

Coaches' Perceptions of Aggression in Elite Women's Ice Hockey

Reference: Bloom, G. A. and Vanier, J. L., "Coaches Perceptions of Aggression in Elite Women's Ice Hockey," *Safety in Ice Hockey: Fourth Volume, ASTM STP 1446*, D. J. Pearsall and A. B. Ashare, Eds., ASTM International, West Conshohocken, PA, 2004.

Abstract: In the past three decades, there has been a substantial amount of research and public debate regarding aggression and violence in sport, particularly in men's ice hockey. Up to this point, there exists a paucity of research on aggression and violence in women's ice hockey, despite the rapid increase of participants in this sport. The purpose of this study was to address this gap in the literature by summarizing the perceptions of expert coaches of women's ice hockey. A qualitative research methodology was employed in the current study. Four elite ice hockey coaches participated in an in-depth open-ended interview. The results of the study revealed that aggressive techniques were being used in elite women's ice hockey. This paper discusses the causes and ramifications of aggression on women's ice hockey, as well as the impact that the increase of size and strength of the modern female hockey player has had on the sport.

Keywords: aggression, ice hockey, women's sport

Ice hockey is a part of North American culture and involves people of all ages and socio-economic backgrounds. It is played at high speeds in a confined area, which makes it susceptible to physical play on the part of its participants. A certain amount of aggression sometimes accompanies the physical play. This has led researchers to examine the causes [1, 2, 3, 4], explanations [5, 6, 7, 8] and potential ramifications [9] of aggression and violence in this sport, primarily in men's hockey. Aggression has generally been defined as an attempt to physically or psychologically harm an opponent, while violence is viewed as behavior intended to injure another person physically [4, 5, 7, 8].

1 Assistant Professor, Department of Kinesiology & Physical Education, McGill University, 475 Pine Avenue West, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H2W 1S4.
gordon.bloom@mcgill.ca.

2 Master of Arts student, Department of Kinesiology & Physical Education, McGill University.