gained. Booth (2007) also points out that "Among surfers competition for prestige [capital] involves displays of physical prowess and courage in big waves" (p. 321). Gaining respect from ones peers is of course highly valuable within the surf field, and will help the surfer or bodyboarder gain access to waves in the current or future surf sessions. Put simply, demonstrations of physical ability via a well-executed barrel are a form of power within the surf field. Capital is also gained by bodyboarders

and short board surfers when performing aerial manoeuvres in the surf as in Figures 3 and 4. From my experience, manoeuvres where a rider is launched into the air will gain capital whether you are a bodyboarder or



Figure 3: New Zealand male bodyboarder getting barrelled while male short boarder watches. *Photo courtesy of photographer: Chris Garden*



Figure 4: New Zealand male bodyboarder getting barrelled. *Photo courtesy of photographer: Chris Garden*

stand up surfer. In this respect, bodyboarders have many manoeuvres where they are launched into the air and as such have the ability to gain respect from their surfing peers (see Figure 2 p. 87).

A characteristic of waves that needs to be explained for non wave-riders is wave power. Some waves may be tall in height yet have very little power and other waves may be very small, yet have copious amounts of power. Scarfe, Elwany, Mead and Black (2003) explain that “Surfers generally prefer waves with steep or plunging faces. These waves provide greater power to propel surfers and the opportunity for more advanced surfers to experience barrel rides” (p. 4). Without power, a rider is unable to generate speed which results in an increased difficulty with riding the wave and performing manoeuvres. For non-ocean goers, using the analogy of an engine and physical size of a vehicle might help explain how sometimes large waves can have less power than smaller waves. If there was a very large powerful engine in a mini, the mini would have a lot more power and therefore more capacity for speed. On the other hand, if there was a mini-engine in a large truck, the truck would look large but have very little power and speed. This same concept applies to size, force and power of different types of waves. What is important to note, is that sometimes size of waves and power of waves are not always equivalent.

When riding a bodyboard in a prone position a rider is able to enter a barrel easier than a stand up surfer. Stranger (2011) acknowledges this position and explains that for bodyboarders, there is “different potential inherent in the board, such as taking off on very steep waves, tucking into smaller tubes and performing a range of different manoeuvres” (p. 74). As

a result of the versatility of the bodyboard, there are specific types of surf breaks that favour bodyboarders over surfers. These types of surf breaks have waves that are very steep, break quickly and are sometimes shallow as in Figures 5 and 6 (Stranger, 2011; Waitt & Clifton, 2012). Thus at surf



Figure 5: New Zealand male bodyboarder surfing a steep shallow wave on a reef. *Photo courtesy of photographer: Chris Garden*



Figure 6: New Zealand female bodyboarder surfing a steep shallow wave on a shore break. *Photo courtesy of photographer: Lilly Pollard*

breaks with these characteristics, bodyboarders have more access and therefore more capital. Andrew shares an insightful perspective here when saying, “[I read] on a bodyboarding blog or video or something like, ‘the barrels that surfers dream of getting, bodyboarders have ridden through time and time again.’” Indeed, it is in the potential for accessing barrels and big, powerful or heavy surf in shallow areas that bodyboarders can gain status and respect from stand-up surfers. Of course this is a form of capital available to committed and courageous bodyboarders.

An experience where bodyboarders gained dominance over stand up surfers at a New Zealand surf break was shared by Andrew, one of the hard core participants in this study. In this situation Andrew pointed out;

There was a whole crowd of surfers out, it was quite heavy and the surfers tried to [take over and dominate] the peak. Then a couple of heavy waves came through and none of them went, but all the bodyboarders caught the waves. So, on the next set the surfers had less priority in the line-up.

In this instance, there was a shift in power from the stand up surfers to the bodyboarders due to the inability of the stand-up surfers to ride the steep heavy waves on offer at this break. Hence, as a bodyboarder the type of waves and the way they break can sometimes influence status, positioning, and dominance in the surf.

One of the most subjective forms of capital is through the perception of the type and size of wave that has been ridden. Social arenas’ where measurement and surf size is discussed occurs in social settings outside the surf (e.g. in the car park, on the beach, at barbeques,

at the bar). Although the majority of this research addresses interactions in the surf, the environment where surf dialogue takes place is also relevant as it highlights the perceptions faced by all wave riders when in other areas of society. A commonly discussed and very subjective topic is wave size and type. For example, James discusses the misconceptions experienced by wave riders via conversation regarding wave size and type:

I've been to breaks around the world and I've surfed some pretty heavy stuff, some scary waves and I just look at the person talking and you can kind of tell that they're not that experienced. As soon as they start mouthing off about surfing and how they were in 20 foot surf I just turn off because everyone knows that anything over 6 foot is pretty scary. Six foot Hawaiian measured surf, is scary surf for anyone so when you hear someone mouthing off saying, 'oh yeah I was in 10 foot Piha,' you know they're not that good. Piha can't even hold 10 foot surf.

I too resonate with the wave size conundrum especially in conversation with others. There have been times I have given respect to individuals who claimed to have ridden 10 foot surf in conversation yet when we've gone surfing together in waves that I deemed three foot they have exclaimed that the surf was six foot. As a result of these experiences, I now take conversational claims at face value and will not draw conclusions on the experience of the wave rider until I have actually been surfing with them. What is clear in this instance, and could be a topic for further research, are the different perceptions of wave size between individuals

and the value in considering if and how this affects hierarchal status in surf culture.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter Bourdieu's theoretical tools habitus, field and capital have been useful in examining the culture of bodyboarding and how the surf field operates through the experiences of the participants in this project. While bodyboarders have presented themselves as 'laid back' and quirky, they also acknowledge the stereotypical perspective of bodyboarding being a sport requiring less skill and thus less deserving of respect than stand-up surfing. However, despite these perceptions, highly committed, skilled and courageous bodyboarders are able to access power and respect through displays of physical capital that includes getting barrelled or performing aerial manoeuvres. Bourdieu (1984), describes social fields as places "in which the agents wield strengths and obtain profits proportionate to their mastery of this objectified capital" (p. 228). When contextualised to the surf field, the distribution of capital and power can shift based on how surfers and bodyboarders are able to ride the waves on offer at a surf beach and is not necessarily dependant of the type of surf craft a person chooses to ride.

Other topics that were introduced and not yet examined in detail, included the different gendered and ethnic experiences of participants, and how this might affect access to waves, power and capital in the surf field. Therefore, further discussions on how capital in the surf is distributed based on interpretations and self-perceptions of bodies as gendered and ethnically different from the majority of surfers, in particular

Maori and Pacific Island bodies on boards, will be explored in forthcoming chapters.

Chapter 5: Gender on the Waves

I think women that surf or bodyboard have other commitments so they're juggling all their stuff and I don't think they're as committed. But for males, it becomes their whole focus and they'll drop work. Like all the tradesmen out at Piha will be like, "Sorry I'm not gonna turn up and fix your house today cos the surfs too good." You'd never get a female that would do that would you? [Pause] Other than you [laughs]. Sueanne

Each society has expectations of men and women in terms of what roles they should and shouldn't play. Gender roles as described by Deane and Davis (1987), are "the behaviour patterns, obligations, and privileges that are considered appropriate for each sex" (p. 314). The opening quote from Sueanne above, presents a number of gendered assumptions such as, 'females are less committed to bodyboarding than males' and 'women have a greater sense of responsibility to other (e.g. family, employers, clients).' It was interesting to note that as an afterthought Sueanne acknowledged that there is the odd female who might go against the norm in terms of commitment. When attempting to understand concepts related to gender, McKay, Messner and Sabo (2000), explain that gender "is seen as a multilayered social process that is not simply part of the personality structure or individuals, but also a fundamental aspect of everyday group interactions, institutions, and the cultural symbols that swirl around us" (p. 3). Thus, gender permeates every action and choice from the clothing we choose to wear, the way we wear our hair, to the behaviour we choose to display when in social arenas. When introducing sport into gendered research, it is often seen as a social arena where multiple layers of gender

construction and re-construction takes place (McKay, et al., 2000). Gendered assumptions and roles have been investigated by numerous scholars who are interested in understanding the femininities and masculinities associated with different sporting codes. On a broad scope, the issues relating to gender that are investigated in sport sociology are outlined by Coakley and Pike (1998) as, “(1) participation and equity issues, and (2) ideological and structural issues” (p. 211). So through gendered perspectives, researchers seek to understand the ways masculinity and femininity are embodied and practiced in the field of sport, and the ways gendered power relations operate such that some groups are privileged over others, in terms of opportunities for participation.

As previously mentioned in Chapters 3 and 4, a number of scholars have investigated gender in a variety of lifestyle board sports. Some examples include research on femininities in snowboarding (Thorpe, 2009, 2010, 2011), windsurfing (Wheaton, 2002; Wheaton & Tomlinson, 1998), and skateboarding (Atencio, et al., 2009; Backstrom, 2013; Kelly, et al., 2005). Additionally, masculinities have been an interest for scholars in snowboarding (Anderson, 1999; Jones & Greer, 2012; Thorpe, 2010), skateboarding (Atencio, et al., 2009; Beal, 1996) and short board surfing (Evers, 2004, 2009; Ford & Brown, 2006; Stranger, 2011; Waitt & Warren, 2008) to name a few. What interests me is that two of these scholars, in particular Thorpe (2011) and Wheaton (2002), are females who present their findings as participants in the sports they are investigating. Having insider knowledge in their sports, they are able to provide their lived experiences through insider status as females and as participants, and as

both participants and researchers are able to negotiate space in the male-dominated sports of snowboarding and windsurfing. As such, these scholars have provided inspiration for me as a female researcher to present the data in this project using my perspectives intermingled with those of my participants. Although gender has been investigated in surf culture, there remains space for the voices of more female researchers to share and present their experiences and perspectives. Therefore, much like Thorpe and Wheaton, the insider status I will be utilising to explore bodyboarding is one of being a female bodyboarder.

In this chapter I will draw upon Bourdieu's theories of habitus, field and capital to investigate the distribution of capital in the surf field based on gender as well as explore the embodied characteristics of male and female bodyboarders. In doing so, I will consider bodyboarders perceptions of themselves and the opposite sex and how they negotiate space in a male dominated environment.

Respect and Power: A Gendered Approach

Research that has investigated gender in the surfing field has exposed themes that are similar to other traditional sports (Kidd, 2013; Messner, 1990, 1992; Wellard, 2002) such as male dominance, male sexism and a lack of respect for females. Men's assumptions of females are presented by Booth (2001), who explains that some, "male surfers considered physical prowess a masculine trait and they deemed women comparatively frail, delicate, passive and neurotic" (p. 6). While it is generally accepted that physiologically males have the capacity to produce more strength and power than females (Eurich et al., 2010), there

are many female athletes and athletic girls and women who do not fit the mould of being frail or delicate. Over the past two decades, we have witnessed a phenomenal growth in the numbers of girls and women participating in a wide array of sports. Female demonstrations of commitment, skill and physical prowess at both the local, national and international level have challenged previous assumptions about the capability of women in sport (Laurendeau & Sharara, 2008; MacKay & Dallaire, 2012; Obel, Bruce, & Thompson, 2008). In some sports (particularly those less entrenched in traditional gender rules), we have witnessed women renegotiating the rules and structures of participation. For example, Wheaton and Tomlinson (Wheaton & Tomlinson, 1998) discuss the changing gender order in lifestyle sports such as windsurfing, and reveal how some women who demonstrate physical prowess, commitment and courage are able to not only participate alongside their male peers, but also gain status and respect of women in windsurfing cultures. In terms of investigating masculinities in the surf, it is important to note that there is more than one perspective. For example, Ford and Brown explain that “men oppress themselves and each other” (2006, p. 85). So while men oppress women, they also oppress themselves through masculine ideologies operating in the surf field, and each other. With these themes in mind, I will consider opportunities available for male and female bodyboarders in the surfing field by discussing embodied gendered dispositions and strategies employed by both male and female bodyboarders in negotiating space on the waves.

Before delving into the differences of both feminine and masculine approaches it is important to first outline Bourdieu's views of masculine domination and symbolic violence and how they will inform sections of this project. According to Bourdieu (2001), masculine domination exists in the embodied dispositions learned from childhood (habitus) and as such, many socializing structures naturally lean toward the domination of males over females from an early age. For example, young boys are given trucks, planes and action figures which portray work, strength and power whereas young girls are given baby dolls, miniature kitchen sets, and doll houses, which portrays looking after children and domesticated chores. Once engrained, these dispositions occur unconsciously and affect every aspect of an individual from deportment, and clothing, to tasks they perform on a daily basis (e.g. men putting out the rubbish, women cooking the dinner) (Bourdieu, 2001). Symbolic violence then, are the symbolic structures or actions of domination that are exercised upon men and women that are accepted as the norm (Webb, Schirato, & Danaher, 2002). An example of symbolic violence in surf culture could be that it is acceptable for females to bodyboard because it is deemed a more inferior form of surfing. Therefore, in the context of this project, symbolic violence relates to the symbols of masculine habitus within the surf field and the aspects being researched are the ways women and men negotiate these assumptions.

It is clear from surf literature (Booth, 2001; Ford & Brown, 2006; Stranger, 2011; Waitt, 2008) that hierarchies in the surfing field are not only reserved to surf craft. Gender plays an important part of

understanding the interactions that occur in the surf and as such, hierarchies are created in addition to varied distributions of power and access to good waves. Waitt and Clifton (2012) clarify 'who' is taken into consideration with these hierarchies when explaining that, "In the gendered hierarchies of bodyboarding, only 'kooks' [incompetent surfers]. . . pose no threat to how gender hierarchies may play out in the surf because they have no ability to temporarily claim the [surf] break as their own" (p. 7). Hence, according to Waitt and Clifton (2012) the hierarchies that exist relate to individuals who have obtained a level of skill where they are competent at catching and riding waves. Therefore, this chapter will focus mostly on individuals who know the rules of the field and know how to catch waves.

The roles of males and females in surf culture are portrayed from a masculine perspective by Waitt and Clifton (2012) when stating;

Women are constituted through an oppressive power relationship as sexualised objects that belong on the beach, suntanning rather than surfing, while men produce their athletic, masculine identity, in the surf through discourses of fitness, health, danger, risk-taking and the logic of competition (p. 3).

This perspective resonates with normative assumptions relating to feminine and masculine roles where men are given more respect in the surf than women. However, despite females having a lower position in the surf, the roles that are played out in the waves provide opportunities for females to gain respect and positions of power. Some of these opportunities include competency in the surf at catching big waves and the

ability to perform manoeuvres. This concept is reinforced where some men ““hold in awe” female surfers who “display courage and skill”” (Booth, 2001, p. 17). Hence, there are varied positions of skill ability in the surf field and as such there are instances where females display more skill than some males. For example, Chica explains that some surfers are, “*not very good and because they’re not good you just paddle for waves they’re paddling for because they’re not going to get it. Once I’ve caught the wave I’ll just call them off.*” Situations like this often challenge gendered assumptions about what women can and cannot do. What is highlighted in this example by Chica, is the physical capital she demonstrates and how this over-rides gender capital in this case. Hence, some women gain respect from their male peers through demonstrations of physical competence and as a result gain access to quality waves.

It is important to note that there are other situations where female displays of traits that are traditionally-defined as masculine (e.g., aggression, risk-taking, physical dominance) can also challenge the maleness of surfing and as a result some men respond negatively to women in the surf. Women who are able to compete physically against men are sometimes trivialised as illustrated by Coakley (1998), who points out that regular statements from males in reference to athletic females include; “Okay, she’s a good athlete, but she’s not a ‘real’ woman” (p. 220), which can lead to accusations of being too ‘manly’ by not ‘performing femininity’ as expected. These assumptions can cause a conundrum for females who seek to gain access to power in the surf, and struggle to negotiate their identities in and out of the waves based on different gender

norms and rules, and understandings of masculinity and femininity. This conundrum is outlined by Bourdieu (2001), who points out that when women “behave like men, they risk losing the obligatory attributes of ‘femininity’ and call into question the natural right of men to the positions of power; if they behave like women, they appear incapable and unfit for the job” (p. 67). As a result of these internalised battles, whether conscious or not, female negotiations in the surf can be quite complex as will be discussed in the next section.

Bodyboarding Femininities

Historically, sport has been considered a male domain where females are often marginalised based on the ideologies that participants need to portray physical strength, skill and ability to be successful. As of late, these ideologies have been contested by feminist scholars and activists, as well as female participants who seek to redefine sport according to their own experiences (Birrell & Cole, 1994). It has been argued that lifestyle sports offer new spaces for different gender relations (Thorpe, 2011; Wheaton & Tomlinson, 1998). Due to lifestyle sports being less structured where participation is by choice and in spaces that are not controlled by referees and umpires, there are arguably more opportunities for women to re-shape and define terms of participation. However, despite this opportunity, “Sport is so thoroughly masculinised that it seems unlikely that it can be reclaimed to serve women’s interests” (Birrell & Cole, 1994, p. 48). For example in surfing, masculinity is ever present and as such many women are put off the sport due to the maleness of the activity. Those women who do continue to participate must develop an array of

strategies to negotiate space in this male dominated territory. Olive, McCuaig and Phillips (2013), offer an interesting analysis of the ways recreational female surfers are sexualized, marginalized and trivialized in the surf, and explain how some women develop unique strategies to support one another and navigate the maleness of the line-up. As various other scholars have discussed, the young male short board surfers hold the most power to access waves and to define and regulate the rules within the surf field at most locations. Similar to Thorpe's (2011) discussion of the snowboarding patriarchy, groups of highly committed young men in surfing culture have developed strategies of symbolic, verbal and/or physical violence in which 'other' men and female participants are marginalized in the waves, on the beach, and the broader culture (e.g. in the magazines. As a result, many learn to merely accept the rules of the field, rather than challenge the structure of the field. Here, I am interested in exploring how those women who continue to pursue the practice of bodyboarding negotiate space within the surfing field that continues to privilege young, male short board surfers.

When asked to comment on the position of female bodyboarders in the surf, Ngailia reveals a tacit understanding of the inequitable power relations when explaining, "*there's the surfers, then there's the boogieboarders, then there's the women boogieboarders, that's like the pecking order.*" Jaffa supports this point and in jest exclaims, "*I'm not too sure where everything fits within that pyramid but I can just say now I wouldn't want to be a female bodyboarder.*" By stating he wouldn't want to be a female bodyboarder, Jaffa is revealing his embodied understanding

that female bodyboarders have the least status in the water, and thus last in the line-up. He is suggesting that being a female in the surf does not yield many opportunities for access to waves hence, one is doubly marginalized based on their sex and their chosen surf craft. Additionally, he acknowledges the struggles that female bodyboarders would face negotiating space in the surf.

While generic gendered hierarchies place female bodyboarders at the bottom of the list, opportunities exist to gain respect in the surf field. Much like female stand up surfers, some female bodyboarders also have the ability to display physical prowess or bravery in the surf but because they do not stand up, they are often still marginalised. Chica shares her views as a female bodyboarder:

[Male short board surfers] probably think you know what you're doing because you've got the guts to call them off. Or they might see you being stink, like not very good, or if they see you go to take a wave then chicken out, then maybe it would be different. But if they see you charging, [(catching big waves)] I guess there's a little bit of respect there, I think maybe if you're a girl as well.

Here we see that physical capital for female bodyboarders is accessible through demonstrating bravery by catching big waves. So while there may be respect for bravery, respect for ability is given particularly when manoeuvres are performed or a barrel is caught (Figure 7). In these instances, while the power has not shifted from the males to the female bodyboarder, there is instead a mutual respect given from the males in the surf and as a result, access to waves ensues. What is important to note



Figure 7: New Zealand female bodyboarder getting barrelled on a shore break. *Photo courtesy of photographer: Lilly Pollard*

however, is that the females are still confined to the rules set by men in the surf field.

Interactions between females in the water were an aspect that this project aimed to investigate due to the number of female bodyboarders and short board surfers being relatively small compared to males. The female participants explained that they were often the only female bodyboarder surfing in the water and occasionally there were female short board surfers. However, the majority of the time was spent surfing with male stand up surfers. When asked about how she feels about other short board surfer females in the water Sueanne explains, *“they’re the worst ones. If they’re really good, they’re actually more snobbier.”* Sueanne elaborates on why she believes the stand up surfer females act this way;

Maybe they’re used to being the only girls out there so when there’s another girl out there competing for the guys attention they may see it as a threat. And if they’re really good, they can tell if you’re

gummy [incompetent] by the way you sit on the board so they might look down at you. (edited for clarity)

This example shows that females sometimes see each other as a threat either through looking more feminine or performing better. These views illustrate that tensions between females in the surf include competing for male attention by looking 'prettier,' which is a form of gender capital, as well as through demonstrating superiority through physical prowess, which is a form of physical capital. Sueanne, who relishes her femininity outside of the surf, supports this perspective and indicates that she is always conscious of 'looking good' and not looking like a 'kook' in the water. What this example shows is that females perceive multi-layered levels of hierarchies among themselves that includes physical appearance and ability.

In reference to female bodyboarders Jaffa explains, "*the guys are pretty good towards them, I generally think, that the guys try to help them as much as they can.*" This comment resonated with some of the females in this project who did not have issues with males on short boards. In fact, some females in this project mentioned that stand up male surfers were quite friendly and helpful and would even help them catch waves. Sueanne explains, "*if they're cool guys they sort of tend to look out for you.*" A reason for this could relate to the perception that bodyboarding requires less skill and so a female on a bodyboard would not threaten a male stand up short boarder surfers masculinity but rather enforce it through needing help. It also reinforces the stereotype that females are frail and weak. So although the females felt that they were being looked

after in the surf by the stand up short board surfers, it is possible that they were being looked down on in a condescending manner and pitied for their inability to surf on a surf board. Ford and Brown (2006) describe this type of behaviour as a form of complicity which can be a form of symbolic violence as both males and females see this type of interaction as normal. Taking this into consideration, while some females might use the chivalry of males to their advantage in getting waves in the surf, it actually reinforces the hierarchal order and as a result the females ultimately get less respect in the surf.

Another form of complicity that I have observed is where females have received attention and access to waves by wearing extremely revealing swimwear. This type of capital as portrayed by Thorpe (2011) is termed gender capital or more specifically a form of feminine capital. In reference to feminine capital, Thorpe (2011) explains that some “women wield femininity and femaleness as forms of capital in an array of innovative ways within different social fields” (p. 145). While this form of capital, wasn't a strategy utilised by participants in this study, I have seen it in action when surfing internationally and believe it is a strategy that may yield opportunities for access to waves when surfing and media attention and perhaps even sponsorship deals which are very limited for female surfers and bodyboarders. The female bodyboarders I'm referring to are from South America and they wear sexualised surf wear that is noticed by males when paddling out into the surf. In these instances I observed males on short boards give females access to waves based on what they were wearing and how they looked. It is important to note that the females

I observed were very good at bodyboarding and it is possible that their intentions were not to gain access to waves, but rather the style of clothing was part of their culture. However, regardless of the reason for wearing the sexualised swim wear, in these instances, the females were emphasising their femininity, which resulted in males allowing them to catch more waves. While these women may not consider broader implications of such gendered performances, emphasising their femininity in the surf is one strategy used by some women in some countries to negotiate space in the line-up. These observations resonate with Waitt (2008), where one of his participants was “willing to accommodate women if they are ‘sexy’” (p. 87). While wearing scant swim wear may be a trend in some countries, I have not yet observed it in New Zealand surf culture although I do not doubt that this form of access exists in some shape or form.

In the surf field there are instances where females attract attention without intending to do so. For example, Waitt (2008) shares the perspectives of his male participants where they liked the increase in women surfing as it gave them opportunities to meet and talk to girls. Ngailias’ experience is insightful here; *“I was just hanging out waiting for a wave and one of these hideous old Polynesian guys goes, ‘oh you’re pretty, what are you doing out here?’ I was just thinking... weirdo!”* So while males might see opportunities to meet females, females have very different reasons to participate and in some instances, do not like the attention given them (Olive, et al., 2013; Thorpe, 2011).

It was interesting to note that the male participants in this study believed that more females should participate in bodyboarding as it was easier to learn and enjoy than surfing. With this assumption, it could be implied that females might not have the physical ability to learn how to stand up surf so should therefore bodyboard. Jaffa provides evidence of physical inability when sharing an example of a friend whose girlfriend has tried her hand at stand up surfing for over eight years;

She's kind of just got nowhere over the whole time that she's been surfing, like I don't think I've ever seen her get a decent wave. She's always just kind of struggling, and I've said to them fifty times, get her out on a bodyboard. She'll probably enjoy being out in the waves more and she'll catch more waves. Even if it just gives her a bit of wave knowledge of where she should be sitting, or how to paddle out, and how to paddle into and catch waves (Edited for clarity).

While it would be unreasonable to assume all females find learning to stand up surf difficult, this particular example emphasises the value of bodyboarding for not only females, but males who find the initial steps of catching waves difficult. The supposition that bodyboarding is a transition to stand up surfing is shared by some stand up male surfers. I recall an experience when I was bodyboarding at Piha and was approached by a male stand up surfer who said, *"You're pretty good on that thing, when are you going to get a surfboard?"* Unbeknown to him I had just won my second World Amateur bodyboarding title. My reply was, *"I don't want to surf on a surfboard, I love bodyboarding."* The surprised look on his face

suggested that he had never thought that anyone would just want to bodyboard.

It is important to note that the majority of females in this project do not consider themselves as highly proficient or 'hard core,' and so their reasons to participate influence the strategies they are willing and able to employ in the surf. Olive et al. (2013) support this concept and state that "it is the everyday experiences and relationships of surfers in the waves that remain the most powerful in how women understand and experience surfing and surfing culture at an individual level" (p. 15). Chica, who is probably the most committed and proficient of the female participants who also competes in surf lifesaving, explains what she enjoys about bodyboarding; *"I just kind of like the freeness of it. Like, if you think about other sports they've got all these rules, whereas bodyboarding is more fun. Even when you're competing it's more fun."* For some of the other less competitive participants they explain; *"I enjoy bodyboarding because you've got more chance to actually enjoy being in the elements"* (Sueanne). *"I just like the natural elements. I like the beauty of the beach, and the waves and the sun, and then I just like going down the wave and it's just beautiful. I like the connection to nature"* (Ngailia). So for most of the female participants, the feeling of being in and enjoying nature were reasons they enjoyed bodyboarding. As such their participation did not include high risk or situations where they would push their physical abilities. I suggest that most of the females in this study were risk averse. For example, Charley shares an experience where she was surfing in a competition; *"So [the surfers would] see a set coming and they'd be like*

“go, go, go” and I’d be like “nah, it’s too big.” The fear of being hurt or injured is one aspect of bodyboarding that has stopped many females from pushing themselves physically and mentally in larger and more powerful waves. Hence, an area that remains to be investigated are experiences of bodyboarding females who enjoy pushing the boundaries through seeking the type of extreme surf sought after by some of their male counterparts.

Masculinity and Bodyboarding

For many years sports research focussed on men’s experiences without considering gender and masculinity. Feminist scholars had been examining gender and women’s experiences prior to Messner’s (1990), and Messner and Sabo’s (1990), investigations into the relationship between sport, gender and masculinities. It has been suggested that the blindness or invisibility of masculine behaviour was a result of masculine ideologies that over-simplified how males responded and participated in sport (McKay, et al., 2000; Messner, 1990). According to Coakley (1998), “Sports emphasizing aggression and competition “fit” with the dominant definition of masculinity . . . [but] they do not fit with most ideas about femininity or with alternative definitions of masculinity” (p. 236). However, recent research into lifestyle sports has indicated that masculinities vary in different sporting contexts (Beal, 1996; Wheaton, 2000b) and across generations (Thorpe, 2011), thus highlighting a need to deconstruct the normative ideologies around masculine behaviours. Alternative definitions of masculinity exist, and as such, scholars have begun to investigate the meanings of these in an effort to understand how men experience sport.

Surf spaces are environments where multiple masculinities are created and scrutinised through performance (Evers, 2004; Ford & Brown, 2006; Stranger, 2011) and choice of surf craft (Waitt & Clifton, 2012). Whether riding a short board, long board, knee board or bodyboard men who surf negotiate their masculinities around the normative assumptions that the dominant surf craft is the short board. However, this assumption does not dictate what actually happens in the surf as different forms of capital might come into play regardless of surf craft used. Bourdieu is useful here to help “account for the variety of masculinities present within and across fields at any given time” (Thorpe, 2011, p. 175). Therefore, this section will shed light on the ways male bodyboarders negotiate space in the surf field.

In their own research, Waitt and Clifton (2012) suggest that “bodyboarding [is] a rite of passage from ‘boyhood’ to ‘manhood [so therefore] bodyboarders (in the eyes of shortboarders) have not yet become men” (p. 9). This point of view resonated with much of the literature relating to masculinity and surfing, and the marginal status of bodyboarders (Stranger, 2011; Waitt & Warren, 2008). When asked where male bodyboarders sit in the generalised social status of surf culture, my participants explained;

Probably surfers would be at the top, males and females. Long boarders would be second, kayakers and stand up paddlers, knee boarders and bodyboarders I think they'd be kind of the same.
(James)

So surfing on a short board is as far as I see it it's the point of the pyramid, like it's kind of like the top. In the water, you're the most successful or whatever else if you're riding a short board. Then there's steps down from there like if you're on a mini-mal or you're on a mal you're kind of below that, and then kneeboard, bodyboard and goat boaters. (Jaffa)

It was interesting to note that in the gendered hierarchal status, the females in this study placed male bodyboarders above female stand up surfers. For example, Ngalia states, *"I don't know where women female surfers come in but I think they're under the male boogieboarders."* On the other hand, the male bodyboarders placed the female stand up surfers above themselves as depicted by Andrew who explains, *"On average, the girl surfers would be higher than the guy bodyboarders."* This illustrates that the females in this study conceded to views that males are superior to females in the surf field regardless of the surf craft. On the other hand, the males showed more of a subordinate perspective in the generalised surfing hierarchy, and based their opinion on the surf craft, the bodyboard, instead of their sex.

According to generalised perception in the surf field while it is acceptable for females to bodyboard, males who bodyboard are often marginalised by male stand up surfers in and out of the surf. This form of 'gender logic,' or "dominant form of gender ideology in the culture as a whole" (Coakley, 1998, p. 9) is consistent with literature investigating surf culture. James experience reinforces this ideology when stating that, *"the guys that I don't know but who are in the water [stand up] surfing, they*

come across as arrogant and they look down upon me because I'm a bodyboarder." According to Waitt and Clifton (2012), "One potential risk of incurring shame for bodyboarders is the shame of not being recognised as masculine enough in the surf. Bodyboarders must constantly negotiate the shame of not being a 'legitimate' surfer" (p. 13). I acknowledge that the location, place, ages and ethnicities of participants in Waitt and Cliftons' (2012) Australian study are different to New Zealand.. However, I believe that the experiences of shame presented here are not consistent with the male New Zealand bodyboarders interviewed in my study. Rather, the male bodyboarders in this study are often more tolerant toward individuals who stereotype their sport, accepting their actions as those of ignorance. For example, when dealing with stand-up surfers who are arrogant in the water James explains;

It used to annoy me but it doesn't any more. I've got nothing to prove to them. I know I've surfed 6 foot, I know I've been to Hawaii, I've surfed some out of it stuff, paddled out to reef breaks. I know what I've done. I don't have to go around proving it to them.

It should be noted that James is a large Polynesian man who chooses to tolerate arrogant stand-up surfers, instead of respond aggressively by using his size. Andrew, shares how he reacts to short board surfers who drop in on purpose; *"I don't normally say anything to the guy. If I do it's kind of just like a comment like, 'Oh what a winner,' or 'good one dick head'. But they never ever say anything back."* So in this instance, Andrew uses sarcasm to point out an obvious infringement by a stand up surfer while in the surf but not to the point of aggression. One of the

bodyboarders in this study who will not tolerate arrogance in the surf was Bolo. He shares an experience where a stand up surfer tried to cause trouble with him;

He's swearing his head off and all that kind of stuff, and so I kind of just turn around and go, 'I'll come over and I'll [f#@k] you up.' You know, I mean, that's not really me but if that's what he wants then I'll give it back to him and then he just stays on the other side of the beach (censored).

In this situation, Bolo decides to use verbal language and the threat of physical aggression to respond to the surfer, and in so doing dominates the situation. It is important to point out that Bolo is a large bald Rarotongan male and it is very possible that his stature could have also played a part in him feeling confident in being able to speak so aggressively. Thus while male bodyboarders are often tolerant towards stereotypical or arrogant behaviour, there are times where they will exert aggression.

However, verbal and physical aggression by bodyboarders towards stand-up surfers is rare. The male bodyboarders in this project used a variety of other more subtle strategies to negotiate social space in the surf and access to waves. One strategy shared by Bolo is described as follows;

If you're the only booger out there, then just say hi to everyone and it kind of gives you a good stable ground kind of thing so [surfers are] like, 'oh, this guys alright, he's not here to just drop in on

anyone.' For me that's a good routine to do when you're going out [in the water to surf].

Jaffa also uses friendliness when in the surf field and indicated in his interview that he too initiates conversations with people when in the water. An insight into the discrimination that bodyboarders experience is provided when Jaffa contrasted his experiences of being friendly on a surfboard to that on a bodyboard;

Most guys are pretty receptive, some guys are funny but the times I've paddled out on a surfboard, it's way easier to talk to people. I can flounder around and not catch a wave and guys will just chat, chat, chat.

So even though being amicable and initiating conversation is used by male bodyboarders, the assumptions underpinning the surf field are still prevalent in the way they are treated by stand up surfers.

Another strategy used to gain respect in the surf field that was highlighted with the males in this project included catching big waves and displaying skill which is a form of physical capital. Andrew explains;

I think that people that I don't know definitely have the tendency to kind of write you off until you get a good barrel or a heavy wave or something like that, and then they kind of have some respect for you. I think you have to prove yourself first.

Indeed in any sporting context to gain respect one must demonstrate ability to perform. As such, this strategy of proving yourself through performance mentioned by Andrew is not only relative to male bodyboarders, but also for anyone who enters into the surf field. This

concept is supported with Thorpe (2009), who uses Bourdieu to understand the embodied practices of snowboarders. In terms of capital, Thorpe (2009) suggests “that an individual’s initial capital is gender-neutral, being fundamentally defined by their relative position in the structure based on their ability, commitment to the activity, and lifestyle” (p. 498). As illustrated here, similar observations can be made in the New Zealand bodyboarding field.

Chapter Summary

In summary, this chapter has added to the work of gender theorists who identify the surf field as being male dominated. Through the perspectives and experiences of females who participate in bodyboarding for leisure, it was evident that opportunities exist for females to gain respect in the surf field. In relation to masculinity in the bodyboarding field, a different perspective emerged in which male bodyboarders’ masculinity is questioned by stand up surfers. Despite a few instances of physical or verbal aggression, most male bodyboarders interviewed for this study ignore the attitudes and insults from male stand-up surfers, and instead opt to negotiate space in the field via acts of physical prowess and friendliness. Having spent many years in the surf, the male participants interviewed in this study seem to have accepted their marginal position in the surf, and instead practice tolerance in the face of ignorance and discrimination.

However, to truly understand feminine and masculine approaches in the surf field for bodyboarders, a holistic approach needs to be made

that also includes age and ethnicity. Consequently, gender research on leisure sports could be developed as suggested by Stranger (2011);

The increasing number of women becoming involved in surfing and other risk oriented leisure activities points to the need to look beyond theories of masculinity and delve deeper into the nature of the experience and its basic attraction for individuals of either sex (p. 107).

Hence, research investigating the experiences of males and females and the attraction they feel to participating in bodyboarding would therefore yield more depth and understanding into gendered negotiations in the surf field.

Chapter 6: Ethnicity in the Surf Field

To see a Polynesian in a place where not many Polynesians are, you kind of know the struggles or the missed opportunities that come with it. Like 99% of the Polynesian people that we see at Piha are either wearing cut-off jeans, t-shirts, swim between the flags, and hardly any of them know how to surf or even paddle on a board. They don't know how hard it is, and how much dedication and training it takes to get to a certain level. It's not engrained in our culture. It's so funny, like even though our culture is from the water, like islands surrounded by water, surfing's never really been part of the culture, besides Hawaii. So when you see another Polynesian in the water, it's kind of that understanding of what it took to get out there, to get out the back. James (Edited for clarity)

One of the aspects of identity that I was eager to explore in this thesis was ethnicity and how it affects the participants' experiences in the surf field. The opening views shared by James highlights some of the themes this chapter will investigate such as, understandings associated with Maori and Pacific Island people and the meanings that participating in bodyboarding has for different ethnic groups. Although in a very different context, it is interesting to note that experiences similar to those described by James were shared by the black African-American surfers in the US documentary *Whitewash* (Woods, 2011). In this film, African-American surfers discuss the social struggles it took for them to participate in surfing. Despite being taunted by other African-Americans who believe that surfing is a 'white persons sport', they persevered and participated in a sport because they enjoyed it; others discussed the joy of disrupting such stereotypes. In this film both white and non-white surfers are asked to comment on race relations in US surfing and beach culture. In this chapter, however, I

privilege the views my participants have of themselves in terms of their ethnicity (rather than others reading of their participation), as I believe this will assist in providing a fresh perspective particularly from the non-white body boarders experiences. However, before analysing the data provided by participants, it is important to first outline some of the on-going assumptions within the broader cultural context of New Zealand society where this project is embedded.

As a multi-ethnic society, people living in New Zealand are sometimes faced with difficult choices when asked to identify the ethnic group they belong to, particularly if they have parents of different ethnicities. New Zealand government agencies such as *New Zealand Statistics* acknowledge the diversification of ethnic identities by allowing multiple ethnic options on census forms (Callister, Didham, Potter, & Blakely, 2007; Kukutai, 2007; Statistics NewZealand, 2010). With the increase of individuals and groups of mixed ethnicities in New Zealand, new challenges relating to identity arise. With people being categorised based on physical characteristics such as skin colour, and treated differently based on stereotypes of people from different ethnic backgrounds, many New Zealand residents and visitors continue to experience racism in subtle and overt ways. Interestingly, in the recent survey by Statistics New Zealand (2012), the most common reason people felt discriminated about related to “skin colour, race, ethnicity or nationality” (p. 4). While skin colour is depicted as a racial term (Hunter, 2002; Klonoff & Landrine, 2000), it is seen and used by some people in New Zealand as a form of recognition when describing others, and even

when describing themselves. Callister (2008), points out that, “everyone in society, including those who are part of ethnic minorities, will be doing some form of recognising and possibly forming discriminatory views or undertaking discriminatory actions based on such recognition” (p. 5). These discriminatory views form stereotypes and are based on broad assumptions that are frequently related to skin colour. As a result, these stereotypes can sometimes form the basis of a world view for many ethnic groups.

Skin colour is an identifiable characteristic that is often related to ethnicity and as such, is a feature that needs to be explained and clarified in the context of this research. In particular, the word that needs contextualising for New Zealand culture is ‘brown’ as it is a term used by Maori and Pacific people in a number of social settings. The word ‘brown’ has been used in the media (Edmunds, 2013; Neville, 2010), books (Grainger, 2008) and scholarly articles (Fitzpatrick, 2011a; Grainger, Falcous, & Newman, 2012; Kukutai, 2007; McKinley, 2005) to differentiate Maori and Pacific Island people from the dominant ethnic group Pakeha (New Zealand European), who are described as white. Brown is also used in the physical education scholar Fitzpatrick’s (2011a) work where the youth, “refer to themselves and other Maori and Pacific peoples as ‘brown’, rather than black, as in the USA” (p. 3). Similarly, many of the participants in my study also referred to themselves and their peers as brown.

While the use of ‘brown’ and ‘white’ are used flippantly to discuss skin colour and differentiate one ethnic group from the other, they also

refer to embodied characteristics related to the ethnic cultures they describe. Bourdieu (1984), is useful here particularly when he explains “that bodily properties [such as skin colour] are perceived through social systems of classification which are not independent of the distribution of these properties among the social classes” (p. 193). Thus, the term ‘brown’ in this project means more than just the colour of skin, it includes a way of thinking and understanding. It is an innate sense of being that is understood by those that are brown. In every day conversation my family, friends, colleagues and students use the word ‘brown’ to describe how they perceive particular individuals and how their actions portray embodied characteristics of ‘brownness’. For example, students have referred to one of the New Zealand European lecturers where I work as being ‘brown’ although he is white. In my opinion, the students characterise this lecturer because of the way he embodies brownness. He has learned how to make flowers and bags using harakeke (flax), is in the process of making a korowai (Maori cloak), always puts the learning of the students first, and would give the shirt off his back to help someone out. Although I am just introducing ways of being brown in this instance, I will explore the social systems and provide a more in depth ‘brown’ analysis in a latter section of this chapter. I will also discuss how these social systems operate in the surf field. I also note that the use of brown throughout this chapter will relate to Maori and Pacific Island people who live in New Zealand.

In addition to skin colour, racial ideologies exist within the sporting context about Maori and Pasifika bodies. Ideologies are the combined

attitudes, opinions or beliefs about a sociological aspect such as race, or gender (Abercrombie, et al., 2000). One such ideology is that Maori and Pasifika are 'naturally' gifted when it comes to sport because they have a genetic disposition for physicality (Fitzpatrick, 2011a, 2011d; Hokowhitu, 2007, 2008). One of the participants in this study also alluded to this ideology when stating, *"I think when it comes to sport, if you've got a tan, people automatically presume you're good"* (Charley). This belief is not dissimilar to beliefs about African-Americans where they are viewed as superior in sports that include jumping and sprinting. Conversely, this biological separation of individuals has been proven by scientists and geneticists to be outlandish and instead, social scientists argue that the propensity for certain ethnic groups to excel in particular sports is socially constructed (Coakley, 1998). This is supported through Deane and Davis (1987) when stating, "no ethnic group has any inborn cultural traits; it acquires them through socialization in its particular environment" (p. 286). For example, accessibility to lifestyle sports, such as snowboarding, may be too difficult for low income Pacific Island people who reside in the suburb of South Auckland as it takes money away from higher priorities such as food or clothing. Furthermore, this assumption of Maori and Pacific people being 'naturally' good at sport is contested by Hokowhitu (2008) who points out that "Conceptualising Maori and Pacific peoples as 'practical' or 'physical' will ultimately limit their potential" (p. 81). Not only do such assumptions undermine the long-term effort and commitment of Maori and Pacific athletes towards their sporting achievements (i.e., if it is 'natural' ability, they haven't worked as hard for it as white athletes), but

Hokowhitu (2008) is particularly concerned by the emphasis on sport for Maori and Pacific youth, such that other potentially life-enhancing opportunities such as education are discouraged.

Another stereotype related to Maori and Pasifika people is that they are more suited to particular types of sport (Edwards, 2007). Specifically, from my experiences working in the sport and education industries, and through stereotypes portrayed in the media, that Maori and Pacific people are better at team sports rather than individual sports. However, when viewing ethnic statistics on participation, the second highest sport for Maori men after touch rugby is golf, which is an individual sport (Palmer, 2007). Also, in 2005 all carded athletes in the sport of powerlifting - another individual sport - were of Maori descent (Palmer, 2007). These statistics clearly show that stereotypes about Maori being more interested in team sports are not true. However, the Polynesian athletes selected by Sport New Zealand and their associated organizing bodies to be 'carded' (receiving various types of governmentally-funded support) were highly represented in rugby league, softball, rugby and netball, which are all team sports. These examples show that Maori and Pacific people differ in terms of participation at the top echelon. In contrast to Maori athletes who are participating in a wider array of sports at all levels, Pacific athletes continue to be over-represented in team rather than individual sports. Here we must consider how dominant ideologies continue to influence the opportunities that Maori and Pacific peoples seek out and are encouraged (or discouraged) to pursue. To get a more holistic understanding of the reasons Maori and Pacific people participate in some sports and not

others, further research is needed that explores more deeply the meanings individuals and groups make of various sports and forms of physical activity.

Fitzpatrick (2011a, 2011b, 2011c), is one New Zealand scholar that is working to understand some of the complexities being experienced by Maori and Pacific youth in relation to sport and physical activity. Through the use of Bourdieu's framework, in particular the concepts of field and capital, Fitzpatrick has been able to unveil the struggles faced by Pacific Island and Maori students in a Physical Education setting. In particular she was able to address stereotypes with having brown skin and how these affected the students in the school where her research was conducted (Fitzpatrick, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c). Her work resonates with the intentions of this project where Bourdieu is used to explore experiences of Maori and Pasifika participants through the use of field, habitus and capital.

One of Fitzpatrick's articles that is of particular interest to me presented Bourdieu's notions of field and capital in a way that has influenced this project. Fitzpatrick (2011b) highlighted the teaching of two educators and pointed out that although they both taught physical education classes, they were teaching from two different fields. One teacher was situated in the field of obesity and the other in health and physical education. It is the concept of multiple fields that I wish to explore in the field of surfing. However, instead of multiple fields, I argue that there are multiple forms of capital operating in the surf field that are based on perceptions and assumptions surrounding ethnicity that come from

broader New Zealand society. Thus, in this chapter I will use Bourdieu's notions of habitus and capital to present a fresh perspective of the surf field through the lived experiences of the Maori and Pacific Island participants in this study. To do this, I will initially explore historical experiences and the workings of racial ideologies surrounding brown bodies in the water, followed by an investigation into the habitus of Maori and Pacific Island people in the surf. Finally, I present a different view of capital in the surf field relating to the habitus of Maori and Pacific Islanders that extends Bourdieu's original concept, with the intent of considering how brown bodies are read and experienced.

Brown Bodies in the Water

From pre-colonized times to now, the ocean has held diverse purposes for the people of Polynesia. For example, the ocean was used as water ways where the people of the Pacific would voyage from one island to another, as well as a rich source of food. It is clear from historical accounts and contemporary issues surrounding water rights for Maori, that the ocean and sea has and continues to be viewed as a sacred place in the lives of Polynesian and Maori (Beattie, 1919; Best, 1924; Matsuda, 2012; O'Regan, 1991). In relation to ancient Pacific mythology, O'Regan (1991), explains that "Tangaroa [the God of the ocean] appears in different forms within the diverse but connected cultures of Polynesia as a figure who cannot be escaped and must always be accommodated" (p. 28). Tangaroa has a very sacred meaning for both Maori and Pacific Island people and it is entrenched into the legends surrounding these cultures (Best, 1924).

Some of the earliest recorded accounts of wave riding in New Zealand included stories about Maori men, women, and children riding waves using a variety of objects such as, boards (referred to as kopapa), logs, canoes and even bags of kelp during the early 1900s (Beattie, 1919; Best, 1924). With such a rich history in aquatic activities, it saddens me that during my travels to surfing beaches throughout New Zealand I have meet so few Maori and Pacific bodyboarders. Such observations are not unique to New Zealand. International research shows that the sport of surfing is very white dominated (Ford & Brown, 2006; Stranger, 2011). Jaffa recalls the ethnic groups he has seen based on his 16 years bodyboarding and surfing in New Zealand and in the United States, *“As far as what I’ve seen, like maybe all European, and male. And as far as female Maori or Pacific Island surfers or bodyboarders, on a regular surf I’d see zero.”* With these observations in mind, this section will address some of the ideologies associated with Maori and Pacific Islanders in New Zealand as well as explore barriers to participation in the surf.

Perhaps one of the most common stereotypes in New Zealand relating to Pacific Islanders and the water is that many of them can’t swim. Indeed, the *Auckland Regional Drowning Statistics (WSNZ, 2011)* shows that Pacific People have the second highest drowning rate after New Zealand Europeans. Most of the participants in this study also acknowledged assumptions around Pacific Island people being non-swimmers, and some provided observations that supported such ideas;

From my experience lifeguarding at the pools, the only people who swam laps were Pakehas and Asians. The Islanders were at the pools, but they were just bombing or playing around (James).

Swimming is an issue because lots of Samoans can't swim. So why would they swim out in the middle of the ocean and catch a wave if they can't swim? (Ngailia).

I know that in the Islands, a lot of people don't even know how to swim which is kind of crazy. Like guys that go out in boats and a little outrigger canoe but can't actually swim if they fall out (Jaffa).

In response to Pacific Island people not being able to swim, Bolo exclaims, *"I think what's embarrassing is that our people don't want to admit that they can't do certain things like swim."* Of course, nobody likes to feel inadequate and incapable of performing seemingly necessary tasks (given that they live on an island), so it is not surprising that for many Pacific Islanders, being unable to swim in your late teens and early twenties is often seen as a shameful thing. I have experienced this shame first hand with my experiences around lifeguarding, teaching my Pacific Island students, and with my extended Samoan family. Prior to this study, I had come to the conclusion that these people either weren't given opportunities to learn how to swim or that they just weren't water people. However, Bolo points out;

You've got state schools that teach swimming. You went to school and you went to swimming classes. I remember there were a number of kids that never came to the swimming classes because some Pacific Island parents didn't feel comfortable having their kids

go near water. Why would you do that to your child? It's free and they're learning a life skill.

Bolo raises some important points in this phrase. Firstly, the basics of learning how to swim is available through most New Zealand schools, and that some of the Pacific Island parents were afraid of allowing their children near the water even in a relatively safe school teaching environment. Arguably, parents fears are maybe being stimulated by their own inability to swim and/or uncertainty in the water, as well as recent media portrayal of Pacific Island people drowning, particularly on the dangerous West Coast beaches near Auckland. Furthermore, given the lower socio-economic demographic of the South Auckland region where I have lived most of my life, I know from experience, that swimming is often not a high priority as opposed to feeding and clothing children. These factors might answer questions as to why the New Zealand based Pacific Islanders do not swim, but it does not answer why Samoans based in Samoa don't swim. As previously noted, Pacific Island people are a homogenised group comprising of different ethnicities. I have chosen to focus on Samoan people because they are the largest group of Polynesian people living in New Zealand (Statistics NewZealand, 2006a).

An example of why Samoans in Samoa might not be confident in the water was provided by James. He explains;

If you look at Samoas' landscape, it has reef and lagoons so there really is no need for them to learn how to swim laps. I mean, if you look at it, most of the water ways are pretty shallow. Plus, if I know

Samoans, they would more likely be doing work like cleaning or cooking rather than playing in the sea.

This is a good point raised by James and it highlights cultural similarities in the Samoa based Samoan culture and New Zealand based Samoan culture where the focus seems to be on working toward the betterment of the family rather than individualistic forms of play. I also spoke to a Samoan woman who was born in Samoa and lived there as a child. Her experiences supported these claims and she explained that as a child, she and her friends would sneak off to swim even though her parents thought that it was a waste of time. Her perspective of swimming was to just kick your legs and move your arms to stay afloat and move from one place to another. This is very different than swimming laps which is the Westernised view of knowing how to swim. According to her recollection, no adults swam as they were too busy doing their work (PersonalCommunication, 2013).

For Pacific Island people based in Auckland there are very often fears related to West coast beaches. For example, when taking some of my students to Piha Beach for bodyboarding lessons, I sometimes met resistance from parents based on the perceptions of Auckland's West Coast beaches. Some of the students had family members who had drowned at some of the West Coast beaches so the fear was very real and the emotions very raw. Even if the students attended, they were very cautious and afraid. Some of this fear might also be attributed to a reality television show called *Piha Rescue* (E. Donnelly, Janse, & Derks, 2001), that features graphic incidents relating to rescues at Piha beach.

Residents at Piha contest the ideology of Piha being a dangerous beach and state that “Piha is is not a 'killer beach'. . . All beaches are dangerous if not respected or the guidelines of SLS Clubs are not followed” (PIHAGALZ, 2004). I too agree that Piha is not a dangerous beach and I have used the opportunity of taking my students from South Auckland to Piha with the intent of educating them on how to manage themselves safely at the beach. In so doing, however, we have to first address students' fears about the ocean.

Piha beach is one of the beaches that all participants have surfed many times. In fact, for many of them Piha Beach is considered their local surf sport. As a result, they have had numerous experiences with bodyboarding and have observed people in distress particularly when they are being taken out to sea by a current of water or rip. There are many times when a surf session has ended up being a rescue session. Bolo explains, *“I’ve actually done a lot of rescues out at Piha. What’s really annoying is that a lot of them are ‘our’ people. Island and Maori and they’re wearing baggy clothes, jeans, shorts and you’re like... arrrggghh.”* The frustration that Bolo feels relates to the attitudes and behaviours of some of the Pacific Island people when they swim at Piha. *“I reckon they are ignorant and arrogant. I remember a Samoan boy calling out to the lifeguard, ‘Hey, I’ll be over here, come and rescue me.’ And it actually happened. And we were pissed off at him” (Bolo).* For Bolo, and indeed other Pacific Island and Maori bodyboarders, the stigma of being treated like they can't swim because they are brown, is reinforced through the

attitude of the Samoan boy in this situation along with the impending result of being rescued.

Being tarred by the same brush as the Samoan boy in the previous paragraph and those portrayed in the media and programmes such as *Piha Rescue* can sometimes be frustrating and often results in unwanted attention from the lifeguards. From experience, it is expected that lifeguards will approach and warn you about the dangerous surf if you are brown and have a bodyboard, even though there are people on surfboards who clearly do not know how to manoeuvre in the surf. In regard to his experiences with lifeguards at Piha, James explains;

Yeah, it's annoying when they come up and tell you that the surf is dangerous, but they're just doing their job. You know prevention is better than action. It just goes to prove my point that there's not many Polynesians out here and the ones that are here, are between the flags or getting rescued.

Bolo on the other hand, is not so forgiving when approached by lifeguards. He shares his experience; *"the IRB came out and told me to get out, and I go, 'Oh what are you gonna do?' Then the lifeguards circled around, took off, went back to shore, and didn't do anything [laughs]" (revised for clarity)*. These two approaches highlight ways that Polynesians navigate their way around stereotypes that brown people can't swim. James, accepted the ideology and justified the approaches by the lifeguards by acknowledging that they were just doing their job. Bolo on the other hand, directly dis-regarded what he thought were unreasonable requests of the lifeguards and maintained his position in the surf.

For Maori, the water is viewed as a sacred place rich in historical mythology. For example, the legends of Maui and the fish, Paikea and the Whale and Tutanekai and Hinemoana all relate to the water in some shape or form (Pohatu, 2000). While the legends and their purposes are beyond the scope of this paper, it is important to point out the passion and deeply rooted historical meanings for the waters of Aotearoa as they are still prevalent in Maori culture today. The passion for water is sometimes used in a different context because it is a means of survival as opposed to leisure and recreation. Jaffa offers his perspective and explains, *“I don’t know if [the ocean] is a big part of Maori and Pacific lives in New Zealand, as it was in the past. To the original Maori it was the provider of life and food and everything.”* These ideas resonate with my experiences where many Maori who live in coastal areas dive and fish for kaimoana (seafood) to feed their family. I remember staying with my Nana where as a young child we would be required to firstly gather kaimoana before we could play in the water, so although we used the ocean as a recreational space, it was first and foremost a means of providing food for our family.

Surfing New Zealand (SNZ) recognises the indigenous people of New Zealand by implementing Maori Surfing strategies to help increase the number of Maori surfing at organised competitions. One of the reasons these strategies were created was because SNZ acknowledged that many Maori were urbanised and had moved to cities to work and get money to support the family (Surfing NewZealand, 2009). However, despite this view of urbanised Maori, there are still contingents of Maori

surfers in places such as Raglan and Gisborne. Ngailia who was raised in Gisborne shares her views on competition;

Most of the surfers in Gisborne were white skinny dudes but there are a lot of Maoris. But then that might have to do with culture as well, in that they're more competitive. Maoris are less competitive I think. Like, it's not in their culture to try to be the best. They just do it for fun. Europeans do it for fun, but they have to be the best at it. They like to push themselves to be the best.

Some interesting views are pointed out in Ngailia's comments in regard to Maori ways of being. Being Maori and European, Ngailia is able to share her lived perspectives relating to both cultures and based on her experience, she points out the difference where although both ethnic groups participate for fun, Europeans tend to be more competitive.

So the impending question remains, why are there still very few 'brown' faces in the surf? While many surfers have tanned faces, here I am referring specifically to Maori and Pacific Island bodyboarders. This is a question I will endeavour to answer through the experiences and perspectives of my participants. Interestingly, the participants in this study were all relatively united in stating that bodyboarding and surfing was not as accessible to some of urban Maori and Pacific Island people. For example, Ngailia explains;

It might have to do with affordability and where people live. If you take Auckland, most of the Polys [Polynesian people] are in South Auckland where there's no real surf beach around. So it's trying to get to a place, get gear, have a wetsuit, and probably have like

mentors or role models. You guys are used to playing rugby or ball sports or team sports. I think it has more to do with economics, and then location, where you live and swimming ability.

It is important to note that in this statement the ideology of Polynesians playing rugby and other ball-based team sports is highlighted in Ngailia's response, but it is more related to access and availability as opposed to stereotyping. South Auckland resident, James shares his experiences regarding accessibility to bodyboarding and explains;

If I was a kid, there's no way that I would have learnt how to surf or bodyboard because it would have been numerous trips. When I was learning [as an adult] I did numerous trips to Piha weekly and sometimes we'd go every day. It's about 60km round trip to Piha and back. So first it's not accessible, especially out in South Auckland, and second, the gear is expensive. You're paying up to \$300 for a board, and \$80 for flippers. And also, no one knows how to do it. When I first started out there was no club, nothing was in the paper, it wasn't in the news, it wasn't in the schools, it wasn't accessible.

Jaffa also supports this perspective and points out:

You've got a lot of people that fall into statistics. You know like, Maori and PI people that have low incomes and a big family to go out and get a cheap board for \$100 bucks, and a cheap wetsuit for \$100 bucks, and a cheap pair of flippers for \$50 bucks, that's \$250 dollars, that's a lot of money if you've got 8 people to feed.

Accordingly, demographics and location seemed to be the most common responses to not having many Pacific Island or Maori people in the surf. However, the Maori and Pacific Island people that are in the surf, “*seem to be doing it for better reasons a lot of the time. If they’re out there, they’re out there to enjoy it*” (Jaffa). These findings resonate with Coakley (1998), who explains that “A combination of ideological, historical, and structural factors have influenced sport participation patterns among different racial and ethnic groups” (p. 286). Although some ideological and structural factors exist around participation of ‘brown’ bodies in the surf, there are Pacific Island and Maori surfers and bodyboarders who do not conform to these. Therefore, as a researcher, investigating motivations of bodyboarders and surfers becomes paramount to having a deeper understanding for participation for different ethnic groups.

Brown Habitus and Cultural Capital in the Surf Field

The surf field is a multidimensional social space that is not governed by institutionalised structures that dictate the type and form of capital. For example, in the field of education, the form of cultural capital that is sought after “is institutional or educational capital. This is a form of cultural capital, institutionalised and formalised in the form of qualifications” (Fitzpatrick, 2011d, p. 39). With the surf field, there are no set rules or guidelines but instead, the participants interact and negotiate space according to their own assumptions and perspectives. As previously discussed in Chapter 4, social rules exist in the surf field, such as *Tribal Law* (see Figure 1, p. 37). However, the interpretation and practise of these rules relies heavily on the habitus of individuals and how they decide

to negotiate their way in the surf field. Bourdieu (1993) explains that habitus “is that which one has acquired, but which has become durably incorporated in the body in the form of permanent dispositions“ (p. 86). Hence, in this section I will present some of the dispositions of the brown participants in this study and discuss how this informs the way they interact in the surf field. As pointed out by Grenfell, (2008), practice is “not simply the result of one’s habitus but rather of *relations between* one’s habitus and one’s current circumstances”(p. 52). In Chapter 4 I presented aspects of the surf field relative to the available literature and the mainstream perspectives of surfers and bodyboarders in this study. In other words, I presented forms of capital in the surf field that were viewed through Western perspectives. Hence, in this section I aim to present a set of cultural values and assumptions operating in the surf field through the perspectives and experiences of the Maori and Pasifika individuals in this study. Based on these values and assumptions I will demonstrate that a different form of capital exists for Maori and Pasifika people in the surf field that operates through a ‘brown’ habitus. This will illustrate that fields are indeed “characterised by their own distinctive properties, by distinctive forms of capital” (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991, p. 15). I will also use concepts identified in Chapter 3 relating to Maori and Samoan ways of being to explain how ethnicity is negotiated using a ‘brown’ perspective.

James, who is a mixture of Polynesian ancestry including Samoan, Fijian, Tongan, and Niuean, shares his insights of being Polynesian in the water. He explains;

You don't often see Polynesians in the water but when you do, you kinda give the old nod, the eye brows up, even if they're a surfer. Polynesians are kind of respectful and look after each other, whereas Caucasians aren't. You can kind of feel that sense of a surfer if he's a Polynesian, you've got that sense of, "oh he's looking out for you." It's unspoken, it's that unspoken respect.

Here we see the embodiment of being Polynesian in action where there is a deeply rooted understanding of being a minority along with the underlying connection of being Polynesian. This sense of camaraderie is possibly due to being part of "a socially identified collection of people who experience discrimination, suffer social disadvantages because of discrimination, and have a strong self-consciousness based on their shared social experiences" (Coakley, 1998, p. 250).

One of the values that came across strongly from the 'brown' participants in this study was "Aroha ki te tangata – respect for people" (Linda Smith, 2012, p. 124). In Talanoa methodology, this value is called "Faka 'apa 'apa" which means being respectful, humble, and considerate (Vaiolleti, 2006). According to Bolo, this respect, humility and considerate behaviour should operate in the surf field; *"Everyone [should] respect each other [when] catching waves. If you just got there you don't just catch waves [straight away]. You allow everyone else to go you know? And that's one way I look at it is respect"*. So according to Bolo, respect involves being courteous in the surf and not taking every wave. This concept is also supported by Ngailia who shares her views on people who don't show respect to others when surfing;

I get annoyed with cocky people that come out and think they know everything. You know, people that don't sit back and watch to see how to fit in properly. They come in and just think they know everything and take over. You're just like [makes a face].. 'hello egg'. I think people should just sit back and just observe for a while and see how they can fit in naturally.

So according to Ngailia, 'sitting back and fitting in' is how surfers should operate fairly in the surf field. By behaving in this manner they are being respectful and courteous.

James also agrees with being courteous and fair in the surf field and adds his perspective on Pacific Island behaviours: *"It's such a Pacific Island thing like, a lot of the Pacific people are brought up where you respect everyone and everything is fair."* Here we see the views on how the surf as a social space operates through a 'brown' perspective where respect is expected when respect is given. In contrast, James describes how Pakeha operate. *"In the white mans' world, it's all about being tough and making the most of the day, and proving yourself to everyone"* (James). Based on James's perspective, the 'white' way in the surf is to demonstrate that you are the best which includes catching all the good waves regardless of anyone else who might be in the surf or how good you are at catching waves. James describes what happens in the surf field as a result of the two differing perspectives and behaviours between white and brown people;

Those things go logger heads you know. You're in an environment where you need to show respect and wait your turn, yet you have

people who come in wanting to prove themselves that they're better than everyone else and it's a bad mix especially if the people come in and they really disrespect everyone around them. It's a bad mix.

So in this instance, the conflicts in the surf occur when there are differing opinions on how people should behave in the surf field. Thus, according to James, Bolo and Ngailia, (a mixture of Samoan, Fijian, Niuea, Tongan, Rarotongan, Maori, Pakeha ethnicities), the right way is to be fair by taking turns catching waves and being respectful, which is in contrast to literature where demonstrating physical capital is how one should behave.

In the Tongan culture, 'Faka apa' apa' and 'Ofa Fe'unga (showing appropriate compassion, empathy, aroha, love), respectively, "are the basis of relationships that will enable credible exchanges" (Vaioleti, 2006, p. 30). This way of treating others are also values in other Pacific Island cultures and in Maori culture (Aroha kit e tangata – a respect for people (Linda Smith, 2012, p. 124)). In the surf field, these credible exchanges are manifest in the way people treat each other in the surf. Sueanne shares her experiences with European people in the surf field and states "*I do find some of the Europeans sort of stand offish and slightly arrogant towards you.*" When comparing how she is treated by Maori and Pacific Island people, Sueanne explains, "*their approach is more laid back and they're more generous with their time, and when you're out in the water they're more generous, they give you the thumbs up and I think that's cool to have a bit of support*" (edited for clarity). Here we see 'Faka apa' apa' and 'Ofa Fe'unga in action where the Maori and Pacific Island people treat others with generosity and supportive behaviour.

Another embodied characteristic of Pacific Island and Maori is that they are friendly people. Nancy Graves and Theodore Graves (1978), point out that many Europeans were often impressed by how friendly, generous and hospitable Pacific Island people were. This characteristic is reiterated by Charley who explains that *“growing up around Maori and Pacific Islanders as a people and even when you go overseas, people tell you that they’re friendly people. Normally, they’re nice.”* When asked to provide an example of how Maori and Pacific Island people are friendly in the surf Charley explains, *“Oh, you think they’re not gonna be a snob if you say hi sort of thing. You know, they’ll actually say hi back unlike Europeans. That’s probably one of the reasons I feel more comfortable around PI’s [(Pacific Islanders)] and Maori” (edited for clarity).* It should be noted here that Charley is Maori and Pakeha and so her perspectives on how the European culture is played out and perceived in society are based on her lived experiences within and across these fields. Her mixed ethnic perspective provides an insight as to why she has chosen to align with Maori culture as opposed to Pakeha. Charley explains, *“I feel like I can connect better with Maori and Polynesian people than Pakehas probably because most of my friends are Maori and PI.”* So in this example, it was Charley’s socialisation with Maori and Polynesian people that helped her feel a sense of belonging with these ethnic groups.

In addition to being friendly, Maori and Pacific Island people can also be quite loud and boisterous particularly when they are all together in a group. Sueanne shares her experiences and explains, *“Maori’s and PI’s are louder and more expressive. If they see a good wave they go, ‘Yeah*

chur bro go for it. Yeee hoooo! As opposed to some of the Europeans who are very uptight and white I guess.” Sueanne’s statement and experiences highlight dispositions relating to Maori and Pacific Island people and reinforce the ideology that they are happy people, who are sometimes quite loud. From experience I too acknowledge that when I am with my Pacific Island and Maori friends in public eating places we tend to enjoy ourselves by laughing loudly and at times we have been asked by the owners of establishments to be quieter.

Sueanne’s assumptions and statements relating to Pakeha being “*uptight and white*” also reveal racial stereotypes toward Pakeha based solely on their skin color. It is interesting to note that although Sueanne presents this racial ideology of Pakeha, many of her closest friends are also white and are not ‘uptight’ as she has depicted in her comments. However, I am assuming from her use of ‘white’, that Sueanne is referring to what she views as Pakeha ways of being. Ngailia eludes to Pakeha ways of being when explaining, “*I’m Maori Pakeha. But there’s white and WHHHITTEEE you know what I mean aye?*” Upon further questioning on what she meant by these comments Ngailia explains;

I don’t really know how to explain that, but I feel more comfortable in that kind of arena, the PI Maori arena. I think it’s the different ways of how you get along really. Cos I think different cultures have different ways, you know they’re [Pakeha] more high strung or more bossy.

This presents an interesting perspective, given Ngailia’s lived experiences as Maori Pakeha. It should be noted here that Ngailia also looks white so

her experiences merging into both Pakeha and Maori world views presents a very interesting and different perspective much like those presented by Keddell (2006) in her article exploring the identity influences of individuals with Samoan and European descent. From Ngailia and Charley, who are both Maori/Pakeha, we are able to gain some interesting mixed ethnic insights where their lived experiences and ways of being suggest that Pakeha ways of being differ than that of Maori.

I believe that the examples provided by the participants in this section, point to a form of cultural capital in the surf field. This type of capital is based on respect, courtesy and fairness. James sums up what he believes would make the surf field more enjoyable when stating, *“Probably the big thing is just respect aye. If everyone respects each other, makes it fair, and doesn’t try to take too much then it’s a better experience for everyone in the surf.”* Hence, respect and the way you treat others awards you more capital in the eyes of Pacific Island and Maori rather than performing radical manoeuvres and having the best physical skills in the surf. James’ final word on the subject is testament of this form of capital. He states, *“One thing is for sure, I don’t respect people who are disrespectful and arrogant in the surf. Doesn’t matter how good you are, if you’re rude and arrogant you get no respect”* (James). The key issue here, however, is that the rules of the surf field in mainstream society and the forms of capital that are most valued based on current surf culture literature, continue to be defined by young, white, male stand-up surfers. While other forms of capital and other value systems exist within surfing, they remain on the margins of the surfing field.

Ethnic Associations in the Surf Field

I've never felt out of place in water even though most of the people out there are Pakeha. It's probably because I am Pakeha so I didn't even think about it (Charley).

I've felt out of place in the water because of my ethnicity many times. Yeah, definitely many times. I think that's why I would drag myself away, get away from the crowd, just find my own little peak and just enjoy it (James).

Lifestyle sports such as bodyboarding and surfing, are sites where rules are less defined as the nature of participation is by personal choice unrestricted by time, officiators and institutionalised structure. However, despite the freedom of bodyboarding and surfing as a lifestyle sport, social pressures exist that affect the experiences of participants in the field. The two different experiences presented in the opening lines of this section highlight ethnicity as an aspect of identity that is influenced when participating in the surf field. While Charley is relatively oblivious to being marginalised based on her Pakeha ethnicity, James is very aware of his 'brown' body as an 'other' in the surf and as a result negotiates space by removing himself from situations that could potentially be uncomfortable. Although literature around ethnic experiences in lifestyle sports is relatively non-existent, other literature addressing minority groups experiences in sport (Abney & Richey, 1992; Burdsey, 2009; Spaaij, 2012) provide perspectives and ways of thinking that can help researchers gain a better understanding of the role ethnicity plays in sport. Hence, in this section I will be exploring the role of ethnicity in the surf field through the experiences of my participants. In particular I aim to shed light on how

ethnicity is viewed and negotiated in the surf field for Maori, Pacific Island and New Zealand European participants.

An interesting observation was made by James who shared his views on how the ethnicity of participants affects the rules operating at particular surf breaks. He explains;

I think that ethnic groups rule breaks where there are more of them. Take for example Hawaii. The indigenous culture, Hawaiians or locals dominate the surf by the rules placed in there as opposed to the skill or ability that someone has. Over there, it doesn't matter how good you are because if you don't have respect for other people, you'll get sent in or beaten up regardless of whether you're on a surfboard or bodyboard (James).

So in this instance, we see 'brown' cultural capital in operation as discussed in the previous section where respectful behaviour is deemed higher than physical capital. This way of thinking and behaving is supported by a Hawaiian surfer who shares his opinion of Australian surfers stating, "They came off as real arrogant and egotistical; they weren't well liked. It's one thing doing this in your own country, but to come do this in someone else's country is basically having no respect" (Walker, 2011, p. 131).

In New Zealand, the social rules at different surf breaks operate similarly. James explains;

Piha is ruled more by whoever is best and whoever can get the good waves and it's more of a European culture. So based on that, if you have a surfboard at Piha you'll always trump someone with a

bodyboard. I think Port Waikato is more Maori though. The vibe in the water there is much friendlier than it is at Piha and there is a strong Maori bodyboarding crew out there too so it's less of a 'surfboards rule the break' kind of thing.

This insightful perspective provides some very interesting discussion points. Firstly, European culture is mentioned and acknowledged, which resonates with current literature surrounding surf culture where it is a white dominated field (Ford & Brown, 2006; Stranger, 2011). Secondly, we see the effects European culture has on the surf culture in the Piha region as well as the effects of Maori culture at Port Waikato. With breaks that have more brown participants, there seems to be different forms of capital operating in the surf field. Whether white or brown, the social rules and distribution of capital in the surf differ possibly because the ethnic cultures at specific surf breaks “share a way of life associated with a common cultural background” (Coakley, 1998, p. 250). This response highlights a research opportunity to investigate ethnicity and how it affects the culture at different surf breaks.

Another interesting factor relating to ethnicity in the surf field that is important to explore are the different reasons participants enjoyed the sport of bodyboarding. The responses varied, and as I will show, they have undertones that quite possibly relate to the habitus of the different ethnic groups. Although all of the participants viewed bodyboarding as something that was fun, the additional comments they made portrayed their different cultural backgrounds. For the New Zealand European participants, their reasons for enjoying bodyboarding varied. With Chica,

she explains, *“I like the freeness of it. Like, if you think about other sports they’ve got all these rules whereas bodyboarding is more fun.”* So for Chica, the freedom from formal rules and constraints was what she most enjoyed about the sport. Chica competes in surf lifesaving which she describes as being much more strenuous than bodyboarding because of the intense training and competition involved. Thus, bodyboarding offers Chica opportunities to be temporarily freed from the institutionalised structure prevalent in surf lifesaving, and she embraces the unstructured aspects of her time in the water on a bodyboard.

On the other hand, Jaffas’ reasons for loving bodyboarding were related to social aspects as opposed to actually participating in the sport. He explains, *“It’s probably just the people. That’s probably the main thing. It’s given me opportunities to see different places and meet different people, but yeah, it’s just like the people more than anything”* (Jaffa). It is important to note that Jaffa pointed out that although as an adult he now participates in bodyboarding for primarily social reasons. He does however recall different motives during his youth: *“When guys are young and competing and stuff like that, they always try and push each other, try to get the better wave, or the bigger wave, or go out when it’s crazy”* (Jaffa). Andrew fits into the category of trying to push the limits as he enjoys the physical challenges faced when bodyboarding. He explains;

I love bodyboarding cos you can always improve on how good you are no matter what level you are. It’s never the same no matter what wave or conditions and the bigger waves with big barrels, you

just say wow after you've caught them. It's kind of, you're only alive when you're scared. That's what I like to think of it (Andrew).

When analysing Andrew's response, his intentions relate to current surf literature where his goal is to improve and catch big waves with big barrels, all which relate to physical capital as discussed in Chapter 4.

In contrast, the responses from the Maori and Pacific participants were different as the majority of their comments related to enjoying nature rather than pursuing physical capital. Ngailia explains, *"I just like the natural elements. I like the beauty of the beach, and the waves, water and sun, and then I just like going down the wave and it's just beautiful."* Charley feels much like this too and points out that, *"being out on the water is quite nice. Like being in it and on it, you can remove yourself from the world and it's quite a different place. I love being in or on the water."* Sueanne had a similar response to her enjoyment of bodyboarding and explains that she enjoys *"the escapism, getting away, freedom and not having any control. Being in the elements and the total mercy of the elements. Being out in the water."* Nature and the elements were also a reason that Bolo enjoyed bodyboarding. He states, *"So long as I was in the water I was happy. Even on a bad day, a stink day, we still went. You know, yeah, we just didn't care so long as we caught something"* (Bolo). James also reiterated these points and explains, *"For a good 20 years I'd never been exposed to anything like bodyboarding so to be able to enjoy being on the water and waves was awesome. I love to just soak it up and enjoy the sun"* (James). It was interesting to note that all of the participants who self-identified as 'brown' mentioned the

experience of being in or on the water. Their statements resonated with comments I heard at a conference where the remark was made that Pakeha see man and nature, but Maori see man in nature (Royal, 2012). There is a ring of truth to this statement and based on the perspectives of the participants in this study and this also goes for Pacific Island people. There was an appreciation and affinity for the water that could be an innate sense of culture inherited from ancestors whose lives revolved around the sea, despite the current contemporary issues surrounding urbanised Maori and Pacific Island people.

It is important to note that although the reasons for participation differed between the New Zealand European, Maori and Pacific Island people, my lifelong experiences in the surf and around water suggest these experiences are not ethnic specific. For example, suggesting that Pakeha do not enjoy the nature aspects relating to surf culture and that all Maori and Pacific Island people do not seek for physical capital is problematic. I am living testament that these assumptions are not a blanket approach to participation because as a Maori, Samoan female I seek for physical capital and enjoy riding big heavy waves. Were it not so, I would not have competed to test my abilities in the sport of bodyboarding. Hence, the perspectives presented by the participants in this study in terms of reasons for participation, provide an opportunity for a more in depth approach to research.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented stereotypes and ideologies relating to 'brown' bodies in the surf in the context of New Zealand culture. To assist this

investigation, Bourdieu's concepts habitus, field and capital have been helpful in exploring the perspectives and views of Maori and Pacific Islanders in the surf field. As such, a form of cultural capital was presented based on the experiences of the brown participants in this study and ethnic associations and how this capital operates in the surf field were also investigated. A view of ideology that resonates with this project is provided by Coakley (1998), when stating, "Ideology is powerful, especially when it is combined with other factors that lead it to be used as a framework for self-evaluation and self-motivation" (Coakley, 1998, p. 256). Opportunities exist for further research into ethnic experiences in lifestyle sports such as bodyboarding, because this project only has enough scope to scratch the surface on some of the opportunities and constraints operating in the surf field.

Chapter 7: Final Analysis

How do you think people perceive you in the water? I mean, you're pretty solid, you're bald, you're a big guy and you're brown. (Mihi)

I think it's don't mess with him. I think they go, 'Oh hell, don't piss him off.' But because I'm always having a conversation with everyone and just acknowledging who's in the water it kind of breaks that wall down. I go 'Hey bro, how's it going?' 'What's the time,' and 'How long have you been out?' It kind of shows them, 'Actually, he's not scary.' But I always think that's what people normally think when they see some big island guy paddling towards them in the water (edited for clarity). (Bolo)

The opening experience shared by *Bolo* reveals how he believes others read his large, brown body in the surf. Based on past experiences, he understands that other surfers view him as a 'scary big island guy,' and thus he tries to counteract any stereotypes other surfers may have by being overly friendly. In this experience, *Bolo's* understandings of others stereotypes of large Pacific Island men in broader New Zealand society, dictate how he decides to act in the surf field. Two dimensions of his identity are being utilised in this experience; firstly he is negotiating his masculinity, and secondly his identity as a Polynesian. This anecdote suggests we cannot understand New Zealand bodyboarders' experiences by studying gender or ethnicity alone. As Messner (1989) notes, "careful analysis [of gender] would make it impossible to ignore the realities of race and class differences" (Messner, 1989, p. 72). While chapters 5 and 6 separated out the concepts of gender and ethnicity, the latter sections of this chapter will consider how these two concepts are intersected. Hence,

this chapter will begin with a summary of the purpose and major findings in this thesis in relation to ethnicity and gender in the hierarchically structured surf field and conclude with a discussion on intersectional approaches to bodyboarding.

Thesis Summary

My extensive experiences in the surf field as a brown, female bodyboarder were the catalyst for this project as I was interested in exploring how gender and ethnicity affected the experiences of other bodyboarders. While studies have been conducted on stand up short board surfers from male perspectives (Evers, 2004; Ford & Brown, 2006; Stranger, 2011; Waitt & Warren, 2008), and female perspectives (Comer, 2010; Olive, et al., 2013), the voice of the bodyboarder was minimal in surf culture research (Waitt & Clifton, 2012). Hence, my objective for this project was to provide fresh insights into the experiences of bodyboarders via an investigation of New Zealand bodyboarders.

Using Bourdieu's theories of habitus (embodied dispositions), field (the physical space where surfing is practiced), and capital (facets in the surf field that yield power to those who possess them), I have been able to explore the nuances associated with the sport of bodyboarding and as a result have been able to provide insights that have not been previously discussed or acknowledged in the ever growing body of surfing literature. The beauty of Bourdieu's work is that his concepts provide theoretical structure to address the complexity of intentions, social situations, actions and reasons behind the action (Webb, et al., 2002). For example, I was able to explore the habitus of the bodyboarder and discuss how space is

negotiated in the surf field. In the next few sections of this chapter, I will discuss the major findings in this project and how these can be used to influence further research in the surf field.

Bodyboarders in the Surf Field

The participants in this study acknowledged their lower hierarchical position in the surf as revealed in previous surfing research (Ford & Brown, 2006; Stranger, 2011; Waitt & Warren, 2008). Despite this acknowledgement, experiences were shared on how the negotiations between stand up surfers and bodyboarders actually play out in the surf. Pivotal to understanding how bodyboarders negotiate space in the surf field, was first gaining an appreciation for the habitus of the bodyboarder. An aspect that stood out from the experiences of the participants included acceptance and tolerance toward individuals who were not cognisant of the wave riding capabilities of bodyboarders. Therefore, when ignorant comments were made about bodyboarding, instead of educating people, the majority of the participants chose to tolerate and disregard rather than argue and fight. Other embodied characteristics included being friendly, inclusive and oftentimes eccentric in nature. The participants also pointed out that bodyboarders are often 'odd balls' in society and that they embrace being different. With these characteristics in mind, it could explain why bodyboarders are sometimes happy to accept their marginal position in the surf field.

The bodyboarding participants in this project also used a variety of strategies to gain respect and therefore negotiate positions of power in the surf field. Some participants gained physical capital via demonstrations of

competency in the surf, and others sought to employ social capital via the initiation of conversation to break the ice. Others, however, chose to find their own space in waves that perhaps were not as good, just to avoid any possible confrontation. In terms of confrontation, the most common form arose from individuals who dropped in on a person who had already caught the wave. Different responses were noted in regards to participants' sex and ethnicity. For example, only one of the females in this study had the confidence to tell a person to stay off her wave. However, the males responded differently. Andrew would not say anything to the perpetrator but would exert dominance by demonstrating physical prowess. On the other hand, James and Bolo sometimes confronted individuals who dropped in on them. So here are different approaches to addressing the issue of other people catching your wave. Opportunities for further research exist here to investigate others experiences and strategies used to address the common surf practise of being dropped in on.

One of the claims to capital that was emphasized in this project was that bodyboarders are able to gain access to waves that are inaccessible to most surfers. For example, waves with a steep drop, waves that break quickly and waves that break in shallow water are often breaks that favour bodyboarders (Stranger, 2011; Waitt & Clifton, 2012). Additionally, bodyboarders can access a variety of barrel sizes as portrayed in Figures 3 and 4 (p. 117) and as discussed in Chapter 4, barrels are a form of capital that is highly sought after in the surf field. Therefore, although at face value bodyboarders occupy marginal positions in the surf field, there

are situations where they are able to out-manoeuvre surf boards and thus have more power and access to waves.

Gendering Bodyboarding

As discussed, gendered experiences have been investigated in surf culture yet only one article had explored the experiences of bodyboarders and it was conducted by stand up surfers interested in gendered hierarchies with young males who bodyboard (Waitt & Clifton, 2012). This thesis aims to add to the limited literature relating to gendered experiences of bodyboarders and provides some insightful experiences of how male and female bodyboarders make sense of their participation in the surf field.

In terms of hierarchies in the surf field, the participants in this study agreed that females were usually given less respect than males. Being a female bodyboarder therefore yielded even less status in the surf field as stand up female surfers were generally given more respect. However, despite this view, opportunities and access to power in the surf field are still attainable for female bodyboarders through varied means. For example, females who portray skill and are fearless in big waves are often given respect in the surf regardless of whether they are on a bodyboard or surfboard. Thus we see that physical capital is rewarded in this instance. However, it was also noted that it continues to be stand-up male surfers who define the rules of the field, and the allocation of capital. Gender capital was also discussed in the literature as being used by some females where sexualised clothing would gain them access to waves in a

predominantly male environment. Interestingly however, this form of capital was not utilised by the participants in this study.

An assumption experienced by the females in this project was that bodyboarding was suitable for women given that the learning curve was not as steep as it is for stand up surfing, and that it would provide easily accessible physical benefits such as an improved lower body physique due to the kicking involved. This is quite a discriminatory perspective as the learning curve would also be suited for males and similar physical benefits would also be gained. It was also interesting to note that the female participants often felt that males tended to be quite helpful toward them in the water. This behaviour could be based on the perspective that bodyboarding is suitable for girls and possibly the belief that males are stronger and more superior in the surf field. Unfortunately, this chivalrous behaviour often tends to be offered from a condescending perspective which in reality results in less respect for female bodyboarders in the surf. Thus we see that stand-up surfing and bodyboarding can be viewed as gendered activities where stand-up surfing is considered masculine and bodyboarding feminine. This is a gender order clearly devised and reinforced by male stand-up surfers.

The male participants in this project had very different experiences than the females, largely due to the popular belief that men should stand up when surfing (Evers, 2004; Waitt & Warren, 2008). As such, the male bodyboarders in this project shared some interesting experiences that portrayed how they negotiated their way around the assumption that they should be standing up. Different strategies were used to negotiate space,

some subtle and some confrontational. The more subtle approaches included gaining physical capital through getting barrelled and catching big waves, initiating conversation with other people in the surf, or simply avoiding surfing in areas where confrontation might occur. Although only one individual used aggression, his large stature would have most likely given him more power than the fact that he rides a bodyboard.

Ethnicity in the Surf

Another perspective that provided fresh insights was revealed through an examination of ethnicity in the surf field. One of the primary motives underpinning this project was the observation that very little literature has examined experiences of non-white participants in the surf field (Walker, 2011; Woods, 2011). I was particularly interested in exploring the experiences and perspectives of the Maori and Pacific Island participants as this facet of identity played a significant role in my experiences as a bodyboarder. In this chapter I was able to use Bourdieu to explore the habitus of Maori and Pacific Island people and how they view and experience a different form of capital in the surf field. Prior to embarking on an analysis of ethnicity it was first important to contextualise this study within broader New Zealand culture.

One of the important findings in this section included a different form of capital coined from the experiences of the Pacific Island and Maori participants' in this project. While the European perspective of capital in the surf relates to physical capital (Ford & Brown, 2006), the form of capital valued in the surf field by Pacific Island and Maori people is cultural capital, or 'brown' capital which relates to respect, courtesy and fairness.

Opportunities exist for future researchers into brown capital as it is only presented in this thesis as an introductory concept.

An interesting point was made in relation to how the dominant ethnicity at a surf break affects the social rules that operate in that space. For example, it is suggested that brown capital is said to exist at surf breaks where the dominant ethnic group is brown, such as Port Waikato that has a large Maori bodyboarding contingent. Comparatively, Piha, which has a large number of New Zealand European surfers operates through the rules as depicted by white male researchers such as Ford and Brown (2006) and Stranger (2011). Thus, according to the participants in this study, the ethnic groupings at some breaks influence the social space in terms of how the rules of the surf operate. A deeper understanding would be gained through further research into the dominant ethnic groups at various surf breaks and investigations of how the rules in the surf field are influenced by the socio-cultural demographics of the surrounding community.

Intersections of Gender, Ethnicity and Bodyboarding in the Surf Field

Intersectional research investigates several aspects of social identity including race, gender and class (Warner, 2008). Primarily, intersectional research was an approach used in gender studies where black feminists used gender and ethnicity to highlight dominance of white women over black women (Christensen & Jensen, 2012; Collins, 1986, 1989; Crenshaw, 1989). However, since the early 1990s scholars have used intersectional approaches to unveil the complex and multi-layered concepts of gender, ethnicity and class in a number of disciplines,

including politics (Simien, 2007; Yuval-Davis, 2006) and psychology (Cole, 2009; Kulik, 2006; Warner, 2008). In sociology, intersectionality is used to expose “multiple inequalities at a conceptual level” (Choo & Ferree, 2010, p. 130). When applied to a sporting context, intersectional research on ethnicity, race and gender has been useful to help explore how multiple dimensions of identity are interpreted and negotiated in terms of how individuals create meaning for themselves and other participants (Elling & Knoppers, 2005; van Sterkenburg & Knoppers, 2004; van Sterkenburg, Knoppers, & de Leeuw, 2012). It is important to point out that my intentions in this section are not to engage a full analysis into the use of intersectional research. Instead, my aim is to provide considerations for future research by emphasizing how gender and ethnicity play a joint role in how participants negotiate space in the surf field.

In the opening experience, Bolo shared his lived experience of being a large brown Pacific Island man and explained how he negotiates space in the surf field. James also sheds insights into his experiences in the surf based on others readings of his body and his understandings of common stereotypes related to Pacific Island masculinity in New Zealand;

It's kind of funny because, like firstly I'm an Island guy, and when you get out into the surf, it's pretty white dominated, so they kind of leave me alone because I'm Pacific Island, and it's a surprise, 'Oh there's a Pacific Island guy out here.' And the other thing is, I'm a big guy, so guys leave me alone as well.

In this experience, James reveals his self-perception of being a large, brown male and the connotations that come with those characteristics

when entering the line-up that remains dominated by white males. James firstly points out how he will be treated as an 'other' based on being a Pacific Island person, and how people in the surf might see his presence in the surf as a) an anomaly or b) a physical threat to be avoided. As highlighted by Dworkin and Wachs (2000), "the athletic male body has been a mark of power and moral superiority for those who bear it" (p. 49). Thus in this instance, James is negotiating his size and the power and superiority that come with those particular physical characteristics. Hokowhitu (2008) sheds some insights here when explaining that with Maori and Pacific Island people can often be perceived as violent by the greater New Zealand public. Indeed, given the portrayal of Maori and Pacific Island males being violent in reality shows such as Police Ten 7 (Kershaw, 2002), it is no wonder Pakeha males may have a fear of large brown males. While being a large brown male can be perceived as threatening characteristics in the surf field, the truth in this instance is quite the opposite as James explains, "*I won't go out to where the good surfers are because I might get in their way. I could use my size to go and dominate but that's not who I am. I'm not that kind of person.*" So instead of using his physicality to gain space in the surf via physical intimidation, James employs Faka 'apa 'apa in his choices by being considerate to those who might be good in the surf, and by not using his stature to dominate others in the surf field. In this instance we see brown habitus in action as James's actions demonstrate respect to those who have a higher skill level than him.

The female participants in this study also presented some interesting experiences that reveal how gender and ethnicity intersect in the surf. For example, Sueanne explains, "*I think the Maori and PI [Pacific Island] guys give me support in the water maybe cos I'm a chick, yeah, probably cos I'm a brown chick out and that's also a bit of a minority as well.*" Through this perception, Sueanne acknowledges that she represents two forms of minority in the surf field; being brown, and being female. As a result of occupying a position in two minority groups, Sueanne therefore feels that this could be the reason the Maori and Pacific Island men support her in the water. In regard to minorities, Jaffa shares his views and states, "*A brown female bodyboarder... If you're getting realistic about it, if you were wanting to take every minority faction you possibly could, yeah, it's about as far down as you can get.*" What Jaffa is alluding to here are the hierarchies he perceives in the surf field taking into account gender, ethnicity and surf craft. From his experiences of being discriminated for riding a bodyboard, Jaffa acknowledges how difficult it must be for individuals who have three minority statuses, to negotiate space and get respect in the surf field, such as Sueanne and myself. The situation of occupying more than one minority status also presents an opportunity for further research in the surf field.

Although this study touches on how gender and identity influence the experiences in the surf for brown females, I feel there is not enough depth from the participant interviews to truly understand the affects of multidimensional identities on their bodyboarding experiences. My reasons for this relate to Ngailia's and Charley's mixed Pakeha and Maori

ethnicities and how the experiences they have differ from Sueannes and mine. Both Charley and Ngailia acknowledge that they do not feel stigmatised in the surf field because they are also Pakeha. Ngailia, shares how she negotiates space when explaining;

Because I look white, I feel I can merge into both worlds. I feel I can just go wherever I please. Like I do affiliate to the Maori side more but I don't have the language so I just don't feel like I'm totally there. But because of my skin colour it is quite easier to do a lot of stuff because you don't get that stigma [of being brown].

Therefore, Ngailia feels that having white skin can sometimes benefit her in some situations and in this case, the surf field. This resonates with Long and Hylton (2002) who state that for white people, "associations are more positive, less open to question, and to a certain extent, taken for granted" (p. 90). In regard to feeling out of place, Ngailia states, "*I think I feel out of place because I'm a woman more so than ethnicity.*" From these comments, Ngailia does not have similar experiences as Sueanne and also acknowledges that a form of discrimination exists with having brown skin. Based on my experience, I often feel very out of place in the surf as a brown, female bodyboarder, particularly if the majority of people in the water are white. Therefore, Ngailias' experiences compared to mine are very different. I acknowledge that each individual is going to have different experiences despite having the same sex or ethnicity, and women are going to have very different understandings of femininity and cultural identity. Although the multidimensionality of female bodyboarders identities have not been fully developed in this thesis, I believe this is

worth noting as it could provide the foundation for valuable research in the future.

While the experiences relating to gender and ethnicity presented through this intersectional approach provided some interesting points, they pose more questions than provide answers. Although insights were provided in relation to gender and ethnicity, in my view there still remain gaps in understanding the depth of these experiences. For example, how would Pacific Island males who are not large in stature experience the surf field, given they lack the large stature that could yield benefits in the surf field? Or how do the experiences of brown women differ than that of white women in the surf field? These questions are only a few that could be investigated through future research. However, what I hope has become in this final analysis, are the potential benefits of taking an intersectional approach to researching lifestyle sport enthusiasts experiences of power and identity in fields of participation.

Last Wave

At the end of each surf session I often wait patiently for one last wave hoping it will bring one more exhilarating ride, one more opportunity to perform a manoeuvre, and one last chance to wrap up the session with a good feeling. Oftentimes, the last wave fails to arrive but the times that it does I am left fulfilled and happy yet still wanting more. Thus, in these final comments, I hope that you, the reader, will also be fulfilled with the concepts, findings and perspectives presented throughout this thesis.

Sport can be a site for challenging dominant ideologies such as those associated with gender and ethnicity. When the sport itself is given

a minority position, as bodyboarding has in the surf field, multi-layered levels of inequality exist, thus presenting opportunities for unveiling and understanding different perspectives of the multiple forms of power operation on and through different surfing bodies. Through co-ordinated efforts to understand cultural differences and an improved awareness of the meanings bodyboarding has for different people, positive changes in existing relationships might ensue. As a bodyboarder, the prone position we are in on the board provides opportunities for accessing parts of the wave that are not always accessible for stand up surfers and in so doing provides a different perspective. With these different perspectives, it is my hope that after reading this thesis, people will have an appreciation for the culture of bodyboarding and the raft of meanings it holds for the participants in this project relating to gender and ethnicity. If this has been achieved, then I trust you will come to the conclusion that bodyboarders do indeed get deep.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Participant Information Sheet

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS THE UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO School of Education

'Getting Deep': Understanding the Experiences of New Zealand Bodyboarders

Dear _____

Thank you for your interest in being a participant in my research about the experiences of New Zealand bodyboarders. As we discussed over the phone you have been invited to participate in this research project because of your interest and experience in the sport bodyboarding. I am conducting this research as part of my Masters thesis in Sport and Leisure. As you know, I have long been a passionate bodyboarder, so this research is very exciting for me. I hope you are also excited by the opportunity to share your knowledge about your experiences and reflections of body boarding in New Zealand.

Outline of Project

As a sport, bodyboarding has been around for approximately 40 years yet no academic research has been conducted to investigate the inner workings and culture of the sport. For individuals not involved in bodyboarding their initial response and reaction is that bodyboarding, or 'boogie boarding' is a fun summertime activity for teenagers and children. It is perceived as a fun light hearted activity that requires little skill and without cultural and historical depth. Academic research has been conducted on lifestyle sports such as snowboarding, skateboarding and surfing, yet none have addressed the sport of bodyboarding. This project is an attempt to fill this gap in the research by exploring the lived experiences of bodyboarders in New Zealand.

As a bodyboarder the position we are in when participating in the sport allows us to 'get deep' in the barrel of a wave yet this is not realised or understood by people who don't bodyboard. Bodyboarding is a sport rich with its own set of rules, values and terminology that I believe deserves to be recognized on its own rather than being subsumed as a sub-category under stand up short board surfing. Although there are bodyboarding magazines, forums and organizations, there is an enormous gap in academic literature that scrutinizes the inner workings and understanding of the sport. Therefore, through my research I will endeavour to explore the experiences of the bodyboarder through the eyes of New Zealand based riders by highlighting aspects that have influenced their experiences.

With this in mind, the purpose of my research is to shed new light on the dynamics within the bodyboarding community, and to reveal the multiple experiences of male and female bodyboarders of different socio-cultural-economic backgrounds. I would be very grateful if you would be willing to tell me about your experiences as a bodyboarder in an interview at a time and place that suits you. By sharing your memories and reflections about bodyboarding, you will help me show that bodyboarders certainly do 'get deep'.

Your Involvement

If you agree to be a participant in this research following are the activities you will be involved in:

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 10 minutes | Read information pack. Read and sign consent form |
| 60 – 90 minutes | Participate in interview (will be taped on an audio tape) |
| 40 minutes | Follow-up correspondence (email or phone) |
| 40 minutes | Read and return interview transcript |

Please understand that this is an entirely voluntary project and that you have the right to withdraw from involvement at any of the stages listed above. Please note that you are unable to withdraw after 4th May 2012 once the analysis of the interview data has begun. This restriction is necessary to ensure that my project is not compromised by late withdrawal of interview data.

Confidentiality and Records

To maintain your confidentiality a pseudonym will be assigned to you throughout my research project. During the course of the interview when other individuals are mentioned, their names will also be assigned pseudonyms as consent to use their name has not been given. Finally, to ensure that your identity is protected, I will ensure sensitivity when writing the final report so as not to identify you or persons being referred to in your interview.

The information I will be collecting from interviews will be transcribed electronically yet only select items will be included in the research. The information gathered may also be used in conferences, journal publications and presentations that I may conduct once I have completed all course requirements for my thesis. I may also use the information for supplementary research or other scholarly purposes. If this information is going to be used for any other reason I will contact you for consent prior to its use.

Just so you are aware, all identifying data such as consent forms etc. will be stored safely and securely at Waikato University for five years after completion of the final report as per Waikato University's Ethical Conduct in Human Research and Related Activities Regulations (2008). Please also note that an electronic copy of the thesis will become widely available, as the University of Waikato

requires that a digital copy of Master theses will be lodged permanently in the University's digital repository: Research Commons.

Participants' Rights

As a participant you have the right to:

- Withdraw from the research project at any stage without question or reason prior to August 2012.
- Decline to answer any of the questions you may be asked during the interview and follow up sessions.
- Adjust, clarify, change or omit statements you have made in the interview before I use the information for my research project.
- Access and retrieve all of the information you provide including an electronic copy of your transcript from the interview.

Contacting the Researcher

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding this research project.

If you have any concerns about ethical matters or any other issues related to this research please feel free to contact me or my Supervisors, Dr. Holly Thorpe and Dr. Karen Barbour.

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If you agree to participate in this research please sign the attached consent form and return it to me by (date)_____.

Thank you for your time and for agreeing to be a participant in this study. I look forward to working with you.

Kind regards

Mihi Nemani
Researcher

Appendix 2: Participant Consent Form

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATION FORM THE UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO

School of Education

'Getting Deep': Understanding the Experiences of New Zealand Bodyboarders

By signing below I am agreeing to the following conditions:

1. I have read and understand the **Information Sheet for Participants** for this research and have had the opportunity to ask questions for clarification on items mentioned.
2. I agree to participate in the research under the following conditions:
 - a. **Interview:** Mihi Nemani will conduct a one-on-one in depth interview with me relating to my experiences as a bodyboarder. The interview will be recorded on an audio tape and will take less than 90 minutes. I understand that I have the right to refuse to answer any of the questions asked of me in the interview. Once the interview has been transcribed I understand that I have the right to modify, clarify or omit sections from it.
 - b. **Record Keeping:** I understand that Mihi Nemani will keep all records from the interview confidential and that once Mihi Nemani has passed her course all data provided by me will be stored and used according to the University of Waikato Human Research Ethics Regulations.
 - c. **Use of Data:** I understand and allow Mihi Nemani the right to use information she has collected from me for her research project. I also understand and agree that the information gathered may also be used in conferences, journal publications and presentations, supplementary research or other scholarly purposes.
 - d. **Confidentiality:** I understand that my name and details will be entirely confidential throughout this research.
 - e. **Withdraw:** I understand that I have the right to withdraw at any time prior to Friday 4th May, 2012 and understand that withdrawal after this date is not feasible due to transcript compilation and analysis.
 - f. **Issues:** I understand that if I have any ethical concerns or any issues that I can contact either Mihi Nemani (mihi.nemani@manukau.ac.nz) or her supervisors Dr. Holly Thorpe (hthorpe@waikato.ac.nz) and Dr. Karen Barbour (karenb@waikato.ac.nz)
2. I **agree / do not agree** (*delete one*) to be contacted for follow up correspondence through email or by phone but understand that I have the right to change my mind.
3. I understand that I have the right to ask questions and have them answered to my understanding at any stage of the research.

Participant Name: _____
Participant Signature: _____
Date: _____
Participant Pseudonym: _____
Ethnicity: _____ Age: _____
Email: _____ Mobile number: _____
Hometown: _____ Home break: _____
Years Bodyboarding: _____

Please circle one of the following statements that most represents you:

- a) I bodyboard and compete frequently
- b) I don't compete but like to bodyboard frequently
- c) I don't compete and only bodyboard occasionally

Appendix 3: Interview Questions

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Please note that the questions below will be modified and adapted between participants. I won't ask all of these questions in each interview, but will use some of these questions as prompts to encourage further conversation during the semi-structured interviews.

How long have you been bodyboarding? Who do you usually go bodyboarding with? What do you do for employment? What do the people you bodyboard with do for employment? Are the people you surf with bodyboarders or surfers?

How does gender influence experiences?

What gender are the people you usually bodyboard with? Do you see many female bodyboarders in the water? Why do you think this is the case? Tell me how you feel about female/male bodyboarders.

Male: Have you ever taken a female bodyboarding? Tell me about your experience? How did you feel about this experience? Would you do it again? Have you ever invited females that you know to go bodyboarding with you? What was their reaction? How do you feel about female bodyboarders? What are your thoughts about male short board surfers? How do you feel when you are among a group of short board surfers and bodyboarders? What about when you are the only bodyboarder at a surf break? How do you feel when a female short board surfer is in the group? What about a female bodyboarder that you don't know?

Female: Other than me, have you ever gone bodyboarding with another female? How do male bodyboarders react when you surf near them? How do male surfers react when you surf near them? What are your thoughts on male surfers? Have you had any negative/positive experiences with male or female bodyboarders? If so what happened? Why do you think these occurred? Have you had any negative/positive experiences with male or female short board surfers? What are your thoughts on male bodyboarders/male surfers/female surfers? How do you feel about being a female bodyboarder in the water?

How does culture influence experiences?

Do you feel different around certain groups of people when surfing? Tell me about your experiences? Have you ever experienced any hassling or harassment in the water? (if yes) Tell me what happened? Who was the hassling between? What do you think are the rules of the surf? How do you feel when someone else breaks these rules? Have you ever broken these rules? (if yes) what led you to break these rules? Do you think that bodyboarders have an unspoken code when in the water? (if yes) can you describe it? Have you ever been 'sent in' at a surfing break? (if yes) tell me what happened? Have you ever sent anyone in while you have been surfing at a break? (if yes) tell me what happened? Have you ever seen anyone sent in? What happened? What vibes have you experienced from stand up surfers when in the water? How about out of the water?

How does ethnicity influence experiences?

What is the most dominant ethnic group that you see in the water when you go bodyboarding? Have you ever felt out of place at a break because of your ethnicity? If yes, why and what happened? Do you see many Maori or PI surfers or bodyboarders when you are bodyboarding? What are your thoughts about them when you see them? Do you think there are many Maori or PI surfers? Why or why not? How do you feel when foreigners or non-locals are at your local break? How do you feel about them?

How does the place you surf influence experiences?

What are your top 5 New Zealand surf breaks? What do you like about your favourite break? How often do you surf there? Tell me about your most exciting experience at this break? Who was there to share this experience with you? Have you had any scary experiences at this break? Tell me about a break that scares you and why? What is your least favourite break to surf and why? What do you look for in an ideal surf break? What is more important to you, the way the surf breaks or the amenities close to the break? Have you surfed any secret spots? What did/didn't you like about them? What aspects do you look at before choosing a place to surf?

How does the choice to bodyboard influence experiences?

Have you ever tried short board or long board surfing? (If yes) What do you like/not like about it? Which do you prefer, surfing or bodyboarding? If you have been short board or long board surfing, how did you feel about it? Were you treated differently? Tell me about your experience.

What is it about bodyboarding that you enjoy most? Have you ever felt discriminated about being on a bodyboard? (If yes) Tell me what happened in the situation? Have you ever gone bodyboarding on your own? How did you feel when you were in the water? Were there any other bodyboarders in the water? How did they react to you? Would you try another way of surfing if you haven't done stand up surfing before? Why or why not?