http://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/

Research Commons at the University of Waikato

Copyright Statement:

The digital copy of this thesis is protected by the Copyright Act 1994 (New Zealand).

The thesis may be consulted by you, provided you comply with the provisions of the Act and the following conditions of use:

- Any use you make of these documents or images must be for research or private study purposes only, and you may not make them available to any other person.
- Authors control the copyright of their thesis. You will recognise the author’s right to be identified as the author of the thesis, and due acknowledgement will be made to the author where appropriate.
- You will obtain the author’s permission before publishing any material from the thesis.
Sports and Bodies

An exploration of bodily inscription through the practice of sport

A thesis

submitted in partial fulfilment

of the requirements for the degree

of

Master of Social Sciences

at

The University of Waikato

by

Tegan Baker

2014
Abstract

Sport is an integral aspect of contemporary society; it is also a political, economic, educational, religious and scientific activity. The body and embodied experiences are central to the practice of sport. This research is concerned with both the embodied nature of sport and the potential for sport to mirror, and channel, discourses from wider society. Drawing from the fields of sports geography, bodily geography, and relevant literature from sports studies, the notion of bodily inscription through sport is the focus of this report. Data was collected through focus groups containing a range of social and amateur sports-people with additional data gained through analysis of sports and fitness magazines. The theoretical framework used to contextualise this data is that of Henning Eichberg’s sports trialectic and the wider concept of body culture. This allows for the mapping of bodily inscription via the different characteristics of sport associated with branches of the trialectic; achievement, fitness and body experience. The work of Eichberg also adds another dimension to this analysis - the comparison between sport, democracy and varying iterations of society. In particular, neo-liberalism which is evident through the dominance of efficiency, competition and individualism in sport, is a potent presence. Through the connection between the ‘obesity epidemic’ and neo-liberalism, an over-riding theme is body weight; the defining inscription of a sporting body as leanness. The dominance of concerns over body weight prompted a revision of Eichberg’s sports trialectic model in an attempt to encompass the role of neo-liberalism and the absence of the heuristic element of body experience.
Acknowledgements

My supervisor, Colin McLeay, you have gone above and beyond the call of duty. Much, grateful thanks.

This is for my family - thanks for reading my drafts and correcting my grammar; thanks for all those long dinnertime conversations that helped sow the seed for this research; and, most of all, thanks for supporting me and just being your crazy selves.
**Table of contents**

Abstract ................................................................................................................. ii
Acknowledgements ................................................................................................. iii
Table of contents ..................................................................................................... iv
List of figures ........................................................................................................... vi
List of tables ............................................................................................................ vii
Chapter One: Introduction ....................................................................................... 1
  Context .................................................................................................................. 4
  Conclusion .............................................................................................................. 7
Chapter Two: Theory ............................................................................................... 9
  Sports geography .................................................................................................. 9
  The body in the social sciences and geography .................................................... 12
  Body culture and the sports trialectic .................................................................. 17
    The sports trialectic ............................................................................................ 20
  Critique and discussion of the sports trialectic .................................................... 30
  Conclusion .............................................................................................................. 34
Chapter Three: Method .......................................................................................... 37
  Focus groups ........................................................................................................ 37
  Discourse analysis ............................................................................................... 40
  Personal experience ............................................................................................. 42
  Secondary data analysis ...................................................................................... 49
  Conclusion .............................................................................................................. 51
Chapter Four: Diet as a method of inscription ...................................................... 53
  Diet as a method of inscription ........................................................................... 56
  Diet for achievement ......................................................................................... 58
  Diet for health ..................................................................................................... 60
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contradictions..........................................................</td>
<td>61</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion......................................................................</td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Five: Weight management..................................</td>
<td>65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control of body composition.......................................</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight as a ‘moral’ issue..........................................</td>
<td>68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notion of skills........................................................</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contradictions..........................................................</td>
<td>71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion......................................................................</td>
<td>73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Six: Dress......................................................</td>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniforms.........................................................................</td>
<td>76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Looking successful’....................................................</td>
<td>77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship and branding............................................</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contradictions..........................................................</td>
<td>81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion......................................................................</td>
<td>83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Seven: Through what means do bodies come to be inscribed by sport?</td>
<td>85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The dominance of achievement......................................</td>
<td>85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discourses of fitness..................................................</td>
<td>87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role of the media...................................................</td>
<td>89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting culture..........................................................</td>
<td>91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion......................................................................</td>
<td>92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Eight: Conclusion............................................</td>
<td>95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ‘absent third’..........................................................</td>
<td>95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role of ‘fat’ bodies and the lean-healthy-fit nexus......</td>
<td>97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-imagination of the sports trialectic..........................</td>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations and future prospects...................................</td>
<td>101</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion......................................................................</td>
<td>103</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography......................................................................</td>
<td>105</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

v
Appendix One: Focus group information sheet and consent form. .................... 115
Appendix Two: Focus group questions (1)............................................. 117
Appendix Three: Focus group questions (2)............................................ 118
List of figures

Figure 2.1: The sports trialectic. ................................................................. 21
Figure 2.2: Process of trialectic thinking. .................................................. 23
Figure 2.3: Modified trialectic model. ....................................................... 30
Figure 4.1: Diet trialectic ........................................................................... 56
Figure 5.1: Trialectic of weight management .............................................. 65
Figure 6.1: Dress trialectic ......................................................................... 75
Figure 6.2: Selected text from Asics advertisement ...................................... 78
Figure 6.3: Example of the colour scheme for a women's Asics shoe .......... 79
Figure 7.1: Means of inscription trialectic .................................................. 92
Figure 8.1: Alternative configuration of the sports trialectic ..................... 99

List of tables

Table 3.1: Table of participant's details .................................................... 44
Table 3.2: Sports represented in magazines stocked in four stores in the Hamilton CBD ............................................................... 50
Chapter One: Introduction

In its annual update of key health indicators for 2012/2013, the New Zealand Ministry of Health reported 31 percent of New Zealand adults were considered ‘obese’ whilst 11 percent of children fell into that category. In total, 1.2 million New Zealanders were classified as being ‘obese’ (Ministry of Health 2013). The number of ‘obese’ adults rose by two percent between 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 while the number of ‘obese’ children remained static (Ministry of Health 2013). In the same year, Sport NZ stated in its annual report that it had invested close to $50 million in the sport and recreation sector for the year ending 30th June, 2013 (Sport NZ 2013). Sport NZ also reported it had spent over $20 million between 2008 and 2013 on programmes encouraging school-aged children to participate in sport (Sport NZ 2013). The World Health Organisation (WHO) identifies physical inactivity as the fourth greatest risk factor for mortality globally and recommends the average adult undertakes between 75 and 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per week (World Health Organisation 2010).

These figures indicate the importance of the trope of physical activity within contemporary society. This research examines the relations between the human body and sport, focusing on the ways in which bodies are inscribed via participation in sport. For this purpose this research will utilise the notion of ‘body culture’, the synergy between bodies and the cultures in which they exist. The perceived ‘naturalness’ of ‘sporting bodies’ will be questioned, and societal discourses which help shape these bodies identified. Employing Eichberg’s (1994: 2003: 2010a) concept of the sports trialectic, the cultural context and social construction of these ‘sporting bodies’ will be examined. Following the example of Fall (2006), Grosz (1998) and Rich (1986), the body will be viewed as the principle spatial element in this report.

The context for this research is provided in the latter half of chapter one through consideration, and analysis, of three global mega sports events; the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the 2012 London Olympic Games and the 2011 Rugby World Cup (RWC). Discussions of these events expose the importance of sport as a cultural
script at regional, national and global levels. Furthermore, analysis highlights how sport acts as a channel for economic, political and cultural tropes.

Chapter two focuses on research methodologies and method. The method used in this research to collect primary data was focus groups. Integral to this chapter will be an exploration of literature concerning focus groups in both geography and sports studies. The data collected through focus groups was analysed using discourse analysis. The collection of secondary data through a survey of sports and fitness magazines will also be detailed.

The third chapter in this thesis discusses the main conceptual framework of this research; the notion of body culture as exemplified through the sports trialectic. Drawing on the synergy between body and culture, the sports trialectic is positioned as a critique of sports science models in which the body is secondary and objectified (Eichberg 2010a). Known for his radical writings on nationalism and Scandinavian traditions of popular folk sport, Eichberg aims to place the body into the centre of sports studies and create a new philosophy of sport (Eichberg 2010a). Eichberg’s sports trialectic is positioned in relation to literature concerning sports geography and literature which specifically examines the geography of sport and the body. Given the centrality of the body within this research, the theoretical relevance of recent work on corporeal geographies is discussed.

Data analysis and discussion provide the subject of the subsequent four chapters. Each chapter discusses a major theme explored in this research; diet, weight management, dress, and means of inscription. Due to the entangled nature of the sports trialectic, the themes evident in the research have been focused upon rather than the branches of the trialectic. Using both focus group data and insights gleaned from sports and fitness magazines, the first of these chapters concerns dietary inscription. Discussions will examine the notions of eating for sport and a ‘healthy diet’. Inscription induced by achievement is a key element and present are discourses pertaining to fitness through the practice of eating for health. Whilst not explicitly expressed by participants, body experience was also an element due to the pleasure of eating and the emotions associated with feeling healthy.
Chapter six identifies weight management as another defining theme. Participants unanimously agreed ‘leanness’ - a body with little fat content - was the major feature of a sporting body. This pre-occupation with weight was a major element to the findings of this research and is, therefore, an ongoing theme throughout. Furthermore, within sports and fitness magazines, weight loss and the control of body composition were major pre-occupations. Positioned as a vehicle by which weight loss could be achieved, sporting activity was identified as being synonymous with health (Eichberg 1986). There is also a clear intersection between neo-liberal values and the concept of weight management. Achievement is integral to weight management as participants established a discourse in which lean bodies equated to competitive bodies. Also in this chapter individual responsibility and personal culpability for health are exemplified through sport, with these notions linking strongly to discourses of fitness.

Dress is at the core of the next chapter. Eichberg (1986, 2007) discusses the role of dress in conjunction with associations between sports clothing, health and discourses of consumerism. Conversely, focus group participants and sports and fitness magazine content placed dress in a more central role. It was argued in participant commentary that dress not only marked a body out as ‘belonging’ to a specific sporting culture but also as a successful sporting body. Sports and fitness magazines positioned clothing, in particular footwear, as key to both an increase in performance and the healthfulness of performance. Notions of sponsorship and branding were also integral to this discussion.

Chapter eight discusses the means by which sporting bodies come to be inscribed. In particular, focus group participants pointed to the dominance of cultures of achievement in sport as exemplified through professionalism and sponsorship. Discourses of fitness are identified as another means of inscription with the ‘culture of personal responsibility’ for ones’ health a key contributor. The media is also recognised through the widespread use of sporting bodies in advertising. Participants claimed that the sharing of knowledge between sporting bodies within a specific sporting culture acting as an additional means of inscription.
To conclude this report, the defining inscription of a sporting body, leanness, is discussed. The impact this has on the sports trialectic will be addressed and another iteration of the model offered. The spatial and temporal setting of Eichberg’s theorisations are compared and contrasted with that of this research. In particular, the notion of neo-liberalism as a guiding ethic of society will be debated as will the interaction between the ‘obesity epidemic’, neo-liberalism and the sporting practices of the ‘bodies’ who participated in this research. This will assess whether the model of the sports trialectic is indeed a suitable model to frame how sporting bodies are inscribed in twenty-first century New Zealand and how the model may evolve to better suit these conditions.

**Context**

Sport is an integral aspect of contemporary society: it is global both in scope and popularity; it is dually individual obsession and civic spectacle; and, the body and embodied experiences are central to the practice of sport (Woodward 2012). Sport also fulfils the function of serving societal goals and reiterating binaries at a global scale; thus sport is a political, economic, educational, religious and scientific activity (Eichberg 2003). While the body is at the centre of sporting activity and therefore at the centre of sport literature, there has been little explicit focus on deconstructing the notion of a unitary sporting body or on the social construction of sporting bodies (Bale and Philo 1994; Eichberg 2010a). Furthermore, through values such as civic engagement and encounter with the ‘other’ sport may be used as the foundation of democratic society (see, for example, Eichberg 2010a, 2011; Putnam 1999; and for a critique of this notion, Dyreson 2001).

Performed, analysed and debated in countries around the world, sport draws significant crowds to live events and large audiences to televised coverage. For example in 2010 619 million people watched the Federation de Internationale Football Association (FIFA) Men’s World Cup final between teams from Spain and The Netherlands (KantarSport and FIFA 2011). The World Cup tournament featured 32 countries and when considering home viewing rates throughout the tournament, FIFA estimated that 3.2 billion people watched twenty minutes or more of coverage (KantarSport and FIFA 2011). Similarly, the 2012 Olympic
Games in London featured 26 sports and 34 disciplines (Olympic.org 2013). Athletes from 204 countries participated in the games, adding to a total of 10,500 participants (Olympic.org 2013).

The 2010 FIFA World Cup and the 2012 Olympics reveal the importance of mega-sports events. In her examination of the legacy of the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa, Dowse (2012) asserts the event was significant for multiple reasons. Firstly, there is potential for a ‘re-branding’ of an area to take place. In this instance, the event had the ability to change popular discourse of both South Africa and the wider African continent (Dowse 2012). The second aspect of import is the economic benefit of mega-events, with increased visitor numbers and investment in infrastructure the two major contributors (Dowse 2012). Thirdly, mega sports events boast a ‘nation-building effect’; the ability to unify the citizens of a host nation around the common purpose of hosting an event (Dowse 2012). Finally, mega-events have the capacity to strengthen regional and foreign relationships (Dowse 2012). In the case of the London 2012 Olympic Games, Hughes (2012) asserts the goal was not only to create a restricted period of elite sporting competition but to encourage an increase in sporting participation in the host nation. This was a central tenet in London’s bid for the games and was one of four strategic objectives presented to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) (Hughes 2012). Stevenson (2012) suggests the Olympic Charter’s objective to blend sport, education and culture together also provides a legacy of the event. Running parallel to the 2012 games was a cultural festival taking place among five London Boroughs, the culmination of a four year cultural Olympiad (Stevenson 2012). The core aim of this was to regenerate London’s East End and encourage creative industries to move into the area (Stevenson 2012).

At a national level, the 2011 Rugby World Cup hosted by the New Zealand Rugby Union (NZRU) showed similar discourses to those present surrounding the London 2012 games and the 2010 FIFA World Cup. When the NZRU won the bid to host the tournament in 2005 the New Zealand government claimed it had two objectives in hosting the games: to organise a successful tournament; and, to maximise opportunities and provide lasting benefits to New Zealanders (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and KPMG 2012). Along with the
sports tournament, there were community engagement programmes, a Māori partnership initiative and the REAL New Zealand Festival which showcased arts, culture and food through more than 1,000 events (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and KPMG 2012). Economic interests were also of concern during this sports event with the government facilitating networking between businesses in parallel to the tournament (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and KPMG 2012). Jackson (2013) also points to a branding exercise similar to that which occurred around the FIFA 2010 World Cup with the promotion highlighting discourse of New Zealand as a clean, green, safe destination and a “great little sporting nation” (Jackson 2013: 848).

These examples highlight the significance of sport as a cultural script which dominates both as physical practice and as spectacle. Moreover, sporting events can be the fulcrum of economic, political and cultural shifts, and the basis of civic engagement. While sport infiltrates day-to-day discourses and experiences of many individuals, debates remain as to what constitutes sport. Bale (1994), for example, warns the vast numbers of people involved in sports, and the wide variety of sports played across the globe, conspire against attempts to produce a homogenous definition of sport. Wickham (1992), therefore, goes no further then offering a tentative definition of sport as any practice delineated as a sport, at any time, by the organisation involved in the delineation. Tangen (1997) defines sport as bodily action associated with competition and performance. Guttman (1978), conversely, defines sport by tracing its lineage - beginning with play, moving through organised play or games, then through competitive games or contests, and ending with physical contests or sports. Additionally, Guttman (1978) provides seven attributes of sport which are as follows; secularism, in that religion and ritual are absent from sporting practice; equality; specialisation of the bodies of athletes; rationalisation or the use of logical structures; bureaucracy and the presence of organisational bodies; quantification of performance; and, the dominance of records (Guttman 1978). An alternate definition is offered by Møller (2003), who suggests that the prime feature of sport is the notion of winning and losing; without the impetus to win, sport simply becomes exercise or play.
Drawing upon existing materials, in this report sport will be delineated as bodily action associated with both competition and performance (Tangen 1997). Additionally, the seven attributes of sport as elaborated by Guttman (1978) will be taken into account. It is, however, noted that this definition will not be strictly applied. Thus, the statement from Wickham (1992) will be added to this definition signalling that sport is bodily action associated with competition but that if an institution defines a bodily action as sport then it becomes sport within this official delineation. This then allows a range of sports to be investigated, from traditional sports through to newer, less customary competitive action.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has provided a context to the study of sport. Through the examination of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the 2012 London Olympics and the 2011 Rugby World Cup, it has been shown mega-sports events are used to encourage economic, political and cultural activities. Thus, it can be concluded that sport exceeds the boundaries of simple, physical activity as sport is strongly connected to discourses and practices from wider social forces. Therefore, it has been noted that sport is difficult to define and theorists from a number of backgrounds have provided many diverse definitions. In recognition of this, a loose definition of sport has been provided. This definition aims to embrace the diversity of sporting activity but also to acknowledge the relationship between sport and society. The ensuing chapter establishes the theoretical basis for the analysis carried out for this report. In particular, the meeting of sports and bodily geographers will be examined as is the work of sports sociologist Henning Eichberg whose theorisations are an integral element of this research.
Chapter Two: Theory

The wider context and the theoretical underpinning of this research provide a focus for this chapter. In the first section of this chapter, the sub-field of sports geography will be discussed along with the evolution of the sub-field and the major theoretical influences. Definitions concerning what constitutes sport will also be presented as will the definition chosen for this research. This will be followed by an examination of bodily geography. Again definitions will be presented as will an analysis of literature surrounding the study of the body in geography and the wider social sciences. Given central role both sport and the body play in this research, geographic work which mirrors this focus will also be examined.

The second section of this chapter will discuss the theoretical basis of this research. Initially, literature concerning the notion of body culture will be explored. Following this, the work of Henning Eichberg will be examined, specifically the spatial and temporal setting of his model of the sports trialectic, an expression of body culture. The sports trialectic is the subject of the next section where each of the three branches of the model are discussed in detail as is how each branch will be applied within this research. Also discussed are the connections that this model has with iterations of society and democracy. Examples of how the model is utilised within scholarly work are also examined (Bale and Sang 1996; Eichberg 2004). Finally, a discussion and critique of the model will take place. Due to differing temporal and spatial settings, as well as the role of political economy, the model proffered by Eichberg has been adjusted for the purpose of this research and the reasons for this will be explored in detail.

Sports geography

Since its origins as an academic discipline in the late nineteenth century, geography has been characterised by fragmentation via a number of sub-disciplines (Unwin 1992). One of the more recent, and perhaps lesser-known, subfields is sports geography (Bale 1989). As Bale (1992: 71) explains “relatively few [geographers] have addressed the serious study” of sports. Indeed, while sport and space have been intimately connected within sport studies (see,
for example Bale 1980, 1982; Burley 1962; McConnell 1983, 1984; Shaw 1963), it was not until the late 1980s that these threads were drawn together in an overtly geographical manner (Bale 1989). Since Bale’s seminal 1989 publication, *Sports geography*, a number of texts have appeared that have furthered geographical understandings of sport (see, for example Bale 1992, 1994; Terrell 2004). Given the relatively brief history of sports studies within geography, it is not surprising the sub-discipline lacks a clear conceptual focus. Sports that have received attention from geographers include; running (Bale 1996; Bale 2004); surfing (Waitt 2008); strength athletics (Tivers 2011); rugby (Overton, Murray and Heitger 2013); and, soccer (Shobe 2008).

Sport has provided a focus for much research in the academic disciplines of sociology, psychology and philosophy, all of which maintain strong theoretical foundations in relation to the study of sport (Bale 2003). One example of this focus in sociology is the work of Norbert Elias on sport and violence. Using the theory of ‘the civilising process’, Elias examined the core issue of why large numbers of people take part in, and watch, the highly regulated bodily performance of modern sport and why, despite rules and regulations, violence still erupts surrounding sport (Elias and Dunning 1985). Within psychology, the original focus was on spectators, however, when an affinity with coaching was noted the field expanded to encompass a wide range of issues from gender, anxiety issues, aggression, self-perception, cognitive issues, group dynamics and cultural competence (Lavallee et al 2004).

Philosophy also maintains a strong tradition of the study of sport. Reid (2012) argues that this began with Hellenic philosophers such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle who observed and commented on Greek sporting culture, particularly as personified through the early Olympic Games. Sport was, however, largely neglected by philosophers until the early twentieth century. In the following decades, however, this focus expanded to include metaphysical concerns such as the relationship between play, fun and sport; the role of rules and the transition of games to sport; ethics concerning spectators, fair play and consumerism; and, the notion of sport as social practice (Reid 2012).
Modern philosophers who have influenced the study of sports, geography and the body include Foucault (1995, 1998) with his notions of the panopticon, bodily discipline and power relations. Feminist thought has also been significant in creating and refining geographical thinking around the body (Johnston 2009). Tivers (2011), for example, uses a feminist perspective in her examination of the gendered performance associated with masculinity and masculine bodies in strength athletics.

The discipline of geography has, however, been a relative late-comer in regarding sports as a cultural experience worthy of investigation (Bale 1988). Sports geography has been situated chiefly between cultural and leisure geographies and has focused on areas such as the diffusion of sport, the geography of sports fandom, economic geographies of sport, and the cultural landscape associated with supporters (Bale 1988). One theorist who has dominated the field of sport geography is John Bale. He is responsible for such seminal publications as *Sports geography* (1989), *Sport, space and the city* (1993) and *Landscapes of modern sport* (1994).

In his 1989 work *Sports geography*, Bale outlines the major concerns of the interdisciplinary field of sports geography. The first of these concerns is with sports activity in the landscape and how this spatial distribution has changed over time (Bale 1989). Of particular concern to Bale (1989) is how sport has evolved to encompass a range of spatial scales over time from the local to the national to the global reach of major sports events. The second of Bales’ (1989) concerns of sports geography relates to changes within the character of the sports landscape and the interdependence between the sports environment and those who participate in sport (Bale 1989). This takes into account the mutual constitution of space and sport, examining not only how spatial prescriptions aid in the definition of sport but also how space can affect sporting outcomes. The final concern of sports geography according to Bale (1989) is the creation of prescriptions for spatial and environmental shifts within the sports environment. In this instance, how sport has moved from place to place is of interest as is the notion of ‘imaginary communities’ associated with sport and how these imagined spaces may be reconciled with concrete spatial prescriptions and experience (Bale 1989).
Work concerning sport within the discipline of geography has primarily been concerned with spatial prescriptions (Bale 1989). One example of this, within the New Zealand context is work by Overton, Murray and Heitger (2013) on the geography of the 2011 Rugby World Cup. By examining the geography of players who participated in the tournament and their team associations, it is possible to chart patterns of labour mobility and evolving core-periphery relationships that challenge existing notions of national identity (Overton, Murray and Heitger 2013). A further example of this pre-occupation with spatial prescriptions is provided in the work of Shobe (2008) on the politics of place surrounding Football Club (F.C) Barcelona. In this study, the narratives surrounding the football club are examined for evidence of links to the social construction of the city of Barcelona and the wider Catalonia region between 1975 and 2005. The core of the work is what Shobe (2008) dubs the place/identity/club nexus.

Spatial issues are also at the heart of Tonts and Atherley’s (2005) examination of how economic restructuring in rural areas of Western Australia changed the landscape of competitive sport. The authors claim that much has been said on the economic consequences of adjustment programs in farming communities but there is a notable absence of reflection on the effects on social and cultural institutions (Tonts and Atherley 2005). Tonts and Atherley (2005) explain that sport is a key component of Australian culture and is thus worthy of investigation. High participation rates in rural areas are cited as a core reason for the importance of sporting clubs to agricultural life, meaning sport is a key institution to examine when considering rural restructuring (Tonts and Atherley 2005). It is important to note, however, that just as geography has diversified into various sub-sections, sports geography has mirrored trends within the wider field of geography. One example of particular relevance to this research is the introduction of the body as an explicit element of analysis in the geography of sports.

The body in the social sciences and geography

For social scientists, the body has largely remained an invisible factor in analysis (Burkitt 1999). This has been attributed to the dominance of the view of the body as purely biological (Longhurst 2005a). The longevity of the dualism between mind and body may be held responsible for the lack of analysis relating to the
embodied nature of social life (Longhurst 1997). Elaborated upon by Descarte, this dualism suggests that the mind is the locus of thinking and feeling, thus being privileged, with the subservient body controlled by the mind (Hubbard et al 2005). Beginning in the late 1980s and early 1990s, however, the body has emerged to take a prominent position within the social sciences as a legitimate focus of research (Longhurst 1997; Valentine 2001). This increased focus on the body is a consequence of the ‘cultural turn’ that affected the social sciences during this time (Hubbard et al 2005). Central to this focus is the recognition that the act of being a person cannot be separated from the body (Burkitt 1999).

Despite the scope of recent scholarship, the body remains difficult to define. Within sports studies the body has traditionally been viewed as biological: a mixture of fat, muscle and bone able to be re-shaped through the use of science and technology (Cole 2000; Tomlinson 2010). Conversely Longhurst (2005a) asserts that while we all have a body, it remains impossible to define the body - everybody and every body is different. This is echoed by Johnston (2009) who suggests a definition of the body is impossible due to the diversity of embodied experiences. Johnston (2009) does, however, relate that the body is defined through difference and this difference may be social, cultural or economic. Grosz (1998) provides a loose definition of the body as an incomplete organic structure created from organs, nerves, muscle and bone, which is then unified and given meaning by surface inscription triggered by social and cultural forces. Mauss (1992) defines the body as a person’s first ‘tool’; their first and most fitting technical object. Within the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty, the objective body belongs to the realms of anatomy, physiology and medicine whilst the body as it is experienced is the result of latent knowledge buried deeply in the subconscious (Spurling 1977).

A diversity of definitions of the body may therefore be found within studies of the geography of the body and of the body at large. Within this report, however, the definition of the body which will be utilised aligns with an explanation provided by Grosz (1998) in her work Bodies-cities. At the core of this work is the assertion that the body remains an incomplete organic structure until it is inscribed by social and cultural forces (Grosz 1998). Extending Grosz’s (1998) definition, I
draw on the work of Mauss (1992) that the body may be used as a tool with which to practice seemingly natural, but inevitably learned, body techniques. Thus, within this report the body is viewed as inevitably socially and culturally inscribed, with bodily actions that may seem natural becoming learned through repetition of body techniques.

Geography has not been immune from the transition within the social sciences towards recognition of the body (Hubbard et al 2005). Bodies have come to the attention of geographers as primary sites of socio-spatial relations and as the major influence in how individuals move through, and occupy, space (Johnston 2009). Nast and Pile (1998) assert, as we all have bodies, we all must also exist in some geographical place. The study of bodily geographies has been primarily led by feminist geographers who play a key role in ‘embodying’ geographies (Johnston 2009). The work of philosophers Butler (1990, 1997) and Foucault (1995, 2008) have also been influential when examining how notions of the body are produced (Waitt 2010b). Publications by Grosz (1998), Longhurst (2011) and Pratt (1998) provide examples of research carried out in this area. Johnston (2009) highlights the importance of cultural inscription to corporeal geographies, with spaces and bodies being viewed as performative. The work of Fall (2006), Grosz (1994, 1998) and Rich (1986) are particularly pertinent, to this research as these three authors identify the body as being open to inscription by cultural values, social norms, morals and ethics.

Sports geography has linked with geographies of the body in a number of studies examining the relationship between sport and the body. For example, there has been a focus on gender and the surfing body within the work of Waitt (2008). Waitt (2008) uses Probyn’s (2003) notion of spatial subjectivity to examine the mutually constitutive relationship between the surf-breaks of Illawarra, New South Wales, and the gendered identities performed there. Lynda Johnston (1998), applying the Foucauldian notion of the disciplining gaze (Foucault 1995), explores the discipline of the female body-builder within the space of the gym. Again, the mutually constitutive relationship between space and the body is foregrounded.
Other geographers have focused on the sexed body. For example, Waitt’s (2010b) examination of the Sydney Gay Games pays close attention to the role the gay male body plays in the subversion of dominant heterosexual discourses within sport. Using Butler’s concept of gender performativity (1990, 1997) and the Foucauldian notion that the body is created via discourse (Foucault 1995, 2008), Waitt analyses the Games as a space in which the bodily performance of marginalised groups may be affirmed and celebrated (Waitt 2010b). Multiple axes of difference were brought together in Benita Heiskanen’s (2012) urban geography of boxing. Racialised, classed and sexed bodies - and the spaces these bodies inhabit from the space of the gym through to the space of boxing itself - are all examined in her study of boxers in Austin and San Antonio, Texas. Using the Foucauldian notion of the delineation of power, Heiskanen (2012) focuses on Latino and female boxers in various spaces associated with boxing including ‘behind the scenes’ activities, the media, and in the ring itself.

The subjectivity of the body and the notion of embodiment have only recently emerged as explicit core concerns within sports studies despite sport and the body being intimately connected (Bale and Philo 1994). Cole (2000) attributes this to a view of the body as objective, a status which has been the hegemonic position evident in sports sociology. A further factor in this absence is sport and science as inextricably linked through the interpretation of the body as a tool constructed of muscle which can be used to achieve physical goals (Cole 2000: Tomlinson 2010). Critiques of this view of the body as scientific object are beginning to emerge from sports sociology, encouraged by increased use of work from feminist scholars on embodiment and the wide usage of themes from Foucault, Elias and Bourdieu (Malcolm 2008). Thus it has begun to be noted by sports scholars that sporting bodies may be socially constructed through dominant hegemonic discourses. Moreover, with the notion of discipline and with the centrality of the objective gaze to sporting practices, the work of Foucault (1995) has emerged as a major tool in the pursuit of troubling the traditional view in sports studies of the body as purely scientific and biological (Malcolm 2008).
One example of this increased centrality of subjective embodiment in the study of sports is the 1999 publication *Talking Bodies* (Sparkes and Silvennoinen 1999). In this collection of essays, ten white, middle-class, academic men from western consumer countries (Sparkes and Silvennoinen 1999) reflect on their experiences in sport. The focus of these reflections is when the hegemonic disciplined male athletic body becomes injured, disruptive or distressed. For example, the contribution from Denison (1999) examines the impact of injury on the career, and emotions, of a competitive athlete. Injury is again the focus of the chapter by Sparkes and Smith (1999), who analyse the issues pertaining to re-weaving identity for a small group of rugby players recovering from spinal cord injuries. Swan (1999) uses his own masculine identity as a counterpoint to examine how the male body is inscribed as humorous within the private space of the changing room, thus encouraging but also constraining male identities. Body-building is the focus of Brown (1999) as he examines how these ‘bodies under construction’ act as sites in which the fluidity of identities and sense of self may be explored.

This recent focus may be attributed to the increased centrality of the body in contemporary society; as Atkinson (2005: 2) notes, “contemporary society loves body-gazing”. Pre-occupation with ‘body-gazing’ signals a complex relationship with the notion of embodiment and also that bodies are made meaningful by the webs of discourse embedded in culture, which give them the position as objects of knowledge (Atkinson 2005). This fixation with the body may also be considered a symptom of a wider ‘body project’: the notion that the body is a tool which is able to be shaped and re-created to align with societal norms and cultures of the body (Orbach 2009; Sassatelli 1999; Valentine 2001). Sport, as an extension of physical exercise, may be seen as a mechanism by which a body which is deemed desirable by the culture in which it exists, can be achieved (Woodward 2009). Contemporary discourse surrounding the body and sport suggests that creating a hegemonic strong, fit body (Orbach 2009) is the core function of sport and physical activity (Zanker and Gard 2008). Thus, the notion of morality and ethics is introduced with sport becoming a moral endeavour (Woodward 2009).
Body culture and the sports trialectic

A review of literature identified the relevance of the concept of body culture (for example, Bale and Philo (1995): Bale and Sang (1996) and Sassatelli (1999)). The term body culture loosely refers to the relationship between bodies and the culture of movement in which these bodies are embedded (Eichberg 1995). Given the importance of definitions of culture to body-culture synergy it is vital that the notion of culture be explored in some detail. Mee (2009) suggests that despite the importance of culture to the practice of contemporary human geography, the concept is astonishingly difficult to define. Mitchell (2000) argues culture does in fact not exist; rather, the idea of culture is used to reinforce and explain existing power structures and social order. The notion of culture as ‘fixed’ is also challenged by Castree (2004), who argues understandings of culture should not be seen as based solely in reality but rather considered performative. Duncan and Duncan (2004) likewise question the notion of culture, urging for a departure from a singular definition and the creation of a multiplicity of heterogenous understandings allowing time and intellectual effort to further refine the notion.

Within geography Mee (2009) provides a set of ten characteristics of the term culture. Those that have relevance to the notion of body culture are as follows: culture is shared by a group; specific beliefs, values, ideas, rules and practices are dominant within a group; culture is not static and evolves through interaction with other cultures; and, culture demarcates boundaries with culture used as an apparatus of power (Mee 2009). Drawing on the work of Mee (2009), the interpretation of culture that has been utilised within this research is that culture comprises beliefs and practices shared by a group which evolve through interaction with other cultures, therefore such interaction shapes what the culture is not and additionally functions as an instrument of power. A further facet of this definition is that beliefs and practices are defined by the term used in front of the word culture. For example in of body culture the beliefs and practices, the exercise of power, the demarcation of boundaries and interaction that characterise culture are related to the body.
This notion of body culture emphasises that the body is a socially produced cultural artefact as opposed to being simply a matter of biology (Bale and Sang 1996). Sport is thus placed firmly in the context of culture (Bale and Sang 1996). This echoes the definition of the body as both socially constructed and the site of cultural inscription; features that are central to the concept of body culture (Fall 2006; Grosz 1994; Pratt 1998; Rich 1986). Due to the multiplicity inherent in the attempt to define culture (Mee 2009), multiple body cultures must therefore exist. Body cultures also vary within sports. For example, Bale and Sang (1996) argue different bodily actions and behaviour relating to cultures of achievement, leisure and nationalism can be identified within Kenyan running. Differences of style connect the body to culture and establish ‘body-culture’ within the wider Kenyan nation. Similar Sassatelli (1999), identifies linkages between body and culture, in the space of a commercial gym. Sassatelli (1999) argues that within the space of the gym there exists a ‘culture’ of achieving a toned, slim, energetic body - within this highly visible space, bodily action is imbedded within this culture (Sassatelli 1999).

The strand of body culture utilised within this thesis stems from the work of Henning Eichberg and his theorisations are firmly placed within the school of Danish sports sociology and Scandinavian experiences of sport. Body culture as explored within Danish sports sociology bears a direct link to the notion of ‘popular sport’ or mass sport. The term for popular sport, folkelig idræt, also translates as nationalist sport and connects to romantic ideals of nationalism and the collective spiritual consciousness of the people (Eichberg 1995a). This notion of popular sport is directly derived from the mass gymnastic movements founded in Scandinavia during the late nineteenth century (Eichberg 1989). The most widely practised Scandinavian ‘mass sport’ phenomenon, Danish popular gymnastics, provides a pertinent example of this. During the late 1800’s, popular gymnastics in nations such as Germany, Sweden, Finland and Denmark was used to foster desirable traits within the populace, primarily a regard for the nation state, through a series of exercises and bodily actions (Eichberg 1989).
In Denmark, however, gymnastics evolved to become the focus of conflicting body cultures which manifested through class tensions. The military and the upper-class, with their own vision of the future of Denmark, adhered to Swedish gymnastics which fostered specific cultural values concerning the retention of their class interests. In contrast, farmers were strongly linked to the local Danish gymnastics which were aligned with an array of cultural values based on a belief in social equity (Eichberg 1989). These insights make it clear that popular sport and sports movements within the Scandinavian interpretation of body culture have a deeper focus than pure corporeality; emotions and spirituality as well as wider cultural contexts, have equal validity.

As indicated by the Danish experience, mass sport was a common in Nordic countries and as such provides a relevant illustration of body culture. Within Nordic comprehensions body culture encompasses three broad human dimensions, these aspects signal that whilst body culture is concerned with the body, it is an understanding of the body as physical, emotional and ‘being-as-a-whole’ (Eichberg 2010b; Kaufman 1970; Kohanski 1975; Merleau Ponty 1962). The first dimension relates to the concrete, material, bodily actions of people; the second dimension is linked to emotions and feelings, including humour; and, the third dimension characterises the creation of unity through social movements, democracy and the notion of dialogical movement (Eichberg 2010a). This firmly establishes a link within the examination of body culture to notions of not only the body and sport, but configurations of society, hegemonic values and practices of governance.

What links Danish sports sociology specifically to body culture as a paradigm, is the essentially democratic nature of popular Danish sport; the notion of ‘sport-for-all’, echoing the focus of democracy on ‘we the people’ (Eichberg 2010a). Eichberg (2011) also establishes an additional link with democracy through the argument that sport can be used as a critique of difference. Using the example of Japanese Sumo bodies, Eichberg (2011) notes sport becomes a platform by which these bodies, which are usually positioned as the ‘other’, become normalised and celebrated in their ‘otherness’. This focus stands in contrast to the positivist
approach wielded by American sport sociologists in which sport science, achievement, elitism and biology are core concerns (Eichberg 1989).

**The sports trialectic**

One expression of this philosophical work surrounding body culture is the model of the sports trialectic (see Figure 3.1). This framework stems from German sociologist Henning Eichberg and is concerned with the many configurations of the moving and sportised body as it is imbedded within sporting cultures (Bale and Philo 1998). This model directly draws upon the work of philosopher, theologian and linguist Martin Buber’s ‘dialogic principle’ (Kaufman 1970: Kohanski 1975), as well as the work of critical theorists Horkheimer and Adorno (1973), the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty (1962, 1963), and the field of Danish semantics, to create a trialetic model which builds upon prior dialectic models (Eichberg 2010a).

Primarily a sports historian, Eichberg employed the concept of body culture as expressed through the sports trialectic to introduce the body-as-a-whole into the centre of the study of sport (Brownell 1994). For Eichberg, the body is present at the centre of the trialectic. Furthermore it is socially constructed through discourses present in the cultures surrounding both sport and movement (Brownell 1994). The body associated with Eichberg’s body culture is not a singular sportised biological body. Thus, the material, flesh and blood body comes second to the body as a metaphor, an extension of society, an analogy with democracy. As such, for each branch of the sports trialectic, as shown in Figure 2.1, there is a different biology; there is no one singular, ‘natural’ sportised body (Bale and Sang 1996). The trialectic framework was developed for the purpose of introducing an holistic view of the body into the centre of sports studies while disrupting the dualism between the cultures of mind and body. Eichberg’s use of Kantian epistemology (2003) provides a framework for this pursuit of this ‘third way’ through which it is possible to critique the dualism between the cultures of mind and body, as well as other dominant dualisms.
Figure 2.1: The sports trialectic. (Eichberg 1994).

The influences on this model are diverse with Eichberg utilising previous work which expands on dialecticism by introducing a third element Drawing on anthropology, Eichberg uses Plessner’s (1941) examination of the contradiction between the ‘body we have’ and the ‘body we are’ by introducing a third element of reflective human practice. Merleau-Ponty (1962) continues in the tradition of dialecticism by identifying a dominant dualism between the body as medical, anatomical object and the body of subjective, subconscious experience. This hegemonic contradiction is disrupted by the introduction of the notions of understanding and love (Merleau-Ponty 1962). Horkheimer and Adorno (1973) follow in a similar vein with pain as social critique disrupting the tension between the alienated, objective, dead body and the subjective, original body of the living. The dialogical principle of Buber (Kaufmann 1970; Kohanski 1975) interrupts the dominance of the objective ‘It’ and the subjective ‘I’ with the concept of the relational ‘Thou’. Finally, within Danish semantics the hegemonic conflict between the ‘I’ and the ‘It’ is interposed by warmth and traditional folk customs (Eichberg 2010a).
Eichberg (2010a) suggests that the process of trialectic thinking may be understood as an extension of traditional dialecticism. Swyngedouw (2009a) explains that dialecticians maintain the world should be viewed “simultaneously as a collection of things and a maelstrom of processes, whereby the things embody and express the dynamic relationships through which these things came into being”. Thus dialectics embraces fluidity over fixity and change over stasis. The process of trialectic thinking, however, introduces a third element into this “collection of things and … maelstrom of processes” (Swyngedouw 2009a: 137). This third element is what Eichberg (2010a) maintains is needed to disestablish hegemonic understandings, manifested as binaries such as between mind and body, which inevitably form from dialectic thinking.

The process of thinking trialectically begins with coherence as an expression of both physical being and social and cultural processes. In this instance, coherence is the field of human movement, aspects of which have evolved into what is now dubbed sport. This coherence, however, is in reality chaotic and as such any analysis necessarily begins by focusing on contradictions as illustrated in Figure 2.2. Within the field of sports studies, as viewed by Eichberg (2010a), the major hegemonic contradiction exists between fitness and achievement sport: sport as fitness activity and sport as competition. This is a direct drawing upon the notion of dialecticism in which the focus is on chaos and instability. According to Eichberg (2010a), the main contradictions inevitably become hegemonic understandings which dominate the sports landscape. The only way it is possible to view and dismantle the main contradiction is through the use of a ‘third way’ that exists outside the major contradiction, illustrated in Figure 2.2 as ‘the third’. This ‘third’ in the sports trialectic is body experience: laughter, music, dialogic movement between bodies. Through the process of analysis and critique in which the main hegemony is untangled, this third way may become the new hegemony and thus the process begins anew (Eichberg 2010a).
Figure 2.2: Process of trialectic thinking (Eichberg 2010a).

As an extension of trialectic thinking, the principle aim of the sports trialectic as related to body culture is to disrupt binaries present in the study of sport, particularly the binary between mind and body (Bale 1994). The use of the trialectic model in the case of sport disrupts the binary between the body and the mind (Bale 1994), thus introducing the possibility of dynamic and fluid relationships between body cultures (Eichberg 2010a). The sports trialectic maps connections between three branches of sportised movement and their corresponding cultures of the body - achievement sport, fitness sport, body experience - with each branch beginning and ending with a malleable and disciplined body.

Each of the three branches of the trialectic, with their corresponding type of sport or body culture, aligns with certain physical characteristics and types of social identity. Further to this, the notions of achievement, fitness and body experience may be extended to connect with differing iterations of societal arrangements and theories of democratic governance. Achievement sport, or elite or professional sport, focuses on a body culture of results, hierarchy and maximisation and concerns a productive social identity (Eichberg 1998). This productive social identity links to a view of the professional sporting body as objectified through competition thus becoming the tool through which results and data can be produced (Eichberg 2010a). Eichberg considers this branch of sport to be the...
modern, hegemonic form of body culture, mirroring the productive emphasis of an industrialised society (Eichberg 1995a). This emphasis on production within the body culture of achievement hints at the discourse of the strong, slim, fit body as the body most suited for neo-liberal, capitalist society (Eichberg 2010a: Orbach 2009).

This notion may be further extended to connect with iterations of society as driven by efficiency, economic expansion and a strong central authority (Eichberg 2010b). Eichberg (2010b) connects this to the rise of manufacturing and capitalism during the Industrial Revolution, and claims that sport is an inherently modern phenomenon which does not pre-date this industrial expansion. Additionally, this form of sporting culture can be connected to the strain of competitive democracy; the ‘winner-takes-all’ system of governance in which the loser, and the loser’s supporters, count for nothing (Eichberg 2010b).

Corresponding to achievement sporting body culture is the ‘It’ body. Eichberg (2010a) regards this form as objective and as serving societal goals related to institutional discourses concerning achievement and fair play (Eichberg 2003). Eichberg (1998) also directly links the core tenets of achievement, competition and efficiency to the core tenets of modern capitalist industries which also focus on competitiveness and the quest for efficiency. Due to this connection with modern, capitalist industry, it is possible to discuss the notion of an ‘It’ society, centred upon the state, which mirrors the characteristics of the ‘It’ body.

The notion of the ‘It’ directly draws upon Bubers’ dialogical principle (Kaufman 1970; Kohanski 1975). Eichberg (2010a) appropriates Bubers’ ‘It’ relation, signifying observation, classification and thinking but never relating to a being, or society, as a whole (Kohanski 1975). Applied to the body this intimates that achievement body culture, and the ‘achievement society’, is the realm of objectification, observation and intellecction. Delving further into the ‘It’ relation, it may be surmised that the ‘It’ is objective and a fact of observation that remains abstract from actual lived experience (Kohanski 1975).
This branch of the sports trialectic aims to show that although this body is objective, it is deeply rooted in human culture and experience (Eichberg 2003). It may also be used to examine the achievement aspects of the culture of a given sport. For example, within the sport of rugby the trialectic is able to map the achievement element of rugby concerning winning margins compared between one season and the next, or comparing the combined weight of one team as opposed to another. A further illustration may be drawn from running in that competitive performances are measured in regards to time for the purpose of ascertaining records at either a national or global level.

Fitness sport and its culture of the body, the next branch of the trialectic to be discussed, is associated with a reproductive social identity. This reproductive identity links to the subjectivity of the body and is focused on the practices of generating or replicating a fit, strong body (Eichberg 2003). This form of sport corresponds with cultures of health, hygiene and personal fitness (Bale 1994) and produces a subjective culture of the ‘I’ body (Eichberg 2003). This is again linked to political economy, with the focus on the individual inherent in the search for health mirroring the concern for the individual in neo-liberalism (Harvey 2005; Larner 2009).

As with achievement culture, it is possible to connect the notion of fitness culture and the ‘I’ relation to democracy and society. Thus, Eichberg (2010b) connects fitness culture to proportional democracy, in which multiple political factions co-exist and the views of the many are accommodated. In regards to the ‘I’ society, this iteration of society is linked strongly to the market - to the individual, commercialisation, privatisation, discipline and welfare. Eichberg (2010b) suggest this form of society was in evidence during the rise in nationalistic sentiments and militarism which occurred in Western Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. During this period, sport was used as a mechanism by which desirable traits, such as discipline and strength, were imparted to the citizenry through gymnastics and military drills. This form of sport found its cogent conclusion in the Fascist regimes present in Europe during the 1930s (Krüger 1999).
Eichberg’s use of the ‘I’ relation replicates the ‘I’ relation described by Buber. When applied to the body, the ‘I’ relation from Buber when applied to the body, occurs only in the relationship between ‘I and We’ and ‘I and It’ (Kaufman 1970; Kohanski 1975). For example, the subjective ‘I’ may occur in the relationship between ‘me and my body’; with ‘me’ representing the subjective ‘I’, and ‘my body’, reflecting the ‘It’. Again, in the relationship between the ‘I and We’, the ‘I’ again may align with my experience whilst the ‘We’ reflects the relational element of my team or my coach. The subjective ‘I’, however, cannot exist in any lived experience outside of these pairs except as an abstract analysis (Kohanski 1975). That is, the ‘I’ cannot exist without either objectivity, observation, or without the relational element of dialogue with others. The ‘I’ therefore does not endure outside these relationships or when the ‘I’ in these word pairs is not articulated through verbal exchanges (Kohanski 1975).

Eichberg (2003) asserts that the fitness branch of sport is associated with individual experiences. These experiences must occur within a specific situation such as jogging or lifting weights with statements uttered such as ‘my body’, ‘my strength’ and ‘my race’. Eichberg (1998) argues that fitness culture bears the hallmarks of a postmodern rediscovery of traditional values and practices. He argues that within this branch, activities such as tai-chi and yoga show a return to spiritualism, as does the re-introduction of music and carnivalesque elements to sporting activity. Despite this, fitness culture, like achievement culture, bears the hallmarks of neo-liberal bodily practices. This assertion is made due to the dominance of the individual within fitness culture but also because it is linked to the modern body project (Orbach 2006; Woodward 2009). Once again using the example of rugby, it is possible to examine the fitness aspect of the game, illustrating the desire to play because a ‘fit’, strong body is obtained through the sport. A fitness aspect of running relates to using ‘my strength’ to go faster, reflecting on ‘my race’ or ‘my opponents’, and discussing ‘my training regime’ (Bale 2004).

The third branch of sport shown on Figure 2.1 is body experience. This is the body culture within sport which Eichberg (2010a) claims produces an aproductive social identity. This is not concerned with the production of results or the creation
of a fitter body - there is simply a culture of experience (Eichberg 2003). Connecting this notion to society and democracy, body experience links to participatory democracy; government of, for and by the people (Eichberg 2010b). Key notions found within the connection between body experience and society, include voluntarism, community and civic engagement. Eichberg (2010b) argues this form of sporting culture echoes the ‘Demos’ element of the term democracy; ‘we the people’. Body experience may be considered the traditional folk branch of body culture as the emotional elements associated with sport and movement are central (Eichberg 1995b). Touch, nearness, music and folk traditions are the concerns and practices associated with this form of body culture (Bale 1994). Within rugby the third branch of the trialectic allows experiential aspects to be mapped. As such, laughter between team mates, the landscape in which a game is played or the role of touch during a game, such as hugging as well as more violent touch, for example, punching, rucks or mauls, are of concern.

This branch of body culture is associated with the ‘Thou’ body and relational experience: groups, emotions and the relationship between the ‘we’ and the ‘you’ (Eichberg 2003). This element of the trialectic again draws directly on the work of Martin Buber (Eichberg 2010b; Kaufman 1970; Kohanski 1975). In this instance, Eichberg (2010b) has drawn on Buber’s dialogical principle and uses the example of the ‘Thou’ or the ‘You’ relation as applied to movement and the body. In Buber’s original work Ich und Du, originally published in German in 1923, the word du was used for the ‘Thou’ relation. Kaufmann (1970) points out that the word du is not easily translated into English as there is no comfortable equivalent. He claims that du is used spontaneously and with little pretention, whilst within the English language thou echoes formal, clerical speech (Kaufmann 1970). Buber, however, used the term du to denote being—as—a—whole, capable of existing independently from any ‘I’ relation (Kohanski 1975). The ‘Thou’ changes and manifests in different forms in every new meeting as a different relation - despite the object of encounter remaining the same, no meeting repeats itself in similar form (Kohanski 1975). When applied to movement and the body, the ‘Thou’ suggests the absorption of the individual body into the many with the experience of ‘we’ or ‘us’ overtaking any experiences that ‘I’ may have had.
The notion of body experience also draws heavily on the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty (1962). Within his work, Merleau-Ponty differentiated between the objective body of medical and anatomical analysis and the phenomenal body of everyday, conscious and sub-conscious lived experience (Spurling 1977). The objective body may be the realm of Eichberg’s (2003) achievement body; however, the phenomenal body is directly drawn upon to explain the concept of body experience (Eichberg 2010a). The existence of the phenomenal body relies on the interplay between consciousness and the body, the subjective ‘I’ and the objective ‘It’. Whilst this integration or ‘being-in-the-world’ is not a regular occurrence, the body is capable of transitioning from its role as a screen between the world and consciousness becoming an opening into the world (Merleau-Ponty 1963). Thus, psychological impulses take on corporeal form or vice versa, mental acts may begin at a physical level, integrating body and mind (Merleau-Ponty 1962). This phenomenal body links to the notion of body experience through the integration of body and mind, through which a synergistic whole is created transcending any ‘I’ or ‘It’ relations and instead metamorphosing into an a holistic ‘You’ or ‘We’ (Eichberg 2010a).

This third branch of the trialectic, is the ‘third way’, the element which Eichberg (2010b) introduces with the purpose of disestablishing the main contradictions which exist within sport. This branch has a focus on what Eichberg (2003) terms dialogical movement. This embodies the ‘Thou’ relation as the meeting between two or more moving bodies (Eichberg 1995). This concept of the ‘Thou’ may also be applied to society, thus creating a ‘Thou’ society. Eichberg (2010b) suggests that examples of this may be found in traditional, folk societies based on community and civic partnership, and also within movements during the 1960’s and 1970’s which called for a return to these traditional values. As discussed previously, this branch of the trialectic is conferred in conjunction with folk games and traditional sports, body cultures in which touch, nearness, laughter and music play a role in movement exchanges between individuals (Bale 1994; Eichberg 1995). This branch aims to go beyond the dualism of mind and body, sport and non-sport by introducing the realm of pure experience (Eichberg 2010a). By focusing on being-as-a-whole, the sporting experiences of groups and on the ambit of unthinking experience, it becomes possible to undo this binary.
The model of the sports trialectic is also a tool by which the fluidity between types of sport may be illustrated, and allows for the troubling of the binary between sport and non-sport. The trialectic also enables a comparison between sports in regard to identifying different levels of emphasis on achieving faster times over a given distance, gaining a fit body or enjoying the capabilities of the body. For example, within a sport such as running, emphasis is placed on producing faster times (Bale and Sang 1996), as opposed to body building where bodily appearance is central (Johnston 1998), or surfing where the capabilities of the body within a particular landscape play a large role (Waitt 2008). The trialectic is also intended to be used for the purpose of dismantling the dominant binary between sport and non-sport by showing that the sensual and expressive elements of non-sport activities are present in achievement orientated, competitive sport and vice versa (Bale 1994). An illustration of this may be provided by acknowledging that emotions such as enjoyment and happiness can be present in competitive sport. Despite the presence of competition, objectification and the primacy of measurement, an athlete may feel a sense of enjoyment whilst racing or happiness at a good result which is not dependent upon the process of quantification. This model also acknowledges that discourses surrounding the appearance of ‘sporting bodies’ are not solely related to sport: that is, sporting bodily expression recognises influences from non-sporting activities and non-sporting discourses. For example, discourses surrounding the healthfulness of an active, moving body that stem from medical sciences and government policy are evident in both fitness and achievement sport (Zanker and Gard 2008).

The process of trialectic analysis has been used by Eichberg (2003) to examine the sport of tug-of-war, as exemplifying the differences between sport and games as well as the process a game must follow in order to be considered a sport. Eichberg (2003) identifies the fitness aspect or the ‘I’ body evident in tug-of-war as the sport is an expression of strength, thus the individual has a direct, subjective experience of their own vigour. Also, this subjective experience occurs in relation to the greater ‘we’ of the team thus reinforcing the ‘I’ relation (Kohanski 1975). This element of the ‘we’ links directly to the body experience or ‘Thou’ element of tug-of-war, expressed through the dialogue between two teams pulling and tugging, directly experiencing each other’s strength.
Within geography this framework has been utilised by Bale (1994) to define the body in relation to sport and illustrate how the landscape of sport and corresponding cultures of the body change with each branch of the trialectic (Bale 1994; Bale and Sang 1996). It must be noted that within the work of Bale (1994) the model is theorised as containing the concrete, material body at its heart. This differs from Eichberg (2010b) as he employed the body as a physical presence but also as a shadow of societal values and governance practices. For example, the landscape of achievement sport is shaped for objective observation and the quantification of results. The landscape of fitness sport emphasises the ‘I’ in spaces such as a gym in which the individual body and its prowess is the focus. The landscape of body experience reflects relations with nature; for example running in outdoor spaces such as a forest or along a beach provides thus bodily movement is experienced in a different way than occurs when running on a track in the space of a stadium or on a treadmill in the space of a gym (Bale 1994).

**Critique and discussion of the sports trialectic**

Given this discussion of the trialectic and the theoretical framework behind it, Eichberg’s original model was adjusted for the purpose of this research. The result, Figure 2.3 is shown below.

![Figure 2.3: Modified trialectic model.](image-url)
In Figure 2.3 the major three elements of achievement, fitness and body experience are present. The barriers have, however, been removed from around each branch to signal the porousness of each element and the circular shape also emphasises that each element is not a discrete entity. The word sport has been removed and replaced with culture, a change which allows for a wider range of movement practices to be examined than proposed by Eichberg’s model. Figure 2.3 also emphasises the open relationship between sport and society. The use of the word culture signals the influence of body culture and recognises that bodies and bodily practices are steeped in cultural values, meanings and beliefs. These bodily practices may also create a sporting culture.

The diagram has been modified due to the differing spatial and temporal setting of this research compared to the original trialectic. The timespan of Eichberg’s work concerning both body culture and the sports trialectic is broad - the earliest work dates from 1989 whilst the latest dates from 2011, with the bulk of the work appearing in print in the 1990s. Also, the major phenomenon illustrating Eichberg’s work, popular gymnastics, was at its zenith of popularity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Eichberg 1989). Temporally, this sits in contrast to those who were researched in this study - all except two participants in this research, the majority had taken up and played sport in the twenty-first century. Thus, their experiences are firmly connected to twenty-first century contexts, practices and discourses of sport. The focus groups took place during, and reflected attitudes and discourses, in late 2013 and early 2014. The magazine articles surveyed followed a similar temporal pattern with the earliest article examined dating from 2011 and the majority issuing from early 2014.

The spatial context of this research plays as much a key role as the temporal setting, in that it sits in contrast to Eichberg’s (1989, 1994, 1998, 2003, 2010a) theorisations. The focus groups took place in New Zealand with New Zealanders experiences of sport to the fore. Carlyon and Morrow (2013) note the sport that has captured the collective New Zealand imagination is rugby. Like Eichberg’s (1989) Scandinavian popular gymnastics, rugby has been identified as a visible expression of national identity and national pride (Carlyon and Morrow 2013). Rugby, however, has not obtained a status similar to that of popular gymnastics, a
folk or traditional sport; the values associated with achievement, results and competition are still very much a part of rugby, a scope highlighted by the 2011 Rugby World Cup hosted by New Zealand (Overton, Murray and Heitger 2013).

The dominance of cultures of achievement and fitness in the participants’ responses may also be attributed to the political economy in New Zealand. Since 1984, the New Zealand economy has been run according to the dictums of neo-liberal policy (Easton 1997). Harvey (2005) defines neo-liberalism as a theory which posits human welfare as aptly advanced by liberating the individual, specifically but not solely in business matters, in a system of strongly defended private property rights, free trade and free markets. This definition is echoed by Larner (2009) who asserts that neo-liberalism is a term used to describe an economic system focusing on free markets, minimal state interference and individual choice as a means by which economic and social wellbeing may be achieved. Further to this, Andrews and Silk (2012) assert, echoing Giroux (2001), that the defining trait of neo-liberalism is “the morbidity of social sphere … a cynicism towards all things public and collective” (Andrews and Silk 2012 6).

Thus, with the attenuation of the state and the marketization of society, populations were made both self-sufficient and accountable. This then lead to democracy and governance being returned to the people but without the auspices of the social state; rather as individual responsibility (Rose 2000). Within the New Zealand context, an overseas exchange crisis precipitated by the July 1984 general election was the impetus to begin a dramatic deregulation of the New Zealand economy (Jesson 1999). The period between 1984 and 1990 saw many significant economic changes including the deregulation of financial markets, the floatation of the New Zealand dollar, the sale of state assets, the removal of agricultural subsidies and widespread taxation reform (Sinclair 2000).

Beyond economic and political change neo-liberalism functions as an ethical framework and, as such, potentially guides all human action replacing all previously held ethical and moral beliefs (Harvey 2005). Thus, whilst neo-liberalism has had a significant impact on the economic sphere in New Zealand, it may be argued that there has been a trickledown effect in which society itself has been changed by neo-liberal values. This is echoed by Rose (2000) who argues
that within neo-liberal doctrine, the individual becomes the keeper of not only their own welfare but, as the individual forms the basis of society, the welfare of their society as well. The competitive aspects of achievement body culture and the individualistic elements of fitness body culture both bear the mark of the neo-liberal values of competition and individualism (Eichberg 2001a; Maguire 2008). The dominance of these two body cultures in the inscription and experiences of respondents and also in the magazine content surveyed may be presented as evidence for Harvey’s (2005) assertion that neo-liberal values may be used to guide all aspects of human behaviour (see Figure 3.3).

Whilst Eichberg (2010b) presents the trialectic as a three-fold model concerning achievement, fitness and body experience, he digresses when discussing the role of neo-liberalism. He suggests that with the introduction of neo-liberal economic policies, a new recapitulation of society; competitive society is created. This form is defined by contradiction, primarily the contradiction between the omnipotence of the market and the concern for individual welfare. The individual is the major element of the competitive society with the dominance of the ‘creative classes’, instigating the perception of the individual as both consumer and creator (Eichberg 2010b). Given the discussion of the relevance of neo-liberal theory to the spatial and temporal setting of this research, competitive society is the most relevant societal form for this research. In keeping with Eichberg’s (1994) notions of the fluidity and connectedness between not only sports themselves, but sport and democracy, it must be noted that just as multiple sports, bodies and forms of governance exist, different iterations of society may simultaneously exist. Additionally, whilst strong parallels exist between the setting of this research and the competitive society, other incarnations of society are evident. Therefore, just as democracy is synonymous with multiplicity and difference, sport and society also become analogous with diversity and variance.
Conclusion

This chapter has examined in detail the theoretical underpinnings of this research. To begin, the history and late development of the sub-field of sports geography was discussed. The multifarious influences on sports geography were also identified, with threads evident from philosophy, sociology and psychology. Previous scholarship from sports geographers was presented, and considered for the purpose of showing the diverse range of concerns within the sub-discipline. The body is the key spatial element within this research and was the subject of the next sub-section. Studies of the body in both geography and the social sciences were examined and a definition of the body was offered. Scholarship which has linked the body and sport within geography and sports studies were discussed as was the process by which the body came to fore in the social sciences and geography.

The notion of body culture was introduced and explained with attention paid to definitions of culture. The work of Eichberg in relation to body culture and the context behind Eichberg’s notions were scrutinised, with particular attention paid to the history of mass sport in Nordic countries. The model of the sports trialectic, Eichberg’s (1994, 2003) vision of body culture, was presented as were the philosophical underpinnings. Each branch, achievement, fitness and body experience, were discussed in detail with the type of body, social relation and iteration of society each branch represents analysed. A critique of the model was offered with an alternative configuration of the trialectic presented, one which reflected the spatial and temporal setting of this research in contrast to that of Eichberg’s work.

To conclude, through a reading of Henning Eichberg’s work it was established that his model of the sports trialectic was suitable for this research. This decision to use a model steeped in influences from sociology and philosophy continues within the inter-disciplinary approach wielded in previous work conducted by sports geographers. The examination of the trialectic model has shown that this model echoes the spatial focus of this research; that of the sporting body. Through the casting of the sporting body as not only socially constructed and diverse but as analogous with society, politics and economy, this branch of body culture thus allows for an examination of a wider range of inscriptive influences. Influences
such as economic governance in the form of neo-liberalism, iterations of
democracy and hegemonic values within society are therefore recognised as
playing a role in shaping ‘idealised’ sporting bodies. The method used to collect
data for this report is the subject of the following chapter with the use of focus
groups and discourses analysis at the core of this chapter.
Chapter Three: Method

The method used for gathering data will be examined in this chapter. The characteristics of a focus group will be explored, as will examples of focus group use in geography and sports studies. The method used to analyse data collected from focus groups, discourse analysis, will also be discussed with definitions being provided and explored. This methodological material will be followed by a detailed examination of the focus groups that were used to gather data for this research. Features such as location, body language, seating arrangements and participants’ engagement will be discussed so as to position focus group data in wider spatial, temporal and emotional contexts. The second major section of this chapter discusses secondary data. This discussion will focus on selection of specific sports and fitness magazines and analysis of article content. Previous social science scholarship which analyses sports and fitness magazine content frames my engagement with similar secondary material.

Focus groups

A focus group is a group discussion in which a number of pre-selected participants take part in a discussion centered upon a pre-ordained topic. As such, focus group may be defined as a group discussion that is facilitated for the purpose of research (Secor 2009). This method takes advantage of the meanings conveyed through speech albeit in a conscious, structured and ordered fashion (Longhurst 2010). As a qualitative method, focus groups have their roots in market research; in the social sciences, focus groups are commonly used to collect a wide variety of data (Longhurst 2010). For example, focus groups have been employed to collect data relating to sensitive topics, cross-cultural issues, the relationship between diverse views and behaviour, and the role of perception (Liamputpong 2011). The group discussion which is the focus of the method is viewed as a single unit of analysis, not multiple interviews, with the main source of data being interaction and dialogue between the participants (Secor 2009). Focus groups are able to produce intensive amounts of data with relative efficiency when compared to other qualitative methods such as participant observation or individual interviews (Morgan 1997).
Focus groups have gained popularity within geography as a forum which is particularly effective in collecting data around questions of meaning, identity, subjectivity and knowledge among others (Longhurst 2010). Furthermore, focus groups provide data that potentially goes beyond the nuances of the relationship between people and place to explore how interaction with others impacts knowledge construction (Cameron 2010). As a tool within geographic research the space in which focus groups occur is as a key element of the process as the location can affect the comfort of participants as well as the positioning of the researcher in relation to the members of the focus group (Secor 2009).

One example of the use of focus groups in geography may be found in Pratt’s (1998) examination of the ways in which domestic work was inscribed onto the bodies of Filipina women living and working in Vancouver, Canada. Pratt (1998) asserted that the location of the groups, a women’s centre, was significant as it was the ‘territory’ of the women. In this space women felt secure to introduce song, dance, collage, role-play and sculpture as alternative ways of story-telling (Pratt 1998). Focus groups within this work provided a secure environment to discuss a topic that may have been deemed sensitive. Adding to this, the comfort the women felt in each other’s company was expressed in the depth of dialogue, the intimacy of interaction is a key element of Pratt’s (1998) research.

Desforges and Jones (2001) used focus groups to study bilingualism and geographic knowledge. Focus group findings underpinned Desforges and Jones (2001) assertion that the ability to speak Welsh affects both social groupings and the process of absorbing geographic knowledge. Similarly, in Vainikka’s (2012) work on the social construction of regional identities in Finland, focus groups were used to facilitate meetings between regions and encourage the exploration of un-coded social practice.

Within sports studies, quantitative methods have long been the dominant tool for data collection (Weed, 2011). As with geography, the use of focus groups as a research method has increasingly gained in popularity, a reflection of the ‘cultural turn’ in the wider social sciences during the 1980’s (Cole 2000). The central reason for the use of focus groups within sports studies is to glean data from interaction as members of groups challenge, elucidate and debate individual and
group opinions on a pre-chosen topic (Jones, Brown and Holloway 2013). Some examples of focus groups being utilised within sports studies include Young et al’s (2001) examination of the attitudes to physical activity and weight loss amongst African-American women, and Munroe-Chandler’s et al (2007) research concerning the use of imagery by athletes aged between seven and fourteen years.

Focus groups have also been used within sport studies to facilitate discussion around controversial and sensitive topics (Jones et al 2013). For example, Johnson, Butryn and Masucci (2013) examined elite female triathletes’ knowledge of, and attitude to, drug use. Two focus groups, each containing six elite triathletes from the United States and Canada, were carried out for the purpose of the study. This research showed that focus groups are a useful method when examining questions of meaning and knowledge across both geography and sports studies.

As with any other method focus groups have both strengths, as have been noted above, and weaknesses. One of the key weaknesses that geographers have identified in relation to focus groups pertains to recruiting participants. This can be attributed to individuals being reluctant to talk about a set of questions in a group setting (Bennett 2002). Another weakness, which may also be a strength in certain circumstances, is the process of gatekeepers filtering research participants during the recruitment process (Hoggart, Lees and Davies 2002). This is a strength of focus groups as the filtering of participants may aid the research process through selecting suitable participants for focus groups. This, however, may become a weakness when gatekeepers begin to make decisions concerning who they believe to be suitable for participation, thus over-riding the requests of the researcher (Hoggart et al 2002).

A further weakness of focus groups is that the depth and efficiency of a group is dependent on the level of interaction between group members (Stewart, Shamdasani and Rook 2007). Given one role of the researcher is to encourage this interaction, the communication abilities of the researcher are important (Longhurst 2010). For example, the researcher needs to be able to dissuade participants from becoming side-tracked from research aims (Cloke et al 2004); it is a possibility within focus groups that discussion may drift away from the
specified aims of the researcher. This can be remedied, however, by the researcher remaining focused on intellectual honesty and maintaining a degree of critical reflexivity throughout the research process (Cloke et al 2004).

One attraction of focus groups is the primacy of group interaction and the role that participants themselves play in shaping the findings (Hoggart et al 2002). This was an intriguing prospect especially as the participants were to be discussing their bodies and embodied experiences. One further factor in my decision to use focus groups is, as has been noted earlier, that these groups are an appropriate avenue for investigating questions surrounding meaning, identity and subjectivity (Longhurst 2010). As focus groups may also be an avenue for the exploration of the construction of knowledges (Cameron 2010) and this method linked to the notion utilised within my research that the body is socially constructed (Johnston 2009). My initial reason, however, for choosing to use focus groups is that they are an appropriate method to use if there are time-constraints on research (Bennett 2002; Hoggart et al 2002). As this initial selection took place when this research project was an Honours dissertation to be completed in 20 weeks, the efficient use of time was a key issue.

**Discourse analysis**

As the majority of data gleaned from focus groups is dialogic data (Secor 2009), the method used for analysing this data will be discourse analysis. Macey (2000: 100), defines discourse as any “organised body or corpus of statements and utterances governed by rules and conventions of which the user is largely unconscious”. It is, however, problematic to attach definite meaning to discourse as many contradictory and overlapping definitions exist (Berg 2009). The multiplicity of definitions stems, in part, from the origin of the term. The concern with discourse stems from a poststructuralist focus on language as a mode by which meaning is produced (Berg 2009) and from a reaction against structuralists positioning of discourse as a near synonym for ideology (Macey 2000).

Berg (2000) provides a set of ‘core concerns’ that he asserts define discourse analysis: suspending pre-existing categories; absorbing oneself in the text; looking for absent presences; identifying the social context; identifying regimes of truth;
coding themes; and, identifying inconsistencies in the text. Furthermore, Berg (2009) notes that because of the slipperiness of the term, human geographers have opted to take an intuitive approach to discourse analysis. Waitt (2010b) argues that within geography, discourse analysis has found favour as a method for investigating how specific notions that aid in the creation of reality become subsumed into hegemonic understandings. Thus, discourse analysis has exposed the ‘heard and not heard’ of debates around issues of environmental and social injustice (Waitt 2010a). It is asserted that guidelines for carrying out discourse analysis in geography should remain vague as any strict rules inhibit the intuitive nature of the methodology (Berg 2009; Waitt 2010a).

Discourse analysis is not only concerned with the analysis of the positions taken by participants, or the framing of the subject positions taken during the focus group, but also engages with what is not discussed, the omissions and silences which may be present (Berg 2009). Within this method of data analysis there is also an acknowledgement that focus groups function as social contexts thus power is evident. In addition, there are dominant and hidden discourses present within the workings of the group discussion (Berg 2009; Secor 2009). Given these considerations and in light of the ideas of author’s such as Phillips and Hardy (2002), Rose (2001) and Waitt (2010a), I define discourse analysis as a method by which statements connecting to the exercising of power, the social construction of knowledge and the production of truth are examined in an intuitive way that is customised to the researchers needs.

Adhering to this methodological definition, I arranged focus group data according to overriding themes. These themes were present in both the focus group questions and in the statements of participants. These themes were inscription via diet, weight and dress, whilst the fourth theme relates to the ways in which these methods of inscription are passed onto sporting bodies. Once being sorted accordingly, the data was then examined via the conceptual lens provided by the work of Henning Eichberg.
**Personal experience**

This research had its beginnings as an Honour’s dissertation - an 8,000 word report to be completed in 20 weeks alongside other coursework. Initial decisions such as the choice of research topic, research method and the scope of participant recruitment where made with this timeframe firmly in mind. Given new opportunities at post-graduate level, however, I decided to upgrade my Honour’s dissertation into a Master’s thesis, expanding my project to a 30,000 word research document. This prompted substantial changes to the original research. These changes included adding more focus groups, raising the number from two to four. Recruitment for more focus groups was attempted and it would have been optimal for more to take place. Excessive difficulties recruiting participants was the main cause for the number of focus groups remaining at four and also taking place over an extended period of time. Recruitment was expanded to Rotorua, adding to efforts at the University of Waikato. Also professional rugby and netball teams, namely the Waikato Chiefs and the Waikato/Bay of Plenty Magic, were contacted for the purpose of organising focus groups. There was no response from the Magic and despite an acknowledgement from the Chiefs, no focus group eventuated.

Along with changes regarding focus groups, shifts were made regarding secondary data. Originally, the literature review carried out for this project was to function as secondary data. Given difficulties recruiting participants and the change from a dissertation to a thesis, an analysis of sports and fitness magazines was added. This provided depth to data already collected and provided additional diversity to pre-existing focus group material. Regarding theoretical material, added time and the additional depth required for a thesis as opposed to a dissertation prompted a deeper reading of theoretical material relating to Eichberg. The original reading of Eichberg focused, superficially, upon the body. On further readings, however, themes pertaining to economics, society and democracy were uncovered changing the framing of this research away from purely ‘bodily’ matters.

Therefore data for this report was collected through four focus groups. To begin the process of participant recruitment, emails with an attached information sheet
(see Appendix One) were sent to the secretaries of four sports clubs - rugby, netball, soccer and hockey - which operated on the University of Waikato campus. The addresses of the secretaries were obtained from the University of Waikato sport website. It was requested that the information provided be forwarded by email to members of those clubs. There was little interest from the members of the clubs despite the email being sent on to them. For example, only one member of Unicol, the university soccer club, replied and this was to say they were unable to attend any of the groups. After the failure of this method of recruitment, the attempt to recruit additional participants was made through personal contacts of my supervisor and myself.

Table 3.1 lists the details of the participants who took part in the study. They are mapped according to the branch of the sports trialectic to which they align most strongly. Some participants are listed under only one, whilst others fit into all three. The participants are listed in alphabetical order according to the focus group they attended. The sport which they played is also listed. Focus group one, which took place at the University of Waikato, is highlighted yellow. The participants who took part in focus group two, also held at the University of Waikato, are highlighted grey. Focus group three, undertaken in Rotorua, is highlighted blue and the final group which occurred on the University of Waikato campus, is highlighted green.
The first focus group took place in early September 2013 and comprised of four participants; three women and one man. Two of the women, Annalea and Marie played netball; one of the women, Nia played soccer; and, Rene, the male participant, was a soccer player. The age-range of these participants was similar though ages were not formally recorded. I had prior relationships with the three female participants - they were recruited through direct contact as they were my classmates and fellow Honours students. Rene was approached through my supervisor’s connection with the President of the Waikato University soccer club Unicol. All of these participants played social sport, while Marie had additional experience with athletics and with refereeing netball matches.

The group took place in a private room at the University of Waikato library in the evening and lasted for just over 40 minutes. This group, as with the others, was audio-recorded on both a portable recording device and a smartphone.
Handwritten notes were also taken as was relevant. My younger sister attended for support. She did not take notes, however, we discussed the groups in detail after it took place and I used her comments to help gauge how well the group had functioned. The participants and myself sat in close proximity around a square table with food and drink in the centre of the table. We were all able to make eye contact with each other. Participants did not eat during the group however three - Annalea, Nia and Marie - did stay after the group to chat and eat. Respondents were given bags of home-made fudge in appreciation of their participation. The questions used for this group may be found in Appendix Two. All participants engaged well with the material and understood key concepts as they had previously been exposed to them through university papers. There was no dominant speaker, every member contributed material and the body language was generally open and relaxed. The group members interacted well, particularly Rene and Marie. Both Annalea and Nia were initially quiet, however, they increasingly contributed more material as the group progressed.

The second focus group, comprising of four people, took place in late September. The three week gap between focus groups was the result of continuing difficulties recruiting participants. Honours level classmates were again canvassed with the purpose of gaining participants, and recruitment was extended to first and third year geography classes. One participant, Ellie, was recruited through my supervisors’ connections. Shane was recruited through publicising this research to third year geography students. Shane then recruited his friends Hugh and Nai to take part in the group. Given this recruitment dynamic, I did not have a prior relationship with any of the participants. Ages of the participants were not recorded. In this group there was a sprinter, a long distance athlete, a casual soccer player and a football referee. The gender make-up of the group was also different, split between two women and two men. This group lasted over sixty minutes and participants were asked the same questions as employed in the first focus group (see Appendix Two).

This group again took place in the evening, in a private meeting room in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences buildings on the Waikato University campus. My sister was again in attendance. There was a large, oval table in the room and
three participants, Hugh, Ellie and Shane sat in close proximity on one side of the table, I was on the opposing side and Nai sat a distance away at the end of the table although she was asked to move closer for recording purposes. Food was again provided and Ellie, Shane and Nai did eat during the group. As a thank you participants were given gift bags of chocolate. Hugh did not accept his. Members of the group were engaged throughout the process although Nai engaged less as the group wore on. Hugh and Ellie were the dominant speakers, with Shane playing less of a role in comparison. Hugh regularly reacted negatively to the nature of the questions through the way he turned his body away from myself and other speakers and how he changed the flow of conversation towards an issue he had been discussing in a previous question.

There was tension between Hugh and Ellie due to their contrasting experiences of athletics. Ellie is a national representative in 200 metres and her experiences are rooted in contemporary athletics whilst Hugh, a distance athlete, attempted to critique contemporary athletics but instead critiqued Ellie. Hugh’s assertions regarding ‘women as conformists and men as non-conformist’ and his consistent negation of Ellie’s experiences, asserting that she was wrong and not clarifying that he felt contemporary athletics was wrong caused tension. This did contribute to an outburst of anger from Hugh. At one point my sister left the room because of the nature of his comments. This may be attributed to Hugh not being fully informed of the research before his participation as the lateness of recruitment did not allow for him to be provided with an information sheet. When he was given one on the night, however, he did not read it.

The third focus group consisted of six Year 13 secondary school students who were recruited through familial connections. This group took place in mid-November 2013. Ages were not recorded, however, it was assumed from their schooling level, that all participants were aged between 17 and 18 years. This group also contained an even gender split between three males - Sam A, Oliver and Bobby - and three females - Grace, Emily and Georgina. There was also a diverse range of sports represented in this group with participants involved in rowing, squash, soccer, rugby, jogging and swimming. I had no prior relationship to any of the participants but my father was one of their subject teachers.
The group took place on school grounds in the Social Sciences resource room and lasted just over 20 minutes with the questions pertaining to those in Appendix Two. Participants chose to sit along a bench beside the rooms’ window. Due to a lack of chairs I knelt in front of the only table in the room with the table between me and the participants. Food was provided, however, they did not eat and when Sam A did eat he was teased. Their body language was aloof and detached, and they did not appear to engage with the material. They were open about not understanding the words in some questions and were reluctant to discuss certain issues such as the media influence on their sporting bodies as they felt that the question did not apply to them. The focus group took place in their last week of school; participants were about to leave for their final exams and a history teacher was present in the room during the focus group carrying out photocopying. Their class had been disrupted in the beginning by a chair being pulled out from underneath a student and the teacher shouting at the class in an attempt to gain control. These two factors may have contributed to the lack of engagement with the process. No tokens to say thank you were offered as some participants had been given free periods in exchange, the remainder of the food was proffered to them which they did not accept.

At the conclusion of the third focus group my supervisor and I agreed to continue to recruit participants given the shift from an Honour’s dissertation to a Masters’ thesis. We agreed additional participant data would be useful. To recruit additional contributors, I moved away from a focus on university students and family connections to engage people in my hometown of Rotorua. Recruitment was carried out via email in late January 2014 with an information sheet attached; this time, however, a flyer had been added. The following sports clubs in Rotorua were contacted via email; the road cycling and mountainbike clubs; Springfield Golf Club; the Rotorua lawn bowls and cricket clubs; Rotorua Association of Triathletes, triathlon and multisport club; and, the Lakecity Athletics club. Again the response was poor.
Recruitment continued at Waikato University at the beginning of the first semester in March 2014. A connection of my supervisor in the Sports and Leisure Studies Department was contacted and they allowed me to canvas students from their first year paper. A brief description of the research was offered and they were left with my email to contact me if they wished. No such contact was made. First year students were again the target of recruitment as my supervisor attempted to recruit participants from his first-year geography class. This was successful and a focus group took place in mid-March containing three participants.

Again ages were not recorded but participants consisted of two first year students and an exchange student from Germany. Sam B and Olivia both played hockey, Sam B at club-level and Olivia in a social team. Jonas played both basketball and soccer but chose to be listed with basketball as his primary sport. The participants had no prior relationship with each other and I had been a sessional assistant at their geography laboratories that week. The group took place in a meeting room in the University of Waikato library in the evening. Food and drink was provided and my sister was present. The questions used for the group had been altered since the last group and a practical activity had been added, these new questions may be found in Appendix Three. We were spread around a large square table with myself and Olivia on one side, Jonas sitting around the corner from Olivia and Sam B sitting diagonally across from myself. All participants helped themselves to food and drink throughout the group.

The participants engaged well with the material and there was no obvious animosity between them. At the beginning of the group they answered the questions in an orderly manner with Jonas starting, Olivia following and Sam B finishing. This did change, however, as they relaxed and became more comfortable. There remained little interaction between group members until the last question when Jonas and Sam B began to interact a little. The group lasted approximately forty minutes. Unlike the first three groups, the participants stayed and talked, mainly between themselves, after the group was completed. Jonas and Olivia left after half an hour whilst Sam B stayed for an additional forty-five minutes.
Secondary data analysis

Given the difficulty recruiting participants, and to provide added depth of material as required given the change from an Honours dissertation to a Master’s thesis, it was decided to conduct an analysis of how sports and fitness magazines represent sporting bodies. A survey of scholarly literature using sport and fitness magazines indicated that analysis of such secondary sources was not uncommon. For example, Parasecoli (2005) investigated how discourses regarding food and eating in male fitness magazines, and how these discourses weave themselves together with notions of body image. Parasecoli (2005) concluded that the features involving food aim to create a discourse of hardening bodies, controlling cravings and desires with the purpose of creating and maintaining an idealised ‘hard body’.

Images of sports women were the focus of Hardin, Lynn and Walsdorf’s (2005) study of Women’s Sports & Fitness, Sports Illustrated Women, Real Sports and Shape. Hardin, Lynn and Walsdorf (2005) concluded that despite the range of images found in the magazines which variously rejected and reinforced traditional notions of sexual difference, the presence of such magazines was a sign discourses of women in sport are changing. Curry, Arriagada and Cornwell (2002) also analysed images of sport. After analysing 46 magazines, Curry et al (2002) concluded that images of men participating in sports emphasised power and performance, while images of women focused on notions of pleasure and participation.

Data from sports and fitness magazines was analysed according to the principles of discourse analysis. Thus, the content was selected and analysed in an intuitive way, which evolved and adapted to my needs as the project progressed (Phillips and Hardy 2002; Waitt 2010). To begin this survey of magazines, stores which stocked magazines in the Hamilton central business district (CBD) were investigated. This area was chosen due to its proximity to the University of Waikato and the presence of a specialist magazine store, Accent Magazines. The stores identified in Table 3.2 were visited on the same day and notes were taken during the each visit.
Table 3.2: Sports represented in magazines stocked in four stores in the Hamilton CBD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Shop</th>
<th>Sports Represented in Magazines</th>
<th>Type of Store</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accent Magazines</td>
<td>Bodybuilding, Boxing, Cycling, Fitness, Kayaking, Mixed Martial Arts, Mountain Biking, Pilates, Rugby, Running, Rugby League, Soccer, Trail Running</td>
<td>Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper Plus</td>
<td>BMX, Cycling, Fitness, Mountain Biking, Pilates, Rugby, Running, Walking, Yoga</td>
<td>Chain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitcoulls</td>
<td>Cycling, Fitness, Golf, Mountain Biking, Rugby, Running</td>
<td>Chain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The stores shown in Table 3.2 stocked magazines which pertained to those played by participants in focus groups. Not all participants’ sports were covered, with only magazines for rugby, soccer and running found. Both the University of Waikato library and the Garden Place Library in central Hamilton were unsuccessfully investigated for suitable content. After this brief survey, it was decided to investigate the websites of the relevant magazines to ascertain if suitable content could be found. The decision to review internet content was based on costs associated with purchasing multiple magazines and the ease with which multiple issues could be viewed via the internet. Only one magazine investigated through this method was found to be useful and material from both print and online soccer magazine *Four Four Two* was used in this final report.
In light of the lack of relevant material in specialist sports publications, generic sports and fitness magazines and websites were investigated for body culture discourse. Copies of the March editions of the Australian and New Zealand *Men’s Health* and *Runner’s World* were purchased due availability and before the costs of purchasing magazines was taken into consideration. Websites of both magazines were also investigated. Other websites analysed included both men’s and women’s fitness sites; specialist magazines pertaining to a specific sport; generic sports magazines and websites; global and New Zealand content. Material was gleaned from all sources. Articles that were analysed met two criteria. The first criteria related to the relevance of the content to the themes identified in the focus group - diet, dress, weight, and the means by which bodies are inscribed by sport. The second criteria for the selection of magazine articles was that the content should relate to one or more branches of Eichberg’s (1994: 2003: 2010a) iteration of body culture as expressed through the sports trialectic model. In this final report, articles from *Femme Fitness*, *Four Four Two*, *Men’s Health*, *Women’s Fitness* and *Women’s Health* are analysed.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has shown the processes by which data was collected for this research. The decision to change this project from an Honours dissertation to a Master’s thesis had a significant impact on the method utilised for this report. The method of obtaining primary data, focus groups, was chosen due to the ability to amass a large amount of data in a short space of time when compared to other methods. Despite this, difficulties recruiting participants for the focus groups lead to less taking place then had originally been intended. Additionally, the data collection process was protracted, and spread across two locations. Useful data was gleaned from the focus groups and these groups have been analysed in detail. In particular, the spatial setting, the temporal setting and the interactions between myself and the participants, and between the participants themselves, were analysed. It has been noted that the space in which the group takes place is key in the data produced and the engagement of participants. Likewise, as focus groups rely on the interaction between participants for the data gleaned, these interactions are integral in shaping this data. It has been shown negativity and tension inhibits interaction and, a congenial and amicable atmosphere encourages participation.
Secondary data was also collected for this report. Through an analysis of sports and fitness magazines. Relevant material related to the acuities of sporting bodies found in these publications. For cost reasons, after an initial survey, both print and online magazines were searched with the majority of data ultimately sourced from online magazines. The material which was analysed and presented relates to the notion of inscription and fits within the framework provided by the work of Henning Eichberg and the sports trialectic.

In conclusion, the choice of method for this report as echoed the core concerns of both the theoretical material and the overall research question. The use of focus groups and discourse analysis recognises the social construction of language and thus, meaning. This links with the role of the body within body culture and the sports trialectic in that the body is considered socially constructed within this model and thus layered with meaning. This choice of method, therefore, provides a basis for critique of ‘meaning’ and hegemonic understandings as related to the creation of sporting bodies. Thus, focus groups, discourses analysis and the analysis of sports and fitness magazines have been selected with the purpose of questioning the pre-determined, unitary nature of sporting bodies. This critiques of sporting bodies begins in the ensuing chapter with the discussion of the methods by which bodies become inscribed by sport beginning with an evaluation of dietary practices.
Chapter Four: Diet as a method of inscription

The chapters that follow focus on discussion of elements of inscription that were identified and elaborated upon by participants in the focus groups conducted for this research. The multiple linkages and inter-connections that characterise the sports trialectic cannot easily be described through the structure of concomitant sentences and paragraphs. In light of this dynamic, I have made a pragmatic decision to organise data analysis according to major themes evident within the data. In this respect, I follow the work of Berg (2009) and Waitt (2010b) in being guided by the comments of my participants - rather than employing pre-determined themes to my research - I have focused on the topics that emerged from focus group discussion.

The first chapter in this section examines diet, an element of inscription Eichberg (2003) acknowledges. Discussion begins with examining diet manipulation for aiding achievement. In particular, dietary components may be tweaked to allow for body composition to be altered in the pursuit of attaining an ‘achieving’ body. The second facet of this chapter focuses upon diet adjustment for health reasons. This discussion aligns with the focus on health evident within contemporary capitalist society and also with the culture of personal obligation for health. This also provides evidence of the entangling of sport, health and society. To conclude, a discussion of contradictory elements identified in focus group commentary and magazine content will take place to reinforce the entangled nature of the sports trialectic and the enmeshing between sport and society.

Chapter five analyses aspects of weight management. Weight management was discussed by focus group participants in terms of a binary, relying on expressions of lean sporting bodies and fat non-sporting bodies. This is further exemplified by the major themes evident in group discussion and magazine content. Control of body composition, as related to achievement culture, is the first theme examined. This section focuses on efforts to control fat content with the purpose of sporting performance being enhanced by a lean body. The second half of the weight management binary is discussed through the example of weight as a moral issue.
Emotions related to weight and the fat body, and the notion of personal responsibility as related to physical activity is the subject of the next section. A discussions of skills and ability as able to transcend physical appearance highlights the contradictions evident in the arguments presented in the chapter.

Chapter six focuses on dress, an element of inscription integral to discourses of the sporting body (Eichberg 1986, 2007). It became apparent during focus groups discussions that dress was a key constituent of inscription for participants. Discussion will examine the role of uniforms in inscribing bodies as belonging to a particular team or institution, or as belonging to a specific role such as referee. Practicality is an element of this discussion as is the function of emotion in the wearing of uniforms. Following this is an examination of the notion of ‘looking successful’. This belief was a key part of participant’s discussion in particular commenting upon how clothing marks a body out as belonging to a sport or as aiming to be a ‘serious’ participant in that sport. Sponsorship and branding follows on from the discussions of ‘looking successful,’ adding an analysis of the role professionalism plays in inscribing bodies through clothing. To conclude, the contradictions and tensions evident in the preceding sections are identified r

In Chapter seven, the final chapter of data analysis, the means by which participants felt that their bodies came to be inscribed is discussed. In this exploration particular attention is paid to the discourses of achievement induced by competition. The presence of competition and professionalism in sport were consistently attributed in participants’ comments to increased bodily inscription via sporting practice. Discourses concerning the benefits of physical activity were also ascribed as a means by which bodies became inscribed by sport. In particular, the culture of personal responsibility and rhetoric surrounding the ‘obesity epidemic’ are a strong thread in this discussion. The presence of sporting bodies in the media is another means of inscription through the presentation of ‘idealised’ sporting bodies. The transference of knowledges within sporting ‘cultures’ is one further means of inscription, as this transference plays an important role in inscribing bodies through the sharing of practices between bodies.
In exploring diet, weight, dress and inscription, as expressed through the competitive element of achievement culture and the individualistic aspect of fitness culture, I remained aware of the important contextualising role of the principles of neo-liberalism. Harvey’s (2005) argument that neo-liberalism may be a guiding tenet for all human behaviour is employed to explain the role of individualism and competition as a dominant motivation for contemporary sports bodies. For example, as will be shown, weight control dominated as a guiding narrative in both primary and secondary data. Thus, for participants and for magazine writers, weight control was either a key aspect of sporting practice or the primary motivation for participating in sport.

Moreover, as Eichberg (1998, 2007) explains, contemporary pre-occupation with the body may be linked to neo-liberal discourses relating to individual health and hygiene (Eichberg 2007). Guthman and DuPuis (2006) clarify this link with neo-liberal ideology, explaining that neo-liberalism creates the fat body through discourses of consumption but also vilifies it through discourses of lack of control and moral weakness. Health has also long been associated with sporting activity (Eichberg 1986), a relationship acknowledged by participants and in magazines via demarcation of the sporting body as a healthy body. Neo-liberal orthodoxy is also evident in the individualistic responses of the focus group participants. The majority of focus group participants took part in team sport, yet their responses were dominated by comments about their particular experiences. Thus, respondents made few comments about relations with teammates, the opposition and other such ‘bodies’; indeed, respondents had to be prompted to discuss their relationship to other sports-people.

Due to the pre-eminence of individual experiences in focus group discussion and respondents emphasis on weight control, there exists a degree of overlap between chapters. Thus, the chapter-based demarcation that exists in this thesis between diet, weight, dress and inscription does not reflect the ‘reality’ of the overlaps that exist between these themes. There is, for example, much overlap between diet and weight management as data pertaining to notions of healthy eating draws on expectations of achievement and controlling body composition. The nature of inter-connections are evident in the components of Eichberg’s (1994) model of
the sports trialectic. The concluding chapter to this thesis offers commentary on the reconciliation of diet, weight, dress and inscription.

**Diet as a method of inscription.**

Diet is cited by Eichberg (1994) as one of the ways through which sporting bodies become inscribed (see Figure 4.1).

![Diet trialectic diagram](image)

**Figure 4.1:** Diet trialectic

Dietary restrictions and an emphasis on eating for recovery, both key aspects of participants’ discussions and diet-related features in the sports and fitness magazines surveyed, are positioned within achievement culture in this analysis. As such, this position reinforce neo-liberal adherence to the value of a competitive society. Restricting dietary components has been shown by both participants and magazine content to be a tool by which both sporting performance and post-performance recovery may be enhanced. Both performance and recovery relate to improved results or achievements and, as such, may be positioned in relation to the concern of neo-liberalism with encouraging competition (Larner 2009).

Elements of dietary inscription may also be related to fitness culture. Two examples discussed by participants and shown in magazine features are the notions of healthy eating and eating for weight loss. Healthy eating, as expressed in discourses of health, is a key component of fitness culture (Eichberg 1994). Eating for weight loss - while not directly related to sports and not always
‘healthy’ - featured prominently in the sports and fitness magazine articles analysed for this research.

Body experience, the third element of the trialectic model, is represented through connections between food and emotion (Probyn 2003). Figure 4.1 identifies the sense of enjoyment or pleasure that comes from enjoying food for reasons of taste or context and enjoying benefits of a healthy diet and associated weight control. In contrast to what may be considered these positive emotions, emotions such as guilt, disappointment and worry may also be associated with the consumption of unhealthy foods and weight gain. As is suggested in Figure 4.1, overlap occurs between (sporting) body cultures and discourses from wider society. For example, notions of weight loss have infiltrated sport through the prevalence of concern over weight in wider society (Orbach 2000). Contemporary discourses around healthy eating and weight loss may be understood to be expressive of neo-liberal socio-economic ideology Eichberg (2007) explains that health is a key bodily discourse within capitalist societies - the slim and fashionable body is characterised through a relation to ‘appropriate’ consumption within contemporary, capitalist, competitive societies (Eichberg 2007). These bodily tropes of health and fashion conjoin around the issue of weight as the slender body is both a healthy ideal (Guthman 2012; Guthman and DuPuis 2006; Zanker and Gard 2008) and a ‘fashionable’ archetype (Orbach 2000).

This element of emotion also provides the basis for contradictions evident in the data. The incongruities observed in primary data may be positioned as expressive of the contradictions that are a characteristic of neo-liberal, competitive societies (Eichberg 2010b). For example, in relation to food, there is tension between the enjoyment of food and the reluctance to eat due to a desire to attain a slim, healthy, achievement-ready body. Similarly, there is contradiction in eating for weight loss while simultaneously preparing for achievement sport.

As was evident in the data, this desire for a fashionably slender body combined with competitive sport creates tension when diet becomes orientated for thin-ness as opposed to achievement. The pursuit and maintenance of a lean body through sport and the professed necessity of a lean body for sport, stands in contrast to lived experiences. Participants could name sports people who had achieved at
both national and international levels yet they did not consider these sportspeople to have the size or shape of body they perceived as necessary for achievement. In contradiction to these perceptions, participants maintained that a lean body was a major outcome and a necessary component of sporting performance.

In light of to a pre-occupation with weight from participants and within magazine content, there is overlap between the material relating to diet and material in the chapter concerning weight management. This overlaps revolves around the centrality of food to both weight loss and the modification of body composition. Body composition is a subject covered in both diet, as related to food intake, and in weight management, as a key component of weight control for achievement.

**Diet for achievement**

Differing opinions on the role and importance of diet were expressed in magazines and by focus group participants. Participants who self-identified as social sportspeople claimed that they did not follow a strict dietary regime as they did not feel the need to at their level of sport. They did, however, know social sportspeople who did eat “for the sport”. The importance of eating for sport, regardless of level of competition, was exemplified by the coverage of diet in the international soccer publication *Four Four Two*. For example, the online issue of *Four Four Two* from January 2014 included a feature on the benefits of fish oil for performance. In this feature it was explained that regular consumption of oily fish can aid mental ability in a similar capacity as physically practicing football skills during training (*Four Four Two* 2014). This link was personalised through information on the consumption of fish oil by former England international David Beckham (Kohanski 1975). Comments from a professional nutritionist added an element of ‘scientific fact’ to claims about the value of fish oil (*Four Four Two* 2014). Expressed through Eichberg’s (2003) trialectic, the consumption of fish oil provides benefits conducive with enhanced performance and achievement in sport.

The sporting benefits associated with seafood were reinforced by a piece in *Four Four Two* (2014) about *moules frites* (mussels and chips). Accompanying a recipe for mussels and chips was an explanation of the nutritional elements in ingredients
for the dish. Particular emphasis was placed on the value of the allyl sulphides that occur in onions as an aid to heal connective tissue in hip and knee joints, both areas of concern for soccer players (Four Four Two 2014). The benefit of celery is also discussed, with apiuman, the complex carbohydrate found in celery, being an anti-inflammatory agent. As such, it is suggested eating celery will speed recovery after performance or injury (Four Four Two 2014). In contrast to this emphasis on eating to improve achievement or to aid recovery, focus group participants identified their eating habits in terms of health and wellbeing. Distance athlete Hugh, for example, explained that his choice to follow a strictly vegetarian diet was not motivated by his desire to achieve in sport but was solely for the benefit of his health. Hugh did add, however, that whilst he did not ‘eat for his sport’, he did tweak the components of his diet for the purpose of aiding weight loss or increasing muscle mass.

While Olivia does not follow a sport-related diet, she recognised Hugh’s position that sportspeople adhere to particular diets in order to manipulate their body composition. Shane also eats differently on the days he played sport or refereed, despite being a ‘social’ participant in both pursuits. Participants agreed, however, that diet was more significant to the training regimes of professional sportspeople than the activities of social sportspeople. These practices echo Eichberg’s (2010) use of Martin Buber’s ‘It’ relation. The ‘It’ body culture is the culture of objectivity and observation but never the being-as-a-whole; the observation of food intake by sports-people and the objectivity of discussing the body’s metabolism all echo the ‘It’ body. It is evident, however, that tensions exist within achievement motivated dieting - this self-contradiction challenges alignment with the ‘It’ body. Further to this, the ‘It’ body reflects the ‘It’ society, sharing many similar traits and cementing a connection between sport, the body and society. This is further reinforced by the linkages between the ‘It’ body and neo-liberal aspects of the ‘It’ society. Ellie clarified this position by explaining that at her level of sport, which involved competing in national events, diet was key to achievement. Such was the relevance of diet to Ellie that she admitted tweaking her food consumption so as to control the amount of fat she consumed. The modification of calorie intake by sportspeople was acknowledged as being only carried out for the sport - it was not a permanent choice. Annalea, for example,
noted a friend of hers monitors his diet during the rugby season for the purpose of aiding his performance. When the season is finished, however, she said that “hell no is he going to do dieting, hell no is he going to run round”.

**Diet for health**

The place of diet within a culture of fitness sport was implicit within the statements of participants (see Figure 4.1). Jonas and Sam B, for example, explained that their participation in social sport was not accompanied by a particular dietary regime. Sam B and Jonas did, however, comment that they did not have to worry about their diet due to their inability to gain weight. Indeed, the diets of Jonas and Sam B reflected concern around health rather than sporting performance or recovery. The dietary profiles of Jonas and Sam B are defined by an internal contradiction due to their inclusion of notions of health, a key facet of fitness culture, alongside reference to rational observation about their inability to gain weight, an emphasis which aligns with achievement culture (Eichberg 2010). This tension between health and weight, fitness and achievement, exposes the limitations of dualisms that rely on dichotomous understandings of achievement and fitness sport, and sport and non-sport.

Comments from Hugh also exposed tension in understandings of diet and sport. Hugh explained that he does not like the term ‘diet’ as to him, it is indistinguishable from sugary, high-carbohydrate food and the diet ‘industry’. Instead, Hugh preferred the term nutrition as it suggests “giving the body something” and is synonymous with him taking responsibility for his body and his health. Viewed through the branches of the trialectic, Hugh’s comments align with the ‘health’ emphasis of fitness culture while simultaneously expressing the importance of personal responsibility, an emphasis evident in both fitness and achievement culture (Eichberg 2010). Participant commentary exposed links between fitness sport and notions of mass sport while reinforcing evidence for vestiges of the welfare state and proportional democracy (Eichberg 2010b). Thus, Eichberg (2011) argues that health is an over-riding pre-occupation within contemporary capitalist society and accordingly, participants spoke of links between social sportspeople and fitness culture. Due to the dual presence of the health aspect of fitness culture, and the element of personal responsibility with
traces of both fitness and achievement culture, a link is forged with neo-liberal thinking. This is due not only to the pre-eminence of health in contemporary capitalism, but also to the notion of personal responsibility which concurrently bears concerns for health but achievement orientated aspects of neo-liberal ideology such as efficiency and individualism.

Contradictions

Eichberg (2010b) explains that contradictions and points of tension are key elements of a competitive society. Such tension was illustrated through the comments participants made about diet. Ellie, for example, explained that everyone she knew who was involved in athletics, especially women, dieted and monitored their food intake in order to maximise their performance. Thus, Ellie ate specialised meals before and after training, and also ate to aid the body’s recovery with a heavy emphasis on avoiding fats. Ellie explained that limiting food intake was necessary to retain the level of body fat, required by Athletics New Zealand. According to Ellie, the only exceptions to this dietary regime are male athletes - within Ellie’s experience the only athletes who can eat what they want, when they want and still perform “exceptionally” are males. This was attributed to their gender; male athletes and their dietary habits were just “being boys”.

Other participants supported Ellie in her categorisation of female and male athletes. Grace, Georgina and Emily, for example, explained that in their experience males who played sport dieted less and worried about their diet less than females. Additional participant comments expressed the belief that not only can men “just eat and train” but they can also eat to “bulk up” when they play a sport, often with the purpose of bettering their level of achievement. It was unclear if participants attributed this to biology or metabolism or if there was an acknowledgement that gendered discourses were at work. Bobby, Sam A and Oliver all claimed that as males they do not feel pressure to eat for the sport or diet - Sam A reported that “if you play the sport to have fun then you don’t care about diet”. In addition to identifying differences in male and female dietary

---

1 Ellie is a national representative for New Zealand in her discipline of 200m sprints. As such, her participation at this elite level is reliant upon her staying within the Athletics New Zealand regulations for weight.
regimes, focus group participants recognised the existence of contradictions in the relationship between diet for achievement and diet for fitness. Grace, Georgina and Emily explained that they had known young women who, while trying to re-create an idealised lean body (Orbach 2001), were not giving their body appropriate nutrition to carry out their sport of choice.

Eichberg (1995, 2003) explains that within the sports trialectic diet is identified as being integral to achievement sport and the corresponding body culture. Diet thus helps to inscribe a sporting body for the purpose of achievement. Diet may be adjusted to affect muscle-mass, recovery time and energy levels, all factors which contribute to performance (Eichberg 1995b, 2003). An example of such achievement is evident in consideration of well-known Australian sports men’s use of supplements as appeared in Klerck (2014). The article was notable as it links specific physical traits to specific sports, providing a clear example of the inscription of sporting bodies. For example, strength is associated with rugby players, mental sharpness with professional racing drivers and oxygen circulation with Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) fighters (Klerck 2014). Additionally, through discussions of supplement usage and dietary adjustment, nutritional components of food and supplements are clearly identified as aiding in attaining the desired physical characteristics for the sport. As noted, protein is highlighted for muscle mass which is suggested is necessary for all sports people but rugby players and triathletes in particular (Klerck 2014). The manipulation of energy levels and of recovery periods are also of concern and it is argued that particular nutrients such as creatine and foods such as fish-oils and Diet Coke may aid these processes (Klerck 2014).

The threads of neo-liberal achievement culture find clear expression in this feature due to the linkage of specific sports to particular physical or mental traits - specialisation is a key feature of modern neo-liberal achievement orientated body culture (Eichberg 1998). The use of supplements is intimately connected to improved performance from the athletes, with the discourse around the bodies of the athletes being concerned with providing the body with the ingredients for what is measured as satisfactory performance,
Conclusion

As has been shown, the adjustment of diet towards increasing performance and enhancing competitiveness aligns strongly with achievement body culture, neo-liberalism, industrial society and competitive democracy (Eichberg 1998, 2003). Despite the participants asserting they only followed a healthy diet and, with one exception, did not modify their diet for achievement purposes, neo-liberal achievement culture was evident within their statements. Discourses of healthy diets were also present in focus group discussion and magazine content. Participants in the focus groups were more likely to relate to notions of a healthy diet as opposed to a diet tailored for achievement. While this trend was also evident in magazine features, the magazine features did recognise achievement discourses by aligning a healthy diet with better performance outcomes (Four Four Two 2014: Men’s Health 2014). The presence of these discourses links to both ideas of a welfare society and sport-for-all, and that health is a major pre-occupation within competitive capitalism (Eichberg 2011). Emotion was the major hallmark of body experience and also provided a catalyst for tensions within the data - the desire to achieve but the desire for a slim, fashionable body; the enjoyment of food but the perceived need to control consumption for achievement purposes; and, guilt concerning over-consumption of food in contrast to enjoyment of food.

This chapter has shown the important role that diet plays within the process of inscribing a sporting body. Food is not only a vehicle by which achievement may be ‘tweaked’, it is also a means by which a state of health may be achieved. It must also be noted that food carries with it a close connection to emotions (Probyn 2003). In particular, this has been shown through emotions such as enjoyment, guilt and shame interrupted the discourses of diet for achievement and health evident in focus group commentary and magazine content. This chapter has also begun the exploration of the relationship between the sporting body and weight - a key finding within this research - through the use of food to control body composition. This practice of weight management which is so closely interwoven with the theme of diet, is the subject of the following chapter.
Chapter Five: Weight management

Weight management was the defining way sporting bodies were inscribed both by focus group participants and through magazine content. All focus group participants listed weight as a concern either through the regulation of body composition for sport or the use of sport to lose weight for aesthetic or health reasons. The pre-dominance of weight as a central issue also extended to sports and fitness magazines, with features concerning the control of body weight in evidence in all the magazines that were investigated. Participant responses and magazine content provide illustrations of two discourses of body culture and society: that of the healthy body and its role in capitalist industry, economic expansion, competitive democracy and authority; and, that of the fashionable body and its relationship to consumerism, the material, and the welfare state (Eichberg 2007). Discourses concerning weight loss, and their emphasis on the value of achieving an efficient, lean body through individual effort and discipline provide a link between body culture and neo-liberalism (Maguire 2008).

According to Eichberg’s (1994; Bale and Sang 1996) model of the sports trialectic, weight management finds expression in fitness culture, achievement culture and body experience (see Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1: Trialectic of weight management
As indicated in Figure 5.1, both body composition and discourses concerning those who do not visibly participate in sport are grouped in achievement culture. Both of these elements rely on measurement, which is inherent in the practice of the monitoring of body composition, and observation, which relies on visible participation (Eichberg 1994, 2003). The culture of personal responsibility and the body project are identified as aspects of fitness culture. This is due to the discourses of health and hygiene that run through the quest to create and maintain a ‘healthy’, fit and lean body (Eichberg 2010a). Body experience, as expressed in Figure 5.1, is the bodily representation of civic engagement, participatory democracy and community. Emotion plays a major role in this branch of the trialectic via positive feelings about weight and the look of one’s body. Conversely, shame at weight gain and frustration at being ‘too big’ to play sport are also part of body experience culture. Feelings of pleasure, joy, guilt, fear are part of body experience but provide contradiction through their invisibility in the data for this research.

Fitness culture, achievement culture and body experience are not discrete and, as indicated by the arrows on Figure 5.1, these body cultures overlap and are open to influence by wider societal discourses. For example, the participant/non-participant, lean/fat binaries expressed by participants is evident within the culture of achievement as well as within fitness culture. Furthermore, while sport is a major vehicle for the body project and culture of personal responsibility, these discourses do not come from sport itself; rather, they are discourses which have infiltrated sport from wider social, political and economic transformations, as is evident through the skills and the contradictions which trouble discussions of weight management and sport.

**Control of body composition**

In the most explicit example of weight management as key for achievement, Ellie recounted how Athletics New Zealand constantly measures the body fat percentage of its athletes to ensure that they fit within a “tiny” range in order to be “competitive”. Ellie justified this by explaining that “any extra fat that you carry round slows you down immediately … it impacts severely on your ability to race”. The ongoing monitoring and measuring Ellie experiences parallels the
centrality of observation and calculation to achievement culture (Eichberg 2003). This concern with body weight was reiterated by other participants who competed in different sports. Georgina and Grace both competed as lightweight rowers, and were required to watch their weight in order to stay under the regulation weight of fifty-nine kilograms. Like Ellie, Georgina and Grace asserted that the higher level at which rowers competed the more emphasis was placed on body fat content as opposed to body weight.

Weight control was also an issue that received significant coverage in sports and fitness magazines. In one such article, the amount of energy burned during activities was identified to determine whether ‘achievement culture’ had been reached. Soccer, tennis, netball, squash and beach volleyball are listed as sports which burn high numbers of kilojoules and, as such, represent achievement culture. For example, the material on tennis explains that “a vigorous 60-minute singles game can burn up to 1,760kJ, not to mention improve bone strength, hand-eye coordination and cardiovascular fitness” (Women’s Fitness 2014: 1). Similarly, those who play soccer benefit from kilojoule loss: “last the whole 60 minutes, without a red card, and you could see 2,940kJ up in smoke” (Women’s Fitness 2014: 1).

The idea of ‘fat’ slowing a sports person down was elaborated upon by Nai, who explained that in her experience playing social soccer she was only ever chosen to play goalkeeper. Nai argued this was because of her weight - it was accepted that goalkeepers do not require a great deal of speed and “fat slows you down”. Nai’s statements show evidence of an achievement body culture based on fat/uncompetitive, lean/competitive binaries. Comments about weight management also provided evidence of fitness body culture, identified the importance of personal responsibility, and reinforced the pre-dominance of notions of health within competitive society. Emotion was also evident in Nai’s comments - evident through her tone of voice and the recounting of her efforts to lose weight - with feelings of guilt and shame accompanying the belief that ‘fat slows you down’. Within a competitive society focused upon industry, this ‘slowing down’ becomes a moral issue as sluggishness is anathema to progress and efficient expansion.
Weight as a ‘moral’ issue

As noted previously, ‘fat’ as ‘slow’ is anathema to not only efficient and industrialised societies but also to capitalist societies fixated upon health. This leads to weight becoming not just a health or achievement issue but a moral issue (Zanker and Gard 2008). Shane asserted that playing social sport, and visibly marking his body out as a sporting body, is a key component of controlling his weight. He claimed that being able to control his weight is very important to him and any increase in weight would result in disappointment and the ceasing of his sporting activities. When presented with the question pertaining to the notion of weight control, Hugh argued that mental attitude is key - any laziness is “your fault” and being “diverted” by “bad habits”, is a sign of weakness. Marie made similar assertions about weight and individual motivation: “It’s a horrible example but if you see a fat person walking down the road, they are probably amazing at rugby, but they don’t have the ideal body to play sports and you automatically think they are fat because they are lazy or they are fat because they don’t want to play sports”. The comments of these participants indicate a general belief that positioned the overweight non-sporting bodies in opposition to lean sporting bodies. It became apparent that non-sporting bodies were as much inscribed by a lack of participation as sporting bodies were inscribed by participation. As such, the individualisation of fitness and the culture of personal responsibility for health and bodily appearance within competitive capitalism was evident (Eichberg 2010: Maguire 2008).

Men’s Health online magazine provided similar example of the focus on decreasing weight and sport. For example, an entry in the “8 week belly off!” programme proffered by the magazine described a former personal trainer’s battle with weight. The article begins with the subject describing his previous exercise habits, which included playing soccer, American football and athletics (Men’s Health 2013). This penchant for physicality culminated in a career as a personal trainer. After suffering burnout, however, the personal trainer stopped all activity, changed his diet and thus ‘put on weight’. The remainder of the article describes in detail how he the lost weight and how he continues to keep it off (Men’s Health 2013).
The presence of achievement and fitness culture comes through in several ways in this article. Firstly, in conjunction with achievement culture, weight loss is positioned as something one can achieve given sufficient willpower and effort. Secondly, weight loss results and success may be measured. In regards to fitness culture, weight loss and, in particular, weight loss through physical activity, sports included, is positioned as healthy. Correspondingly, not taking part in physical activity is positioned as unhealthy. Furthermore, the individual is presented as the primary agent for establishing healthy exercise habits and achieving associated weight loss. Body experience may also be identified in this discussion as weight loss is presented as a goal which, when achieved, provides a sense of wellbeing and pride in reaching a set goal and obtaining a leaner body.

In contradiction to such positive emotions, shame may emerge in response to both health and achievement discourses. For example, the fitness trainer felt sufficient shame at his physical condition that he chose to modify his body. Similarly, shame is present in Shane and Hugh’s comments. Shane explained that if he perceived himself to be overweight, he would experience sufficient shame to cease sporting activities. Hugh invoked the same emotion by shaming those who he considers overweight - he dubbed them morally weak and blamed them for their laziness throughout the discussions surrounding weight control and sporting activity.

Those who did not participate in a sport provided a focus for the judgement of focus group participants and article writers. There was unanimous agreement amongst participants that sportspeople were leaner than non-sportspeople. In addition, participants believed that sportspeople displayed increased levels of determination, a lack of laziness, an increased quality of life, longer life expectancy, and a healthier body image. This discourse positioned sport as a focus for ‘healthy’ activities and outcomes. Moreover, notions associated with the health and hygiene of fitness sporting culture where very much in evidence in participants’ sporting experiences (Eichberg 2010a). There was, however, evidence in these statements of sentiments more far-reaching than health or achievement. There are linkages to ethics and morality, wider societal values and a vision of bodies as mirroring a healthy society.
Sport as a vehicle for weight loss was also a key aspect of focus group discussion. With concern over the ‘obesity epidemic’, physical inactivity has been blamed for increased weight and sport has been cited as a method by which weight may be reduced (Guthman 2012; World Health Organisation 2010). Thus, discourses of health, weight loss and sport become entangled. Providing evidence for this, Hugh argued that he originally began to exercise to lose weight but now exercises to release energy because “if energy stays inside you, it turns to fat”. This notion was reiterated through the suggestion of other participants that a body that did not fit within the body culture of a particular sport was “wrong”. Such bodies become othered through deviation from the hegemonic body idealised within a particular sport. These assertions link to the culture of personal responsibility inherent within contemporary fitness body culture, as well as adhering to ideology about the value of the individualised, commercialised market-orientated society (Eichberg 2010a; Maguire 2008). Thus, as sporting bodies have taken individual responsibility for their health and wellbeing by participating in sport (Maguire 2008), those who do not appear to participate in sport, that is, those without the lean body participants attributed to participation in sport, are not part of that culture of personal responsibility and are therefore othered (Eichberg 2010a). Furthermore, threads of achievement body culture and the ‘It’ relation are evident in that if an overweight body is not observed as participating in sport, then it becomes othered.

**Notion of skills**

The focus group discussion of body weight was accompanied by comments on sports and skills. It was argued by participants that having an ideal body for a sport was important but that in certain circumstances a good skill base was as influential on performance. Thus, the notion of the ideal, lean sporting body becomes troubled through the idea of ‘skills’. Jonas noted that in his experience when a new basketball player joins a team, their ability is judged purely on their physiology as opposed to their skill base. He noted if “a tall, athletic, black guy” \(^2\) who fits into the corporeal stereotype of a good basketball player joined a team...

\(^2\) Given the focus of this thesis it is not possible to explore the wealth of material pertaining to the issue of the deeply entrenched racism that exists within sport. For material pertaining to this topic see, for example, Bale and Cronin (2003), Jarvie (1991) and Solomos and Back (1997).
the existing members would be excited simply because of his body type. Such an emotional response is based on bodily expectations not observed skills or abilities. Jonas went on to say that he has observed many players without the ideal basketball physique but whose vision, ball skills and ability to work within a team make them a valuable player. Sam B and Olivia also noted that in hockey a player with a short, heavy physique would be seen as not a worthy addition to the team and other players would see their own bodies as having an edge. Olivia, however, explained that she has often been surprised at the skill level and technical ability of those she has initially seen and perceived as not having an ideal body for hockey.

The statements recounted above link strongly to the inherent contradiction which Eichberg (1994, 2003, 2010a) claims exists at the heart of achievement body culture and the corresponding ‘It’ body (Kaufmann 1970; Kohanski 1975). That is, the objective ‘It’ body at the core of achievement body culture becomes nullified if it is not observable. In this example, Jonas, Olivia and Sam B recount idealised bodies for their sports. It is noted, however, that despite a player being observed to seemingly have an ideal basketball or hockey body, if they do not have the requisite skills to achieve in the sport then their body, which appears to be focused on achievement, becomes contradictory.

**Contradictions**

The notion of weight management, along with dieting, proved to be a contentious issue within focus group discussions. Thus contradictions and points of tension, a key facet of contemporary, competitive neo-liberal societies, became evident as participants explained their views and recounted their experiences. As recounted earlier, Ellie’s experience within athletics shows that a high priority is placed upon having a lean body for the purpose of being competitive. In other words, an athlete’s body cannot compete unless it conforms to the regulations for fat percentage set out by governing bodies. This argument sits firmly within the culture of an achieving body and its focus on measurement and observation (Eichberg 2003; Kohanski 1975).
This notion of body fat being measured solely for the purpose of aiding achievement was challenged by distance athlete Hugh. Hugh argued that “if somebody wins the sprints … they are not going to say in actual fact you need to put a bit more muscle on, you are too thin. They are not going to do that”. Experiences recounted during the group are based in contemporary athletics culture; Hugh based his responses on experiences from the 1960’s. Hugh’s comment suggests that if a ‘body’ is already achieving at a high level, then further inscription of this body should remain at a minimum. Also implicit within this statement is an element of fitness culture and subjectivity - the monitoring of body fat is not a necessary element of achievement, rather, it may be a subjective judgement made by regulating bodies.

The ‘It’ body is evident in the above discussion just as it was in discussions surrounding diet. Thus, echoes of the efficient, competitive, authority-focused ‘It’ society, and the winner-takes-all competitive strain of democracy are present. The body is again regarded as observable and objective, as exemplified by Ellie's experience of her body fat content being monitored. In addition, as the debates centred on body fat content as opposed to body weight there appeared a reliance on a biological and purely physical definition of the body (Cole 2000) as opposed to a more holistic vision of the body as socially produced and embedded in culture (Bale and Sang 1996; Eichberg 2010a). This reinforces the importance of the objective, achieving body as opposed to being-as-a-whole as the locus of experience. Hugh, however, does point to what he perceives to be a tension within the ‘It’ body and its relationship to weight management. This relates to his questioning the need for athletics bodies to be lean; Hugh suggests that this perceived need is in fact a subjective judgement made on the part of governing sports bodies and that if a ‘body’ is already achieving within a particular body culture, and thus already inscribed a successful, then it does not need to be further inscribed within that culture.
Conclusion

The notion of weight management within sport links to the achievement aspect of sport as exemplified by the sports trialectic (Bale 1994; Eichberg 1995b, 2003). Focus group participants shared the belief that sporting bodies are lean and thus competitive. This reflects aspects of competitive democracy and efficient, industrial societies in which slow and uncompetitive elements are negated (Guthman and DuPuis 2006; Zanker and Gard 2008). Cultures of fitness were also present through the predominance of the contemporary ‘body project’ in which sport plays a major role (Orbach 2009; Sassatelli 1999; Valentine 2001; Woodward 2009). This hints at an increased focus on sport as a mechanism by which a lean, healthy body may be achieved (Maguire 2008; Zanker and Gard 2008). Eichberg (2007) notes health is an overriding concern for competitive societies, and fitness culture may also be extended to encompass notions of welfare, individualism and privatisation. Body experience was also extant with analogies between community and participatory democracy. The major presence of this was through emotions of happiness at physical appearance but also shame associated with corporeality. Emotions also highlight points of tension, in particular the emotion of shame.

In conclusion, this chapter has highlighted a major marker of the sporting body; a body with low fat content. Due this predominance of the leaness as key to a sporting body within participant commentary and magazine content, it has been gleaned weight management is a major method by which sporting bodies come to be inscribed. Not only were shades of concerns over performance and health evident within this chapter but the notions of weight management and leanness provided a major point of intersection between societal discourses and the sporting body. In particular the view that, with concerns over the increasing BMI of populations, both the retaining and shedding of weight through physical activity becomes a moral issue shows a clear relationship between the inscription of sporting bodies and society. The third and final major theme of this research moves on from bodily modification to analyse ways in which individuals dress the body.
Chapter Six: Dress

Dress is a means by which bodies become inscribed by sport. Examples drawn from focus group discussions and features from sport and fitness magazines expose the centrality of dress, and clothes, to corporeal inscription (see Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1: Dress trialectic

Figure 6.1 displays the wearing of uniforms, ‘dressing for success’ and clothing practicality may be attributed to the presence of neo-liberal achievement sporting culture. Uniforms are a way of quantifying and providing an element of visibility, a key component of achievement culture (Eichberg 1994). Dressing practically also defines achievement body culture through links between practicality and objectivity; for example, Eichberg (2010b) reports efficient societies are focused on industry and practicality.

Aspects of dress may also be grouped under the branch of fitness body culture (see Figure 6.1). For example, people may advertise their sporting preference through the clothes they wear. This practice, such as wearing the shirt of a favourite team, expresses subjectivity and individuality, key components of making the decision to wear such clothing (Eichberg 2003). Another aspect attributed to inscription via fitness body culture is the statement ‘running gear’ -
focus group participants debated why clothing by well-known sporting brands were dominant in sporting practice. Thus, in the context of a discussion about jogging, respondents mentioned the subjective judgement associated with choosing desirable running gear and personal taste as to the style of clothing chosen (Eichberg 2003). A significant element of fitness culture, individual agency aligns with notions of proportional democracy and welfare. Such agency operates, however, within an ‘I’ society characterised by commercialism, privatisation, and the consumption of global sportswear brands.

Finally body experience, the realm of dialogue between bodies and ‘fun’, is in evidence in discussions of dress. Uniforms, such as a school team uniform or a referee’s uniform, may also be worn with pride and wearing the items of an expensive sports-wear manufacturer may also instil a sense of pride. Body experience sits alongside participatory democracy, voluntarism and community. In particular, pride in clothing encourages a sense of community between others wearing the same teams’ shirt or who are sponsored by the same brand.

**Uniforms**

Participants who were attending secondary school claimed that uniforms played an important role in inscribing their sporting bodies in relation to achievement. Rowers Georgina and Grace, for example, noted that during national secondary school competitions if competitors were not wearing school colours they could not take part in any races. Indeed students were not able to compete if uniforms were not matching or aligning with school colours down to “if you’re not wearing the right hat”. Another participant, Shane, suggested that he not only wore a uniform for his job as a referee but he chose to wear soccer shirts as a ‘uniform’ in his leisure time to show his support for the game, marking himself out as a ‘soccer body’. Shane is thus emotionally tied to the sport of soccer and to a specific team as well as ‘advertising’ the sport to others.

Clothing also appeared to play an explicit role in the shaping of achieving bodies. It was noted by Ellie that the clothing athletes were required to wear during meets influenced how they shaped their bodies. She argued as the uniform for women was a tight and ‘not very forgiving’ two-piece, there was added pressure for
female athletes to monitor their weight. There was also an emotional element to the uniform with the large amount of bare skin exposed by the uniform, identifying those bodies which looked ‘good’ in the outfit as having an edge on those who felt self-conscious in the uniform. Ellie added that when an athlete looks ‘good’ in their racing outfit they immediately have a competitive edge over the other competitors who equate looking ‘good’ in the racing outfit with a high level of performance. Athlete’s bodies were, therefore, being shaped not just for the purpose of competition but also to look acceptable in the clothing in which they were required to race. Thus, the body culture in athletics contained elements of achievement through both the drive to win but also to achieve an acceptable body that looks ‘good’ in the required racing outfit.

‘Looking successful’

This important role clothing plays in the inscription of sporting bodies perhaps most eloquently expressed by Sam B. He explained the clothing he wore and how he looked on the sports field was just as important as how he looked and what he wore in social situations. In an example of how he saw clothing as key to the inscription of sporting bodies, he argued that he could always tell a person who plays soccer because “they wear Nike or Adidas baggyish pants and a training top and Nike or Adidas flat-foot shoes”. It was suggested by Sam B that maybe this was professionalism or an attempt to look professional. Marie argued that there was a discourse at work within sport which emphasised the notion that in order to be a successful sportsperson one had to look like a successful sportsperson. This, she explained, involved wearing clothing from sports-clothing brands with a global reputation and a history of sponsoring successful athletes. Thus, looking successful not only included body shape but also clothing signified the continuation of a tradition of success. Olivia echoed this statement, arguing that she felt that sports-people will not only purposefully shape their body to maintain the ‘look’ of an athlete, copying the bodies of athletes within the media, but they will also use their clothing for the same function. She claimed that “there must be a reason people buy Underarmour [a line of thermal and compression wear] and other expensive brands”; she attributed this to athletes attempting to show fellow sportspeople and coaches that they are serious about their sport.
The importance of sportswear to sports people was exemplified in an advertising supplement that appeared in the March 2014 edition of the Australian edition of *Men’s Health*. This glossy supplement was promoting the clothing and shoes of Asics, a Japanese athletic equipment company. For example, the supplement advises readers that Asics running shoes would help the wearer reach their goals (see Figure 6.2).

![Asics Advertisement](image)

**Figure 6.2**: Selected text from Asics advertisement (Asics 2014).

By highlighting the importance of ‘goal-reaching’, the text positions Asics shoes as an exemplar of neo-liberal achievement body culture (Eichberg 2003). The values placed on establishing a goal and working towards achieving the goal mirrors Eichberg’s (2003, 2010a) argument body cultures of achievement are those which focus on measurement and competition. Along with this discourse of goal reaching, other key words used within the advertisement included ‘comfort’, ‘plush-ride’ and ‘run efficiently’. The discourse of running efficiently expresses a body culture of achievement (Eichberg 2010a) and associated reliance on neo-liberal notions of efficiency and competitive democracy. Highly subjective issues of comfort and a plush-ride are, however, illustrative of a fitness body culture (Eichberg 2003).
Supplement material advertising Asics’ running shoes for women differed in both the nature of the shoes concerned - women’s shoes were in varying shades of pink and purple which contrasted with the predominantly darker coloured men’s shoes - and in the language and the body cultures which were evident (see Figure 6.3).

**Figure 6.3**: Example of the colour scheme for a women’s Asics shoe (Asics 2014)

Rather than claiming the shoes would help the runner achieve their goals, the ability of the shoes to adapt to specific needs of the wearer was the focus of the piece. Thus, in addition to the pre-occupation with comfort and plushness which was shown in the men’s shoe feature, there was an additional focus on preserving a natural foot shape. The focus on the ability of Asics shoes to provide comfort and adapt to the needs of individual wearers points to the presence of a fitness body culture. The subjective notions of comfort, a plush ride and natural foot shape link to fitness culture as these words are presented as synonymous with a healthy running style. Despite no obvious references to discourses of achievement, there is an implicit link between a comfortable, healthy shoe, and an improvement in performance. Thus the supplement illustrates the connectedness of achievement and fitness body cultures (Eichberg 2003, 2010a).
The Asics supplement also exposed the importance of specialisation by identifying different shoes for different sports. The suitability of specific shoes with specific features for specific sports is indicative of both specialisation of the body and the presence of rules governing not just the performance of sport but what, the company asserts, an athlete must wear while participating in sport (Eichberg 1998, 2003). These are key facets of neo-liberal achievement culture and also evidence of the commercialisation of bodily specialisation as revenue may be gleaned from creating specialised shoes as opposed to creating generalised sports-gear. To reinforce this, a list of athletes who are sponsored by Asics was provided with sports represented including rugby league, rugby, cricket, soccer and tennis. This list not only indicates that these athletes have a level of achievement significant enough to be sponsored by Asics, but that Asics is able to provide sports equipment pertaining to a diverse range of sports.

**Sponsorship and branding**

Sponsorship was a topic which generated much discussion amongst focus group participants. For example, Nia described how a friend of hers is a professional rugby league player who plays for the Sydney Roosters. This players family wears supporters gear from the club because it allows them to make an explicit statement of support for the club and their son and brother. The second example of sponsorship was provided by Nai, and concerns her brother who recently moved to France to play rugby as a professional. When in France Nai’s brother signed a sponsorship agreement with a sports clothing brand. Nai explained that since signing a sponsorship contract her brother always wears the sponsored clothing as it is a sign of success both for him and for the company as they had found a suitable ‘body’ through which to advertise their goods. Athletics provided an example of sponsorship as Ellie recounted the experience of her friend who recently entered into a relationship with Asics and now all his clothing and equipment is provided by the company. Ellie’s friend had become Asics’ “walking advertisement” despite the company having no input into his training programme. Ellie’s comments are interesting as they bring to light questions as to how much impact sports-specific clothing has on performance.
Contradictions

Like diet and weight management, dress can be aligned with achievement sporting culture and the corresponding ‘It’ body. Shane, for example, claims that he wears soccer shirts as an act of inscribing his body as that of a soccer player - others may observe his body and he is able to influence the judgement observers make about his sporting preferences. In Shane’s experiences as a referee, clothing also plays a role as his referees uniform is used to visibly demarcate his body, identity, position of power and role within the game as different from the players. The use of uniforms in sport, as discussed earlier, also aligns with this notion of visibility. In the statements of secondary school students it was noted that uniforms are used in their experiences to mark their bodies as bodies belonging to a certain institutions, such as their school when competing. As such, the achievement of their body becomes part of the achievement body culture in their school. A similar observation may be made about the connection between sponsorship and sport. Participants made it clear that sponsorship played a large role in the relationship between clothing and sport - through a sports clothing company sponsoring an athlete the achievements of the athlete become part of the achievement culture of that brand.

As with diet and weight management, contradictions exist with the ‘It’ body culture. One example of this is shown with comments concerning looking like a successful athlete. While the desire to achieve is rooted in achievement sport and its corresponding culture of producing results, the decision about what looks like a successful athlete may be considered a subjective one, relating to fitness sporting culture and an emotional argument aligning with body experience. A similar case may also be made for the discussions of sponsorship. An athlete may be seen as worthy of sponsorship, as evident in Nai’s anecdote about her brother; however, what a successful athlete and thus model of an achievement-orientated sports person looks like is subjective. This vision may vary from manufacturer to manufacturer according to the views of the designers and marketers that work for the company. In broadening the notion of body culture outside the parameters of sports, it may be concluded that those who work within sports clothing manufacturers may have their own cultures of the body or may relate themselves more strongly to the body culture in one sport over another. This association with
specific body cultures or the manufacturing of new cultures are expressed through the choice of athlete (body) used to promote the company’s goods.

As an integral aspect of the body culture surrounding sport, clothing occupies a noteworthy element in this analysis. It does not, however, correspond neatly with either achievement sporting culture or fitness sporting culture. As discussed previously, clothing is linked to achievement culture through the desire to look like a successful sportsperson while the judgement as to what a successful sportsperson looks like is subjective. Two participants, Oliver and Sam, both played for their school’s First Fifteen rugby team and this required the wearing of a suit or ‘number ones’ to school on game-days. They both noted that this, while not signifying achievement as the school does not have a reputation for rugby, changed their behaviour. This change echoed the pride they had in themselves, their team, their sport and their school, and they adjusted their actions to match this emotion. This anecdote exemplifies the reproduction of values and subjectivities which are central tenets of fitness sport (Eichberg 2003).

This dominance of subjectivity in Sam and Oliver’s discussion about their ‘number ones’ also links to another element of fitness sport; the ‘I’ relation or the ‘I’ body. Drawing on the work of Buber (Kaufman 1970; Kohanski 1975) and applying it to sporting bodies, Eichberg (2010) asserts that the subjective ‘I’ body can only exist in relation to either the ‘It’ - objectivity - or the ‘We’ - collectivity - and only within verbal exchanges. This statement also provides evidence of the ‘I’ - individualistic aspects of sport. Both Sam and Oliver express their changes in behaviour and identity through relating their experience to the ‘We’, in this example the collective elements of their school, their rugby team or the sport of rugby in general, and to the objective ‘It’, in this case their body. Also these relations are not evident until they have been verbalised as they did so within the forum of the focus group (Eichberg 2003). This dominance of the individualistic ‘I’ links to arguments concerning the presence of an ‘I’ society, one focused on privatisation and the individual as well a proportional democracy, again the hallmark of individualisation.
Conclusion

In the statements of participants it became clear dress played a key part in the inscription of their sporting bodies with clothing also a key aspect of inscription in the magazines analysed. The most notable ways sporting bodies were inscribed through clothing included the use of uniforms used to mark the body out as belonging to a certain sport or a certain role. Understandings of practicality were also expressed by focus group participants. There was also evidence that clothing is used to appear professional and a ‘serious athlete’ or to visibly align the body with a certain sport. Discussions also touched upon the role sponsorship plays in the clothing worn by athletes, with a pertinent example of this being discourses around shoes. Emotion was also present in discussion. As an example of this, clothing is used to emotionally align a body with a team or a sport, and or to express pride in ones team through wearing a uniform or team shirt. Finally, emotion is a contradictory element, both bridging achievement and fitness and bringing achievement and fitness into conflict.

To conclude, it has been shown clothing plays a major role in inscribing sporting bodies. Departing from concerns over leanness and weight, clothing does not clearly align with aiding performance or health. Instead, appearance was at the core of discussions. It was noted that clothing can be used to instil feelings of pride, demarcate bodies as well as create an ‘aura’ of professionalism and gain an ‘edge’ over opponents. Thus, it is evident that clothing does play as key a role in inscribing a sporting body as the diet and weight management that bear the hallmarks of health and competitiveness. This chapter draws to a close discussions of the tools by which sporting bodies come to be inscribed with the next chapter examining the means by which bodies come to be inscribed by the practice of sport. Forces such as the dominance of ideals of achievement, the prevalence of fitness practices, the pre-eminence of sports-people in the media and the sharing of knowledge between sporting bodies provide key points of discussion.
Chapter Seven: Through what means do bodies come to be inscribed by sport?

Through the previous chapters the modes through which sporting bodies become inscribed have been discussed. Three major elements of inscription have thus been identified: diet, dress and weight management. It is important to note, however, that the means by which these bodies become inscribed, and the culture through which these elements of inscription become noteworthy, is also worthy of investigation. The focus of this chapter is on the channels through which the body cultures of sport which emphasise diet, dress and weight management, are created, maintained and expanded. Aspects to be discussed include; the culture of achievement that is synonymous with sport, in particular the role of stereotypes and specialisation in sport, as well as the objectification of the sporting body; the dominance of discourses concerning the benefits of physical activity, sport included; the presence of sporting bodies in the media; and, the workings of sporting culture in the creation of habits and behaviours.

The dominance of achievement

One of the means of inscription discussed by focus group participants was the notion of achievement. As outlined in Chapter One, it is the role that achievement and competition play that delineates sport from other forms of physical activity (Guttman 1978; Møller 2003; Tangen 1997). The presence of competitive elements in sport streamline, homogenise and normalise a body; that is, the individual ignores his or her needs and adapts to the techniques required to create a competitive body within the culture of the sport in which it is participating (Eichberg 2011). This body culture of achievement again echoes the ‘It’ body, the body which is objective and observable, and the ‘It’ society, dominated by competitive democracy, efficiency and industry. As has been shown, however, there exists a series of contradictions which calls into question the validity of the use of the ‘It’ body and society (Kohanski 1975). These contradictions include the need for the performance of the ‘It’ body to be visible, hence the reliance on observation and measurement.
It was noted by all members of the focus groups that there was a specific body associated with specific sports. As Ellie explained, a sportsperson “wouldn’t get there ... if his [sic] body didn’t conform to the body that was needed”. It was unanimously agreed that sportspeople were predominantly lean but with variations in height and muscle mass across sports. Perceptions cited by focus group participants included the belief that soccer players were smaller than rugby players, while basketball players were taller than both soccer or rugby players. It was noted by participants that there was considerable variation within sports which reinforces disparity within the body culture of the sport. This hints at the existence of multiple body cultures within a single sport. Participants noted that within rowing there are lightweight rowers while within soccer it was suggested that defenders were generally bigger than forwards. Ellie asserted that when a child begins in athletics, it is their body which allows a coach to determine whether they will be a sprinter, middle or long distance runner, a thrower or a jumper. She asserted that enjoyment or personal preference come second to their body composition and which branch of athletics their body composition matches.

Despite this degree of variation within sporting bodies, participants felt the element of achievement stemmed from the presence of a culture of competition. They considered the methods of inscription such as dress, diet and weight management to be vehicles by which achievement or success could be shaped, shown and maximised. Annalea, for example, explained that she kept her body close to the ideal she felt was needed within the body culture of netball with the purpose of keeping an active role within the team and to avoid being “benched”.

There was an also agreement amongst focus group participants that the sporting body was an object through which a sports person can achieve results. The inscription of the sporting body through diet, fitness and weight management are methods by which these achievements can be made. There was, however, conjecture between the groups as to how achievement sport encourages inscription. Some participants suggested that as self-identified social sportspeople, achievement-induced inscription was not an issue for them. They did expect the influence of competition to be much greater for professional sportspeople as the pressure to produce results would be significant. This links to the notion of an
achievement body culture as participants noted social sports body culture did not emphasise achievement, however, they anticipated there would be greater pressure to achieve results in professional sporting body cultures. This also provides evidence for the presence of contradictions between cultures within sport and also for extension beyond a dualism between sport and non-sport, achievement and health.

There was also agreement amongst participants that professionalism and competition induces greater inscription of the sporting body due to the financial aspects of professional sport culture and the pressure to achieve in competition from which this derives. Again, it was suggested by participants that professionalism would lead to increased inscription. For those who played sport within a secondary school, this also added another layer to their statements. They asserted being within a school provided a cushion of the schools’ culture between their sport and discourses about achievement from wider body cultures within society. There was, however, discussion about how a school’s reputation in one particular sport would lead to pressure to develop an idealised body associated with that sport. For example, Sam A affirmed that as his school does not have a reputation for rugby the level of inscription his body has received relating to achievement is minimal. As such, training regimes and dietary adjustment were not a part of his sporting practice. He then went on to assert that he expected the level of inscription of rugby bodies at a school with a reputation for rugby, such as Hamilton Boys High School, to be much greater.

**Discourses of fitness**

Another method of inscription for sporting bodies that was noted by focus group participants was the presence of discourses concerning the health benefits of physical activity. As expressed in the introduction to this report, sport acts as a channel for societal goals and also functions as a mechanism for the reiteration of binaries at a global scale, thus acting as a mirror for society. During the early twenty-first century the rise of what has been dubbed the ‘obesity epidemic’ has increased the focus on benefits provided by regular physical activity, sport included (Maguire 2008; Zanker and Gard 2008). As such, sport becomes a channel through which discourses of health and the ‘importance’ of movement
may be channelled (Zanker and Gard 2008). This argument was echoed within the focus groups, particularly with mention made of the role physical education (P.E.) plays in schools. An illustration of this was provided by Marie who commented that at school one is made to take part in P.E. classes even against ones wishes. This statement links to Eichberg’s (2003) argument that sport can act as a conduit for values and in this instance it is the school passing on the notion that physical activity and sport are beneficial, healthy activities (Zanker and Gard 2008). This also links to the notion of a culture of ‘personal responsibility’ and sport as a moral endeavour (Maguire 2008). Expanding this to a wider scale there exists a connection to an ‘I’ society which is focused on the individualisation, the privatisation and the commercialisation of health. The use of sport as a conduit for values of discipline and good citizenship is symptomatic of the focus within proportional democracy on the individual as the primary agent for societal welfare (Eichberg 2010b).

The statements of participants also suggested an emotional element to fitness and the culture of ‘personal responsibility’. Rene argued that adhering to a healthy diet and getting regular exercise helps improves a person’s sporting performance as well as their quality of life. This sense of “looking good, feeling good”, he asserted, encourages more sporting activity and more success. Similarly, Hugh argued that individuals were the keepers of their own health and as such mental attitude is key for him - exercise is beneficial and becoming “diverted” by “bad habits” is a sign of personal weakness. This line of argument was followed by Jonas, who stated that he enjoyed playing sport as he feels positive when the training he puts into his game results in a win or a good individual performance. Sam B, when asked why he played sport, also argued that it was not just the physical workout he enjoyed but the mental exertion. He asserted that playing sport made him feel calmer and was character-building. These statements signal the presence of an underlying emotional element. This links to body experience and also provides the basis for evaluating the contradictions between inscription for health and inscription for achievement.
Whilst the attitude expressed by Rene, Hugh, Jonas and Sam B may be positioned in relation to the third element of the trialectic, body experience, a closer examination reveals that the notion of ‘looking good, feeling good’ is also related to fitness sport. As noted earlier, the ‘I’ relation and ‘I’ body on which fitness sport rests cannot be examined in isolation. Rather the ‘I’ must be verbalised as a relationship between the ‘It’ or the ‘We’. In this instance, Rene is discussing how becoming fitter and achieving more in his sport makes him feel happier about himself and he believes that his body looks better than if he did not play sport. Using Eichberg (2010), it is possible to see that this statement is verbalised using the relationship between the ‘I’ body - ‘my body’, ‘my achievements’, ‘my fitness’ - and the ‘It’ achievement body - my ‘It’ achieving body does well in competition, ‘I’ feel better about myself and ‘I’ make a subjective judgement about ‘my’ physical appearance. This is again evident in Hugh’s statements as he appears to be referencing the subjective body when he discusses the lack of participation in sport and physical activity. This he relates to people underestimating ‘their’ abilities and making subjective and emotion-laden judgements thus linking to the ‘I’ body.

The role of the media

Another means of inscription which was identified by participants as influencing sporting bodies was the media. The media, in particular advertising featuring sports people, was discussed by participants as a way in which their bodies and also other sporting bodies had become inscribed. As Ellie explained, in a society in which professional sports are valued, the linkage between sport and the media creates a fluid relationship between sport and society. Furthermore, the influence of the media stops individuals playing for fun as money becomes a visibly important element within sport. Eichberg (2010) notes that fitness media is a pervasive element of contemporary cultures of physical self-improvement. Participants felt that sport pervaded a number of advertising campaigns and helped to reinforce the idea of ‘looking’ like a sportsperson to be successful in their sport. Campaigns that were mentioned in particular included Jockey underwear campaigns featuring All Black Daniel Carter, and also advertisements for Nutrigrain and Weetbix breakfast cereals. The presence of sporting bodies in the media was described by participants as a means by which bodies could
become inscribed via clothing in regards to certain brands being associated with certain sports but also in conjunction with sporting physiques. Within the context of sport at a secondary school level, certain participants felt that they were not affected by the media due to the lack of sports-people ‘like them’ in advertising. In an example of this Georgina and Grace explained that rowers do not currently play a large role in the media and because of this they claimed the media was not active in shaping their sporting-bodies.

As Burroughs and Nauright (2000), and Woodward (2009) argue, sport is not free from the exercise of power and corporeal inequalities can result from imbalances of power (Cole 2000). It was noted by participants that the media inscribed certain sporting bodies as more powerful or more relevant than others through the visibility or invisibility of specific sporting bodies within media coverage. The lack of coverage of women’s sport was identified by participants as a major media ‘blind-spot’. This was linked by Ellie to the dominance of professionalism in sport as the lack of branding and economic resources in women’s sport drives down the ability to make a profit thus decreasing the media’s interest.

Despite this, it was suggested by participants that if female athletes fitted within the dominant hegemonic discourses of physical attractiveness they would become more visible within the media. One example of this that was noted was the New Zealand women’s hockey team. It was suggested by Ellie that this sports team had gained media notoriety due to the ‘attractiveness’ of certain players; she argued that the culture of the team had changed to value appearance over skill with the purpose of retaining their media profile. It must be noted, however, that this assertion by Ellie sits in contradiction to her own previous statements as well as arguments from Olivia. They both argue that participating in sport helps women achieve a more positive image of themselves’ and sportswoman are healthier role models than fashion models. Olivia argued that she enjoyed sport due to what she perceived as the lack of focus on women’s appearance.
Sporting culture

One further method of inscription that was discussed in the focus groups was behaviour of other sporting bodies influencing participants’ behaviour, or “peer pressure”. This transmission of knowledge from one sporting body to another provides further evidence of body-culture relations, as certain physical, dietary and dress habits become embedded in the culture surrounding specific sports. In an example of this, Shane listed his dietary habits and those from whom he had learned these techniques. These included eating egg-based meals as he had read that professional footballers in Europe ate similarly; eating carbohydrates such as bread and pasta three to four hours before a game as he had seen team-mates carry out a similar routine; and, the practice of keeping hydrated as a friend had suggested to him it was a beneficial habit.

While this behaviour may not share the negative connotations of the term “peer pressure”, this does provide an example of how other sporting bodies can act as a means of inscription via the transmission of knowledge within a sporting culture. Similarly, Sam discussed the notion of sport in a broader framework. Rather than focusing on the rugby body culture within his school, he departed from the comments of his peers and noted that he modelled his behaviour more often and felt more pressure to conform to examples set by professional rugby players as opposed to his peers. Thus, professional body culture as expressed through mainly through the media has become more important for Sam than the body culture in which he tangibly participates at his secondary school.

The March 2014 Australia and New Zealand edition of Runners World included a beginner’s guide to running. This feature provided an example of how knowledge and practices are passed between sporting bodies within a specific sporting culture, in this instance the culture of running. Included was a five part programme to aid those just starting to train as runners (Van Allen 2014). In the introduction to the article it is noted that the thirty-five week plan has been devised by an experienced coach (Van Allen 2014). The mention of an experienced coach aligns with an achievement body culture of elite sport and coaching (Eichberg 1998).
Each step of the programme has a detailed day-by-day plan over seven weeks, beginning with the reader starting to exercise, starting to run then running non-stop, running longer and finally running faster. This is inscription of the body through achievement body culture as the programme deals with measurement and objectivity (Eichberg 2003), outlining distances and minutes that should be run on specific days. Each section additionally includes a series of tips to help runners ‘succeed’ as well as motivational comments from athletes deemed to be inspirational (Van Allen 2014). The presence of motivational comments links to the subjectivities of fitness body culture as does the purported benefits of running such as weight loss and increased fitness (Eichberg 1998, 2003). Discourses of democratising sport, a feature of fitness body culture (Eichberg 2010a), are also present via the suggestion this is a plan any ‘body’ can follow and can additionally be tailored to fit the needs of individual bodies as flexibility is stressed.

**Conclusion**

The means by which bodies come to be inscribed by sport are manifold. To express this, the major findings from both the focus groups and the survey of magazines have been illustrated using Eichberg’s (1994, 2003) model of the sports trialectic, as shown in Figure 7.1.

![Figure 7.1: Means of inscription trialectic](image)
In this model, the dominance of achievement is clearly linked to achievement culture, as is the use of sporting ‘bodies’ in the media. The media has been placed in the domain of achievement due to media promotion of successful athletes, the linkage between the advertised products and success, and the visibility of the athletes and sporting codes. These elements relate to Eichberg’s (1994, 2003) culture of achievement: visibility, measurement, competition and the notion of success. Another method of inscription, discourses of fitness, sits under the eponymous branch of the trialectic, fitness culture, as does sporting ‘culture’. Whilst it may be argued sporting culture may be linked to achievement, many of the examples of sporting culture found in both sport and fitness magazines, and the focus groups, also adhered to the elements of fitness body culture. This is attributed to the culture of health and hygiene (Eichberg 1994) evident in sporting culture; for example, staying hydrated or eating certain foods on the day of a match.

Body experience, the domain of emotion and fun, is also present in the analysis. Whilst not directly referenced, the notion of belonging and feeling part of a team or wider sport is a key part of inscription via sporting culture. Tailoring the body so it seems to belong within a sport contains an emotional element of liking the sport or the sporting culture, and feeling comfortable within it. Furthermore, the notion of looking good-feeling good, which may lead to more success, contains a clear emotional element.

The multiple means through which the sporting body comes to be inscribed has been the focus of this chapter. In conclusion, achievement and fitness culture are the branches of the trialectic most in evidence. This is due to the dominance of competition in modern sport and the prevalence of discourses pertaining to fitness existing alongside notions of achievement. Ideals of performance and the fit body provide a mirror for the ideals of efficiency and performance in neo-liberal, capitalist economies. This again shows the connection between sporting bodies and the hegemonic values within a society, a key concern of this report. The threads from the previous four chapters will be drawn together in the ensuing concluding chapter for the purpose of establishing conclusions for this research.
Chapter Eight: Conclusion

This report has addressed questions regarding context, theoretical framing, method and the major themes in evidence in the data. In this final chapter, attention will turn to drawing conclusions from the data collected through focus groups and analysis of sports and fitness magazines. In particular, the absence of body experience will be examined. Further to this, a new imagining of the trialectic will be offered, one based on the data gathered for this research. The limitations to this research and directions for future inquiry will also be noted.

The ‘absent third’

The spatial and temporal settings of the sports trialectic provide important contextual markers. For example, Eichberg’s (1994) model of the sports trialectic and the wider interpretation of body culture the model reflects is firmly rooted in the places of Scandinavian experiences and the intellectual spaces of the sociological study of sport. Furthermore, these experiences and conceptualisations are timed around events in Scandinavia at the turn of the nineteenth century. In contrast to Eichberg’s (1994) focus on gymnastics as a mass sport, the most popular sport within the collective New Zealand imagination is rugby (Carlyon and Morrow 2013).

While rugby has a history of dominance in New Zealand’s cultural psyche (Phillips 1996), in recent years there has been an increasing emphasis on the non-sporting benefits of playing rugby. Thus, membership at rural rugby clubs, organisations that were once the ‘backbone’ of New Zealand rugby, has declined as players have sought clubs that can provide a path to paid contracts and careers as professional rugby players (Laidlaw 2010). The shift from the egalitarian rhetoric of the early decades of New Zealand rugby to contemporary emphasis on financial opportunities may be attributed to the New Zealand economy being governed according to the dictums of neo-liberal policy (Easton 1997). The relatively rigid neo-liberal ideology evident in New Zealand contracts with the statist individualism adopted in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden (Wooldridge 2013). For Eichberg (1998), so-called Nordic capitalism is expressed
through the ongoing value placed on gymnastics and shooting as folk sports enjoyed at a grassroots and informal level. Music and laughter play an important role, and achievement and bodily fitness are not the focus of physical activity (Eichberg 1998). This exists in contrast to the experiences of evident in participant commentary with fun, laughter and music playing less of a role in their sporting practice thus indicating an absence of body experience.

One of the defining features of the culture of body experience is the notion of ‘fun’. Eichberg (1998) outlines this as the presence of music, laughter and festivity associated with sport and movement. ‘Fun’ is the preserve of traditional games, providing a contrast to the focus of modern sportspeople on maximising their potential to be faster, higher and stronger than their competitors (Eichberg 1998). It is important to note, however, the practice of sport for fun is also a key aspect of post-modern sport, in particular re-carnivilisation and re-musicalisation (Eichberg 1998). Examples of this cited by Eichberg (2003) include yoga, tai-chi and the revival of traditional games. The data collected for this report suggests the re-introduction of festivity, music and laughter to post-modern sport is tempered by concerns for health and well-being. For example, when asked about ‘fun’, participants had mixed responses. Sam B asserted children played sport purely for fun but as they mature, fitness, pressure and performance become fun. Rene and Marie echoed this claiming they found the pressure to perform one of the most enjoyable aspects of sport. Jonas suggested fun is not a key factor for him in playing sport; instead, the competition, and the enjoyment after a good team or individual performance, is important for him. Olivia also claimed competition was ‘fun’ for her as she asserted she is a very competitive person and enjoys the outlet which sport provides for her competitive nature.

One further aspect of sport which participants asserted they found ‘fun’ was the social aspect. The participants who self-identified as serious participants in individual sports did not profess to enjoying the social side of sport. Those participants who played in social teams did, however, admit to enjoying the social aspects of their sport. For example, Olivia asserted whilst she had the ability to play in a more competitive team, she had chosen to play for a social hockey team because socialising with other players was an important part of her sport
experience. Similarly, Nia, Marie and Sam B explained that one of the benefits of playing sport is time spent with others who have similar beliefs, practices and habits as themselves.

The discussion of fun undertaken by participants did not include elements of music, laughter and festivity valued by Eichberg (1998). It is noteworthy, however, that while these elements were not directly referenced by participants, it does not mean ‘fun’ is not a chief concern for the focus group participants. For example, Rene asserted regular exercise made him feel healthy and this was a prime reason he enjoys sports. Thus, along with the concerns of health which are key to fitness culture, Rene finds an element of body experience in fitness body culture in that he enjoys the results, or the inscription of his body, which stems from these habits. In another illustration of this, Olivia claimed to enjoy competition. Superficially this aligns her with achievement culture and the corresponding bodily inscription. There are, however, elements of the culture of body experience as she asserted she enjoyed competition and in particular the competition between different, moving bodies. It may thus be theorised that within the two major competing body cultures, fitness and achievement, there also exists cultures of body experience. The reason for this absorption of body experience into fitness and achievement culture - the lack of playing sport for fun - can be attributed to the dominance of discourses pertaining to weight control in participant commentary. The spectre of the lean body thus provides a reason for the infiltration of neo-liberal body culture into the practice of sport.

**The role of ‘fat’ bodies and the lean-healthy-fit nexus**

The dominance of the sporting body as lean was the overriding marker of the sporting body in focus group commentary and magazine content. This pre-eminence illustrates how hegemonic societal discourses, in this instance neo-liberal economic policy, shape the sporting body and discourses within society more generally. One pertinent example of this is the ‘obesity epidemic’ and its centrality to contemporary public health debates in Western society (Guthman 2012). Guthman and DuPuis (2006) argue the obesity epidemic provides a clear example of the neo-liberalisation of bodies. The shift to understanding human behaviour as patterns of consumption, when accompanied by neo-liberal values of
discipline, creates a dualism in which the obese body is both created via consumption and vilified through a perceived lack of discipline (Guthman and DuPuis 2006).

Not without critics, the blame for the increase in Body Mass Index (BMI) - a height-to-weight ratio used to identify the overweight and obese - amongst both children and adults across populations has been attributed to bigger portion sizes, an increase in the consumption of energy dense foods and a lack of physical activity (Guthman 2012). This lack of physical activity has been at the centre of policy shifts designed to encourage children and adults to take up regular exercise (Zanker and Gard 2008). This pre-occupation with weight was echoed in participant’s commentary. Even when not discussing issues of diet and weight, the concept of a lean and toned body was noted as important. It was assumed by group members that if they observed a person with a lean body then that person must, by necessity, play sport.

In opposition to this lean body is the ‘fat’ body. ‘Fat’ bodies were also discussed by participants and variously described as “wrong”, “not belonging” and “disappointing”. This echoes Longhurst’s (2005b) assertion that within contemporary capitalist societies ‘fat’ is to be a ‘dirty’ word, loaded with meaning and references to immorality, laziness and decay. A relationship is thus signalled between lean bodies, which are assumed to be sporting bodies, and ‘fat’ bodies, which are assumed to be non-sporting. The lean, strong, toned sporting body is, therefore, defined by not being a fat, weak non-sporting body. When discussing leanness, participants also drew the connection between a lean body, health, fitness and enjoyment. Consequently, the assumption was made that a lean body was a healthy and fit body, and a person with a healthy and fit body was more able to enjoy sports than an overweight person.

The notion of bodies which do not conform to conventions within sport, such as fat or ‘weak’ bodies, signals the operation of a complex moral ‘geography’ concerning sports and bodies. The most pertinent complicating factor is the ‘culture of personal responsibility’ (Eichberg 2010a; Maguire 2008). As explored earlier, this culture has been encouraged as a direct response to the ‘obesity epidemic’ (Maguire 2008). Thus, responsibility for ones’ health and well-being
becomes individualised to the point of becoming a moral issue (Maguire 2008; Orbach 2009). Applying this notion of exercise, and by extension sport, as a moral responsibility, participants are able to express moral judgements concerning those bodies they do not perceive to participate in sport. That is, those who do not fit within the lean-healthy-fit nexus, those whose bodies do not bear the stereotypical inscriptions from sport, become ‘wrong’ and ‘disappointing’. This was also evident in material reviewed in sports and fitness magazines, as weight management was a core concern (Men’s Health 2013; Women’s Fitness 2014) - those who had previously not partaken in physical activity, but had shown discipline in achieving a body which fits within the lean-healthy-fit nexus, were celebrated (Men’s Health 2013).

Re-imagination of the sports trialectic

The model of the sports trialectic has been at the centre of debates presented in this thesis. Discussion has exposed the evolution of the diagram and the role of body culture. In light of preceding analysis, Figure 8.1 provides an alternative configuration of the sports trialectic that reflects participants’ discussions and magazine content.

![Figure 8.1: Alternative configuration of the sports trialectic](image)

Unlike Eichberg’s original model (1994), Figure 8.1 contains two separate elements: fitness body culture and achievement body culture. These two elements are dominant but also exist in contradiction. The third branch in the sports
trialectic, body experience, is no longer a separate and distinctive arm of body culture. The ‘Thou’ body and relation - dialogical movement, fun, music, laughter and enjoyment - has been subsumed into the two oppositional elements of fitness and achievement. This reflects the presence of enjoyable, relational aspects within the practice of fitness and the pursuit of achievement. Thus whilst enjoying competition, having fun during a difficult gym session or feeling positive about maintaining a lean body do not fit cleanly within a separate body culture, it is appropriate they be positioned as experiential elements of fitness culture and achievement culture (see Figure 8.1)

Linking to the original research question, therefore, sporting bodies are inscribed by their low fat percentages. As has been identified, the prime marker of a sporting body is a lean body, a body perceived as having a low fat percentage. The presence of a lean body thus leads to assumptions about health and fitness as well as the ‘rightness’ of the body’s participation in sports. Following from this, the main channel through which these bodies become inscribed is through visible participation in sports in that they are seen to be carrying out physical activity. Another means by which bodies become inscribed is the body culture in which they exist. This includes modelling behaviours after peers and professional role models who play the same sport, thus work within the same body culture.

The review of magazine material provided data which, however, does not fit comfortably within the expression of body culture chosen for this research. As has been argued, the presence of neo-liberal doctrine in New Zealand (Jesson 1999; Sinclair 2000), and the linkage between discourses of obesity and the dominance of leaness as a marker of sporting participation, may be responsible for the disjoint between the model of the sports trialectic and the data collected for this research. In particular, the absence of explicit statements relating to body experience has led to a re-imaging of the sports trialectic model in an attempt to reflect the specific spatial and temporal setting of this research.
Limitations and future prospects

Disjuncture between theory and data has been one of the key limitations of this research. This research originated as an Honours dissertation and, as such, was required to be completed within 16-weeks. The timeframe of Honours research meant that the initial analysis of Eichberg’s work was limited to key body culture concepts. Furthermore, the ideas identified in Eichberg’s work were employed when formulating focus groups questions. The transition to a Masters’ thesis, and the associated increase of time allocated to research, provided for additional analysis of Eichberg’s conceptual work. The timing of the shift from Honours to Masters’ research coincided with difficulties recruiting focus group participants, one outcome of which was disjuncture between Eichberg’s theory and the questions asked during focus groups. Useful themes were identified during the process of analysis but if the process were to be repeated, additional focus group questions would be asked. Such questions would involve clarifying the definition of a lean body, asking how healthy and lean bodies differ from unhealthy and lean bodies, and querying how respondents understood the notion of a competitive society.

Another limitation of the research stemmed from the decision to focus on competitive, mainstream sports such as athletics, rugby and soccer. This mainstream focus contrasts with the trialectic as the model was conceived to cover a wide range of movement from competitive sport (Bale and Sang 1996; Eichberg 2003) to yoga (Eichberg 2003) and choral singing (Schulze 2009). The emphasis on athletics, rugby and soccer biased data such that it was dominated by competitive ideals, and the associated fitness and achievement branches of the sports trialectic. If a more diverse range of sports had been covered, other aspects of the trialectic may have been in evidence. One example of this absence is body experience. Body experience did not play an explicit role in participant commentary or magazine content. Therefore, when body experience was discussed in this report, emotional undertones to participant commentary were drawn upon rather than explicit statements pertaining to this branch of the trialectic.
There are a number of directions in which similar research could be taken in the future. One avenue is the investigation of the place of ‘traditional’ sports in New Zealand, ascertaining if any sports or types of movement mirror the laughter, music and emotion Eichberg describes in relation to folk sport. This would engage directly with body experience as a separate element, an aspect which has thus far been an absence in participant commentary and magazine content. If body experience as an explicit and separate entity is evident in ‘traditional’ sports then Eichberg’s trialectic model would be validated as having a role in contemporary society. A continued absence of body experience in traditional sports or a lack of sports considered to be traditional, however, would provide additional evidence that the trialectic must be reconfigured to fit the conditions within contemporary competitive societies. Any such investigation would also align with one of Bale’s (1989) three concerns for sports geography, that of the evolution of space and sport. In particular, analysing the ‘place’ of traditional sports in New Zealand has the potential to chart the effects that a competitive society has upon the place of sport - what place do traditional games focused on ‘togetherness’, music and laughter, have in the space of a society dominated by competitive ideals.

Another avenue for inquiry is opened in discussions of sport and society, in particular practices of democracy. With the notions of competitive society and competitive sport there exists a parallel which is worthy of investigation. This would align strongly with Bale’s (1989) assertion that sport and space are mutually constitutive, with the dual spatial elements at work in this investigation being the space of the nation and the space of the body. Of particular interest is examination of a range of bodily movement, beyond that of sport, which would allow for a critique of the relationship between competitive sport and competitive society. This would also allow for a re-imagining of both the sports trialectic but also has ramifications for the process of trialectic thinking. Notions of bodily movement, democracy and society could be extrapolated further through the concept of the post-political (Swyngedouw 2009b, 2010, 2011) to ascertain if competitive societies are not only post-political and post-democratic but also if the post-political equates to a state of ‘post-sport’. Additionally, whilst Swyngedouw (2009b, 2010, 2011) has investigated the post-political city, the use
of the post-political to critique sport would allow for this notion to be applied to more abstract 'spaces;

The connection between sport and body weight is also worthy of further investigation. An understanding of the sporting body as lean has dominated this research due to the body being the principle spatial element in this inquiry. As this differs in the reality of sports, for example strength athletics (Tivers 2011) and Sumo wrestling (Eichberg 2011), I feel a wider exploration is warranted. This would ascertain if this ‘lean-centricity’ is truly a wide-spread phenomenon within sports or whether it is more dominant in social or professional sport. It would also be possible to explore why focus on leanness occurs and the discourses at work which create the culture of leanness. Additionally it would be established whether this is truly related to sports or if a deeper, more complex relationship exists - the mutual constitution in modern capitalist competitive society between the body and weight. If the body was not posited as the principle spatial component within the research and another element was chosen - such as the space in which sport takes place or the continued evolution of the relationship between sport and place (Bale 1989) - weight may continue to be an underlying thread in the research, therefore, it could be theorised a more complex geography is at work.

**Conclusion**

The over-riding concern of this report has been how bodies become inscribed through the practice of sport. Using the body as the principle spatial component, it has been noted that there are practices which enable bodies to be inscribed by sport. These practices include diet, weight management and dress. Along with these tools of inscription are the means by which these messages reach sporting bodies - through the dominance of achievement and fitness in modern sport, the presence of sporting bodies in the media and the passing of knowledge between sporting bodies within a sports culture. What has been highlighted, however, is that despite these multiple tools and means of inscription, the dominant marker of a sporting body is a lean body.

Through the use of the sports trialectic and dialogical research methods, it was possible to unravel the social construction of sporting bodies. The sports trialectic
places the physical and emotional body at the centre of the study of sports thus enabling the link between economics, politics, culture, society and the sporting body to be explored. Dialogical methods such as focus groups and discourse analysis allowed for the hegemonic understandings related to the body which were evident in the discussions of sports people to be presented, analysed and untangled. Further data collected from sports and fitness magazines provided an avenue to explore the knowledge which exists in the media pertaining to the inscription of sporting bodies. Examining the social construction of sporting bodies further opened the relationship between sporting bodies and society with the clearest illustration of this being the dominance of leanness and the othering of ‘fat’ bodies. This focus on leanness is an underlying thread throughout the data analysed for this report.

Leanness as a marker of health, fitness, enjoyment and success in sport shows a clear link between discourses in wider society actively inscribing sporting bodies; the mutual constitution between sport and the ‘space’ of a society (Bale 1989). Physical activity and health are key tropes in contemporary society, in particular within neo-liberal societies where efficiency, performance and the individual are held in high regard. This concern with the lean body provides an illustration of a means by which society shapes sporting bodies, particularly within competitive societies. Furthermore, with the othering of the fat body through the ‘obesity epidemic’, any measures taken to control or reduce weight through physical activity become moral endeavours. When 31 percent of New Zealand adults and 11 percent of children are considered obese (Ministry of Health 2013), a lean body not only becomes a marker of participation in sports but a marker of a healthy, moral character.
Bibliography


Castree, N. 2004: Economy and culture are dead! Long live economy and culture! *Progress in Human Geography* 28(2), 204 - 226.


Four Four Two. 2014: Think fast and fish out a pass. January 235, 125.


Sport NZ. 2013: Sport NZ annual report 2013. Wellington: Sport NZ.


Appendix One: Focus group information sheet and consent form.

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
THE UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO

Please read through carefully the following information:

My name is Tegan Baker and I am a post-graduate student in the Geography Programme at the University of Waikato. I am currently completing a masters’ thesis. The major requirement of this is to produce a report based on original research. The topic that I have chosen relates to the ways in which sports ‘inscribe’ or write themselves onto the bodies of those who play them.

The way I will be collecting data for this project will be through focus groups (an informal group discussion lasting for at least an hour). Within these groups participants will be asked a series of pre-arranged questions and will have the chance to also generate their own discussion if the chance arises. The date, time and venue will be decided in conjunction with participants.

All contributions to this research will remain confidential.

Data collected during the focus groups will remain secure at all times. The data will only be handled by me during the focus groups and analysis, and it will not leave my possession. For data stored on my computer, I will change the passwords on my computer so that I will have sole access. These passwords will be changed on a weekly basis and I will disclose them to no-one. Written notes and transcripts will remain in a lockbox in my home that only I will have the key to.

The dissertation will be unpublished. It will be read by my examiners. It will be available for viewing with approval of the Administrator of the Geography Programme.

As a participant you have the right to:

- Ask any further questions about the research pre, post or during participation.
- Request your identity remain anonymous.

I may be contacted via the following if you have any questions, concerns or complaints:

Tegan Baker  
[tab17@students.waikato.ac.nz]

“This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Any questions about the ethical conduct of this research may be sent to the Secretary of the Committee, email fass-ethics@waikato.ac.nz, postal address, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Te Kura Kete Aronui, University of Waikato, Te Whare Wananga o Waikato, Private Bag 3105, Hamilton 3240.”
Description of Project: In which ways, and through what means do sports inscribe themselves onto the bodies of their participants?

I have read the information sheet and I understand that:

- I can decline to answer any particular question.
- I may ask any further questions about the research that occur to me during or post participation.
- All information I provide will be kept in a lock box.
- All information I provide will remain confidential.
- The information I provide will be used for the submitting of a report in order to achieve the researcher’s final grade.
- My identity will remain anonymous, if I request it to be.
- I consent to allow my answers to be audio-recorded.

I (your name)________________________agree to participate in this research and acknowledge the receipt of this consent form and the project information sheet.

Signature of Participant………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….. Date

Signature of Tegan Baker………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….. Date
Appendix Two: Focus group questions (1)

- Is there a feeling that that your body must align with conventions within your sport? (Emphasise objectivity?)
  1. If so, what are these conventions?
  2. Do they relate to achievement aspects of the sport?
  3. Do they relate to fitness aspects of the sport?
  4. Do they change according to the position you play? – link to fitness or achievement
  5. Do you think that they change according to gender or age or ethnicity?

- What role does diet management play in the inscription of your ‘sporting bodies’?
  1. Why does/doesn’t it play an important role?
  2. Again, does this relate to your gender or age?
  3. Is this again related to achieving or is this related to other hygiene/health?
  4. Objective/subjective?

- Do you feel that the way you dress should align with discourses around your sport?
  1. Does this relate to the level played? (E.g 1st 11 or 1st 15 as opposed to social leagues)
  2. Are there attitudes that you must represent institutions through your body?
  3. What are these institutions?

- What attitudes are there towards non/ideal body shape and weight management within your individual sports?
  1. Do these attitudes change across the sports and also the different levels played?
  2. Why is this? More prestige/pressure/identity?
  3. Or again does this link to objective/subjective bodies?

- Are attitudes towards diet, clothing and body shape solely connected to attitudes and discourses within the sport?
  1. What pressures exist or don’t exist within sports clubs?
  2. Is there pressure to achieve i.e the objective body?
  3. Or are there more general concerns about looking good? (subjective body)
  4. If so through what channels are these discourses relayed to participants?
  5. Are there rules in place from sporting bodies that govern how bodies should look?

- Are there discourses from wider society concerning hygiene and health at work?
  1. What institutions impact your attitudes?
Appendix Three: Focus group questions (2)

- Do certain bodies belong with certain sports? If so, how? Why is this? Where do these messages come from?
- Is diet management important to you? Why or why not? Why do you think people tweak their diet, is it because they want to perform better or because they want to be healthy?
- What about the relationship between clothes and sport? Why or why isn’t it important?
- What attitudes do you think exist, or you have experienced, towards bodies that do not fit the norms of a sport? Does this change across genders/age/sports? Where do you think these attitudes come from?
- Why do you play sport?