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"Every Day, We Have the Opportunity to Make a Difference": NCAA Division I Female Head Coaches' Experiences of Care

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Susannah Kaye Knust entitled ""Every Day, We Have the Opportunity to Make a Difference": NCAA Division I Female Head Coaches' Experiences of Care." I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Kinesiology.

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“Every Day, We Have the Opportunity to Make a Difference”: NCAA Division I Female Head Coaches’ Experiences of Care

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DEDICATION

Mom and Dad

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ABSTRACT

According to sport psychology literature, care is an important part of the coach-athlete relationship (e.g., Jowett & Poczwardowski, 2007; LaVoi, 2004; Poczwardowski, 1997; Wylleman, 2000). However, a systematic study of "exemplar" caring coaches is lacking. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to interview 12 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I head female coaches of female teams who were identified by others as "exemplar" carers. A semi-structured interview guide was developed using a modified version of Gilligan and colleagues' (1989) Listening Guide. An adaptation of Hatch's (2002) political analysis was used to identify major themes found in the transcribed interviews. Results suggest that four major themes (a) *Team as "Family";* (b) *Holistic Care of Student-Athletes*; (c) *Development of the Self-as-Coach*; and (d) *Institutional Care* were found in the data. While coaches described relationships with and responsibilities for athletes and assistant coaches like a traditional, heterosexual family (e.g., coaches serve as "transitional parents"; athletes serve in the roles of children), relationships with university administrators and the NCAA were typically perceived as hierarchical and also complex. For these coaches, it was important to have in place caring coaching philosophies and behaviors that affected not only the short-term well-being and development of their athletes (e.g., make sure that athletes felt "heard" and "known," help them reach their full potential both on and off the court, use "tough love" when necessary) but also their long-term well-being. Coaches measured their success based on the interactions they had with their athletes after graduation. Female identity development models (e.g., Layton, 1998) and feminist models of care (e.g.,

Noddings, 2005) are linked to sport in the discussion too. Further, suggestions are made for how to foster a caring environment in NCAA Division I sport.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

As a former high school and collegiate coach, I tried to demonstrate holistic care for the student-athletes. I invested much time with one young woman who was struggling a lot. Through my caring behaviors, she began to trust me. After running away from her home twice, I asked her parents if they would consider signing guardianship of her to me. She came to live with me soon after. I wanted to do the right thing and I believed that I could positively influence her. The young woman continued to struggle, but slowly she began making different decisions that affected her general outlook. She went to college on an academic and athletic scholarship and was the first from her family to earn a college degree. She has developed into an amazing woman and I am quite proud of her!

While working for my PhD, I have been employed by an athletic department in a large university in the Southeast as a sport psychology consultant. I have had opportunities to interact with elite student-athletes and coaches. Both groups are constantly trying to improve student-athletes' performance and have experienced varying amounts of success. During consulting sessions, some student-athletes have talked with me about training issues and based on this, I have questioned the motives of coaches; however, I know I do not have the full story and I cannot judge a coach's motives based on the words of a student-athlete (although they may indicate trends). During these times, I strongly encourage student-athletes to communicate with the coach so they can sort out the problems together. Some student-athletes are clearly intimidated by their coaches, perhaps because the power difference has been emphasized. When it comes down to the

core, what do these coaches care about? The student-athletes? The wins? Keeping their job? Getting a raise or promotion?

Two female coaches who have not demonstrated care toward student-athletes and have abused their power include Rene Portland and Bev Kearney. Portland, the former Penn State head basketball coach, has been known as "The Mommy Coach" in that she promised parents she would take care of the women entrusted to her as a mother figure; however, in the documentary *Training Rules*, Jennifer Harris and six other former Penn State student-athletes shared their experiences of verbal and psychological abuse at the hands of Portland because she perceived them to be lesbians (*About Training Rules*, 2011). Harris alleged that Portland dismissed her from the team because of her perceived sexual orientation and her unwillingness to have a more "feminine" appearance (Leiber, 2006). University investigators found that Portland violated Penn State's university policy as she created a "hostile, intimidating and offensive environment" (Fitzpatrick, 2006, n.p.).

Kearney, the former University of Texas women's track and field coach, has been celebrated for her resiliency after a fatal car accident that left friends dead and her paralyzed. After the accident she took custody of the child of a deceased friend. In 2012, she admitted to having sexual relations with a student-athlete in 2002 and resigned in 2013 (Voepel, 2013).

In both of these cases, each coach has experienced significant success with regard to her win-loss record and was considered an excellent coach in this respect. However, Portland and Kearney demonstrated a lack of concern for the well-being of the student-

athletes through their actions. Portland not only imposed her homophobic beliefs on the student-athletes, but she actively oppressed those who she believed were lesbians. Using her power, she chose to treat specific athletes in a severely disrespectful manner that had a significant impact on their psychological well-being (Leiber, 2006; *About Training Rules*, 2011). Kearney, also in a position of power, entered into a relationship with a student-athlete who could have had a strong impact on the development of the student-athlete as well as the team. It was considered a consensual relationship; however, determining if the student-athlete believed she could say no could be a challenge because of the hierarchical relationship.

It seems clear that NCAA Division I coaches have a lot of power over student-athletes and how they use this power can greatly affect their athletes. However, they may not be cognizant of the impact that their power – via actions and words – has on athletes. Therefore, I proposed to conduct a qualitative feminist study to learn more about the experiences of "exemplar" caring coaches and how they negotiated the structures they are part of. First, I discuss literature related to definitions of care, identity, power, and the coach-athlete relationship. Next, I propose my dissertation study. I finish with a section of operational definitions.

Literature Review in Brief

Over the past thirty years, the importance of care has been described in various disciplines (e.g., anthropology, educational psychology, nursing, psychology) (e.g., see Gilligan, 1993; Noddings, 1984, 2005; Leininger, 1981; Valentine, 1989). Leininger (1981) discussed the cultural nature of care and its importance for survival. Noddings

(2005), an educational psychologist defined a caring relation as "a connection or encounter between two human beings—a carer and a recipient of care, or cared-for" (p. 15). She emphasized that moral decisions are based on this connection. The two components of her care model are engrossment and motivational displacement. When considering a teacher-student relationship, she specified it was reciprocal and not mutual as the teacher has power over and responsibility for the student. Valentine (1989) researched how nurses care for and about patients. Gilligan (1993) studied a feminist ethic of care and noted that women make moral decisions based on relationships and responsibility. However, there has been minimal research related to care in sport psychology (e.g., Fisher, 1997; Fisher & Bredemeier, 2000; Gano-Overway et al., 2009; Newton et al., 2007). Noddings' (1984, 2005) model seems to reflect the coach-athlete relationship best.

Identity, whether the combination of "fragmented" portions of the self (e.g., race, class, gender, sexual orientation) (e.g., Fisher, Roper, & Butryn, 2009; Gill & Kamphoff, 2009; Hill, 1993; Schinke, Hanrahan, & Catina, 2009) or the "power differentials that are internalized as part of one's definition of gender, agency, and relatedness" (Layton, 1998, p. 55), helps people make sense of their inner self in relation to the outer world. In addition, there are also socially constructed identities that relate to a person's position within institutional hierarchies. Power and privilege are often more noticeable to those who do not have them (McIntosh, 1988). With two or more "inferior" identities (e.g., African-American and female), these may multiply oppressions rather than just add. In addition to the traditional identities that all have (e.g., race, class, gender, sexual

orientation), coaches also may be affected by their athlete identity (Brewer, VanRaalte, & Linder, 1993) and coach identity.

Acknowledging the interdependent relationship (Thibault & Kelley, 1959, 1978) of the coach and the athlete, four coach-athlete relationship models have been proposed (e.g., Jowett & Poczwardowski, 2007; LaVoi, 2004; Poczwardowski, 1997; Wylleman, 2000). Wylleman's model includes three dimensions including: acceptance-rejection, dominance-submission, and the social-emotional. Jowett and colleagues' (e.g., Jowett & Chaundy, 2004; Jowett & Cockerill, 2002, 2003) 3+1Cs integrates the constructs: closeness, commitment, complementarity, and co-orientation. LaVoi's (2004) conceptual model includes these foundational aspects of a relationship: authenticity, engagement, empowerment, and the ability to deal with conflict. Poczwardowski and colleagues' (e.g., Poczwardowski, 1997; Poczwardowski, Barott & Henschen, 2002) suggested that care is central to the coach-athlete relationship and that interpersonal interactions are either instructional/technical or social-psychological/affective. LaVoi's (2004) model seems to fit with Noddings' (1984, 2005) conceptualization of care the best because both interpersonal relationships (i.e., engrossment, motivational displacement) and hierarchical relationships (i.e., reciprocal) are emphasized.

Women's athletic participation has increased from approximately 16,000 in 1970 to more than 200,000 in 2012 (Acosta & Carpenter, 2012) and today, there are more female head coaches than ever although the percentage remains around 40% because more women's teams are being added. However, since the passage of Title IX, the percentage of female head coaches of women's teams has decreased from more than 90%

in 1972 to 42.9% in 2012 (Acosta & Carpenter, 2012). Prior to the passage of Title IX, few coaches of women's teams were paid; however, since its approval, compensation has made the coaching positions more attractive (Acosta & Carpenter, 2012). Because NCAA Division I head female coaches are a minority and that women tend to make moral decisions based on an ethic of care rather than justice, it would be beneficial to learn more about their interrelated experiences related to care, power, and identity.

Statement of the Problem

In summary, sport psychology research suggests that care is explicitly or implicitly an important part of the coach-athlete relationship (e.g., Johnson, 1998; Jowett & Poczwardowski, 2007; LaVoi, 2004; Poczwardowski, 1997; Wylleman, 2000). However, to date, a systematic study of "caring" coaches is lacking. Coaching is clearly more than just instructing athletes with regard to techniques and tactics. In an athlete-centered athletic program, coaches are aware of athletes' holistic needs and make decisions based on them. When consistently implemented, coaches are modeling care for athletes because they have elevated the athletes' needs above their personal needs through engrossment and motivational displacement (Noddings, 1984). It is important to learn more about and from caring coaches who have consistently implemented an athlete-centered philosophy because of the power and influence that a coach has to shape the lives of their student-athletes.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine "exemplar" caring female coaches' perspectives and experiences with care as they worked within an NCAA Division I

Athletic Department.

Guiding Research Questions

Guiding research questions included:

1. What are the components/philosophy of an "exemplar" care orientation/caring coach in NCAA Division I Athletics?
2. How is such a care orientation implemented between coach and athlete? What are the behaviors that the coach engages in, in order to demonstrate "care"? How does the coach "know" she is "caring"? How does the athlete "know" she is "cared for," from the coach's perspective?
3. What does it mean to be a "good" coach? Is being a "good" coach the same as being a "caring" coach? In what ways? When do these two identities mesh/integrate well and when do they conflict?
4. What institutional structures are in place that either encourage or discourage caring behavior (e.g., practice time, interactions inside and outside of practice and games, resource allocation, an "athlete-centered" philosophy)?
5. What NCAA structures are in place that either encourage or discourage caring behavior (e.g., an "athlete-centered" philosophy)?

Limitations

1. Only NCAA Division I female head coaches of female teams were interviewed. Therefore, generalizations to this population at any other level cannot be made.
2. Only one method of data collection was used.
3. Those asked to identify "exemplar" caring coaches used their own definitions of

"exemplar."

Delimitations

1. The NCAA Division I female head coaches of female teams were at schools east of the Rocky Mountains.
2. Ten of the coaches reported having a religious affiliation while two did not.

Definitions

Actual Similarity—how one partner's direct perspectives (e.g., "I respect my coach") is shared by the other (e.g., "My coach respects me") (e.g., Jowett & Poczwardowski, 2007).

Assumed Similarity—how comparable each partner's responses are about their direct perspectives (e.g., "I respect my coach" and "I respect my athlete") (e.g., Jowett & Poczwardowski, 2007).

Athletic Identity—the extent that a person identifies with the role of athlete (Brewer et al., 1993).

Caring Relation—"a connection or encounter between two human beings—a carer and a recipient of care, or cared-for" (Noddings, 2005, p. 15).

Cared-For—"recipient of care" (Noddings, 2005, p. 15).

Carer—this person's state of consciousness is "characterized by engrossment and motivational displacement" (Noddings, 2005, p. 15).

Closeness—the affective aspect of the coach-athlete relationship, "reflected in mutual feelings of trust, respect, and the like that result from appraisals of coaches' and athletes' relationship experiences" (Jowett & Poczwardowski, 2007, p. 17).

Coach-Athlete Relationship—"…broadly defined as a situation in which a coach's and an athlete's cognitions, feelings, and behaviors are mutually and causally interrelated" (Jowett & Poczwardowski, 2007, p. 4; see also Jowett & Cockerill, 2002; Jowett, Paull, & Pensgaard, 2005; Poczwardowski, Barrott, & Henschen, 2002).

Commitment—the cognitive aspect of the coach-athlete relationship, "…represented in coach's and athletes'' long-term orientation toward the relationship… [including]…thoughts of attachment and the intention to maintain the athletic relationship (Jowett & Poczwardowski, 2007, p. 17).

Complementarity—the behavioral aspect of the coach-athlete relationship, "…reflected in coach's and athletes' actions of cooperation" (Jowett & Poczwardowski, 2007, p. 17).

Confirmation—affirming and encouraging the development of a known other's potential (Buber, 1965).

Contrapuntal Voice—"several different layers of a person's expressed experience" (Gilligan, Spencer, Weinberg, & Bertsch, 2003, p. 164).

Co-orientation—comprised of three dimensions including assumed similarity, actual similarity, and empathic understanding, these "are essential indicators of the quality of the coach-athlete relationship" (Jowett& Poczwardowski, 2007, p. 19).

Co-participants—"…active subjects empowered to understand and change their situations" (Lather, 1991, p. 59).

Costs—"…any factors that operate or deter the performance of a sequence of behaviors" (Thibault & Kelley, 1959, p. 12).

Cultural Identity—nationality, religion, race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation,

and ability (Fisher et al., 2009; Gill & Kamphoff, 2009; Hill, 1993; Kontos & Breland-Noble, 2002; Martens, Mobley, & Zizzi, 2000; Schinke et al., 2009).

Dialogue—open-ended, genuine communication; "neither party knows at the outset what the outcome or decision will be" (Noddings, 1984, p. 23).

Empathic Understanding—how well one partner understands the other's perceptions (e.g., "I respect my athlete" and "My coach respects me") (e.g., Jowett & Poczwardowski, 2007).

Engrossment—"…open, nonselective receptivity to the cared-for" (Noddings, 2005, p. 15).

Feminism—movement "to liberate women" that "address[es] virtually all forms of domination because women fill the ranks of every category of oppressed people" (Alcoff & Potter, 1993, p. 4).

Feminist Standpoint Theory—the premise that "women's lives…can provide the starting point for asking new, critical questions about…women's…and men's lives and…the causal relations between them" (Harding, 2005, p. 221).

Homologous Reproduction—the decision by those with power "to carefully guard power and privilege for those who fit in, for those they see as "'their kind'" (Kanter, 1977, p. 48) (e.g., selection based on race, class, gender, sexual orientation).

I Poem—a listening for the how the participant talks about herself—for the voice of the 'I' speaking in this relationship" (Brown & Gilligan, 1993, p. 27; Gilligan et al., 2003).

Interaction Outcomes—"The consequences…for an individual participant of any interaction or series of interactions can be stated, then, in terms of the rewards received

and the costs incurred…" (Thibault & Kelley, 1959, p. 13).

Interdependence—the description of relationships when "*A* [has] fate control and/or behavior control over *B and B* [has] fate control and or/ behavior control over *A*" (Kelley & Thibault, 1978, p. 31).

Intersectionality—"… the intersection of racism and sexism factors into Black women's lives in ways that cannot be captured wholly by looking at the race or gender dimensions of those experiences separately" (Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1244).

Listening Guide—method of data analysis that "…provides a way of systematically attending to the many voices embedded in a person's expressed experience" (Gilligan et al., 2003, p. 157).

Modeling—the demonstration by carers of "how to care in [their]own relations with cared-fors" (Noddings, 2005, p. 22).

Moral Development—how carers influence cared-fors through modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation (Noddings, 1984).

Motivational Displacement—"the sense that our motive energy is flowing toward others and their projects" (Noddings, 2005, p. 16).

NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association)—an organization that was "founded…as a way to protect students athletes…to implement that principle with increased emphasis on both athletics and academics" (NCAA, 2012a).

NCAA Division I—a division of the National Collegiate Athletic Association that has its own membership classification, "the largest programs that provide the most athletically related financial aid for student-athletes" (NCAA, 2012b).

Personal Construction of Identity—how the self integrates "power differentials that are internalized as part of one's definition of gender, agency, and relatedness" (Layton, 1998, p. 55).

Practice—the provision of opportunities for cared-fors "to gain skills in caregiving and more important, to develop the characteristic attitudes [of engrossment and motivational displacement]" (Noddings, 2005, p. 24).

Rewards—"…pleasures, satisfactions, and gratifications the person enjoys" (Thibault & Kelley, 1959, p. 12).

Social Construction of Identity—how the self integrates hierarchies that are built into institutional systems such as politics, economy and cultural (Baca Zinn & Thornton Dill, 1996).

Transformation Process—the change in a person's decision-making process after contemplating broader factors such as patterns over time and outcomes for all involved rather than only her own outcomes (Kelley & Thibault, 1978).

Voice—"a way of speaking or communicating that renders the silent and invisible inner world audible or visible to another" (Gilligan et al., 2003, p. 157).

In the next chapter, I review literature related to care, identit(ies), power, female coaches, coach-athlete relationships, and sport psychology models.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

In this chapter, I present literature pertaining to care, identit(ies), power, female coaches, coach-athlete relationships. I also review sport psychology models that have been used to date related to these constructs.

A Care Orientation

In the past thirty years, the topic of care has been researched in the fields of educational psychology, anthropology, nursing, and sport psychology, albeit sparingly (e.g., see Fisher, 1997; Fisher & Bredemeier, 2000; Fry & Gano-Overway, 2010; Gano-Overway et al., 2009; Gilligan, 1993; Noddings, 1984; Leininger, 1981; Newton et al., 2007). In educational psychology, Noddings defined a caring relation as "a connection or encounter between two human beings—a carer and a recipient of care, or cared-for" (Noddings, 2005, p. 15). Gilligan (1993) studied the psychology of girls and women and found that they based moral decisions on care and connection. She described care as "the psychological logic of relationships" (p. 73), particularly for women. In anthropology, Leininger (1981) defined professional care as learned behaviors that enable others to maintain a healthy life. And, there are additional care models that are reviewed later. At base, however, it appears that connections between two or more people are important in each of these frameworks. Another commonality is that the presence of care seems beneficial to a person's quality of life whereas the absence of care could be detrimental. Considering care is related to a positive connection between two people, this is an important factor when considering coach-athlete relationships.

Nel Noddings' care model. More specifically for the purposes of this proposal, Nodding's (2005) conceptualization of the care relationship arose within the discipline of educational psychology. Her feminist conceptual model of care includes engrossment and motivational displacement, two dynamics that a "cared-for" experiences when interacting with the "carer." She defined engrossment as "…open, nonselective receptivity to the cared-for" (p. 16) and motivational displacement as "…the sense that our motive energy is flowing toward others and their project" (p. 16) Within the coach-athlete relationship, this would mean the "ideal" coach strives to understand the athlete's communication and helps her get closer to her needs/wants. With the open-ended nature of the "ideal" coach's engrossment and motivational displacement, caring would then become individualized for each athlete. Through listening and observation, the coach would be better able to understand what the athlete desires.

Noddings (2005) also emphasized that a caring relationship is reciprocal, not necessarily mutual. For example, relationships can be mutual when both parties are the carer and cared-for at different times; however, there are caring relationships that are unequal such as the parent-child, teacher-student, and coach-athlete relationships, where one person does more caring than the other by virtue of their roles. Noddings believes that in the unequal relationship, the carer has moral influence over the cared-for; therefore, the carer not only has a responsibility to care but also is also responsible for the moral education of the cared-for. Typically, in the coach-athlete relationship, this means that the coach has more power – and more responsibility – to demonstrate care for the athlete than vice-versa.

This responsibility led Noddings (1984, 2005) to detail four components of moral education: modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation. *Modeling* is how the carer shows the cared-for how she cares for her. It is also used so the cared-for can learn to receive care. Coaches have the opportunity to model care each day. *Dialogue* is open-ended and the outcome is unknown; therefore, engrossment (e.g., open, nonselective receptivity to the cared-for) is implied. Dialogue may happen with individuals, groups, or the team. The carer also needs to give the cared-for opportunities to *practice* caring. This is because Noddings believes that the cared-for is working toward developing her full humanity. However, coaches may or may not believe this nor specifically request that athletes demonstrate care to teammates and others. *Confirmation* occurs when the carer affirms and encourages the best in the cared-for (Buber, 1965).

Further, Noddings suggests that in order to see the cared-for's potential, it is imperative to know and be connected to her; therefore, a trusting relationship is crucial (Noddings, 1984). Coaches who know athletes well are able to confirm them. Each of Noddings' four components of moral education, hence, is based on relationships.

Carol Gilligan's care orientation. Gilligan and colleagues (e.g., Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan, 1993) studied the ethic of care from a feminist perspective. After conducting a longitudinal study related to women's decisions of whether or not to end a pregnancy, Brown and Gilligan (1992) found that women's voices connected their psyche and body, joined their psyche and culture, and were inherently relational when facing this dilemma. These connections are crucial to try to understand women's experiences because it appears that through women's relationships, they come to know

themselves as well as how others know them. Thus, for women, intimacy and identity can be fused. This research suggests that women often make decisions based on connected relationships rather than on abstract, concrete principles (i.e., Kohlberg's justice orientation) (Gilligan, 1993). Oftentimes, girls' and women's primary moral struggles pertain to relational conflicts (i.e., disconnection, dissociation) (Brown & Gilligan, 1992). Communication is also an extremely important part of connection and a way that women deal with conflict (Gilligan, 1993). However, women sometimes choose to withhold communication, silencing their voice, in order to avoid conflict to maintain relationships (Brown & Gilligan, 1992).

Leininger's cultural model of care. The cultural model of care is based in the disciplines of anthropology and sociology. Care is made up of human acts and processes (Leininger, 1981) based on cultural beliefs, norms, and practices; as Leininger (1984) states, these allow for the survival of humans:

> The anthropologic record of the long survival of humans makes us pause to consider the role of care in the evolution of humankind. Different ecologic, cultural, social, and political contexts have influenced human health care and the survival of the human race. One can speculate their cultures could have destroyed themselves had not humanistic care acts helped to reduce intercultural stresses and conflicts and protect humans. (p. 5)

This model of care is more related to survival than Noddings' or Gilligan's models of care. Noddings' (2005) goal for students, for example, was not just to

survive, but also to thrive; this happened when adults are actively engaged in students' lives in positive, responsible ways. By extension, coaches who care most likely will want their athletes to get closer to reaching their potential rather than just survive or endure.

Valentine's integrated model of care. Valentine's (1989) integrated model of caring is humanistic and represents a complex and holistic process rather than separate behavioral tasks as some models do. The core of caring is cognitive (e.g., thinking) and affective (e.g., feeling). Valentine suggests that philosophical beliefs and structural elements strongly affect one's psychological core and that this initiates action to interact with another being. The interaction can be social or physical in nature and is affected by social, environmental, and professional factors as well as the availability of resources. Valentine's humanistic model of care is similar to feminist models of care; however, it is important to note there is a difference between caring behaviors and attitudes and the (feminist) ethic of care (e.g., Gilligan, 1982; Noddings, 2005). Valentine's (1989) model focuses on the process of caring that is influenced by philosophy and structure in a professional context. However, Valentine (1989) did not emphasize moral education or power differentials as Noddings (2005) and Gilligan (1982) do. The structures in place within NCAA Division I Athletic Departments and teams may both encourage and inhibit a coach's care for athletes. Feminist frameworks and methodologies allow for a critique of current structural as well as psychological practices (Duncan-Andrade, 2010).

Based on the various models of care, I have chosen to use Noddings' feminist model of care (Noddings, 1984, 2005) because it has been used in educational settings

and it invites critique of current educational systems (Duncan-Andrade, 2010), in our case, NCAA Division I Athletics at major universities. Such a framework pushes us to explore coaches' experiences and perspectives in systems where they have significant power; it also exhorts us to explore athletes' experiences of being oppressed by "uncaring" coaches. Coaches' experiences and perspectives are also shaped by their identit(ies). In the next section, I discuss how personally- and socially-constructed identit(ies) may affect coaches' perceived power in such settings.

Identit(ies)

Identity - prior to postmodern theory, for example – was defined in psychology as a process that promotes the integration of the fragmented portions of a self and connects a person to the social world (Erikson, 1968). More recently in cultural sport psychology, identity has been defined as reflecting just one "fragmented" portion of a self that includes nationality, religion, race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation, and ability, for example (see Fisher et al., 2009; Gill & Kamphoff, 2009; Hill, 1993; Kontos & Breland-Noble, 2002; Martens et al., 2000; Schinke et al., 2009). Some "identities" are privileged in a culture while others are not; for example, in the United States, white, male, upper class, heterosexual, and able-bodied identities are valued over black, female, lower class, homosexual, and disabled identities, which are oppressed. Identity is both personally and socially constructed (Baca Zinn & Thornton Dill, 1996; Layton, 1998). For a postmodern gender identity theorist like Layton (1998), personally-constructed identity relates to the "power differentials that are internalized as part of one's definition of gender, agency, and relatedness" (p. 55). To make a comparison, the definition of

femininity and the opportunities a girl believes she has may be quite different for a Caucasian girl from the lower class and a Caucasian girl from the upper class (Layton, 1998). Because of their differing definitions of femininity, their definitions of power are different as well.

Beyond gender, racial, and sexual orientation identities, two other identities may be very important to coaches as well —their athletic identity and their coaching identity. Athletic identity has been defined as the extent to which a person identifies with the role of "athlete" (Brewer, Van Raalte, & Linder, 1993). Coaching identity has not been formally defined; however, it would seem logical that it would be the extent to which a person identifies with the role of "coach." This is a fruitful area for future research.

Not only do coaches experience their intersecting identities in very personal ways as described above, but they also experience these identities as social constructions. Socially-constructed identity is comprised of hierarchies that are built into institutional systems including political, economic, and cultural systems (Baca Zinn & Thornton Dill, 1996). As Baca Zinn and Thornton Dill (1996) suggest, as members of society are socialized into these systems, they internalize the messages from these systems. These systems are set up so it is not easy to move within the hierarchy and also so those who have power are able to maintain it. Further, oftentimes, people are not even aware of the institutional systems they are part of or how this affects their identity. For example, coaches are part of various systems where they may have significant power or minimal power. In fact, within NCAA Division I Athletics, the coach has the most power within her team's system. She makes decisions related to structures such as personnel, resource

allocation, and time. However, another system the coach works within is her Athletic Department. She may or may not have a strong voice in this setting depending on the structure of the system and her personally-constructed identity. That is because administrators have the power to make decisions related to the structures of the Athletic Department that may significantly affect the coach and the team. Finally, the NCAA is a system the coach is part of and it seems many coaches have very little power within the NCAA. The NCAA was put into place to protect student-athletes from abuses of power by coaches, athletic administrators, and others (NCAA, 2012a). This governing body is deemed necessary because student-athletes do not have power; so, those who run NCAA Division I Athletics believe that student-athletes need an outside entity to protect them. In light of recent coaching abuses (e.g., Penn State, Rutgers), this does not seem unreasonable, even though the NCAA is not without its problems.

The experiences of power and privilege are painfully apparent to some while barely recognizable to others. Frequently, people who are privileged are not aware of the benefits they receive because of such privilege (McIntosh, 1988). For example, as Beal (1970) stated, African American women do not experience privilege from either being African American or female; rather, they often experience oppression because of their intersecting identities termed "double jeopardy." Crenshaw (1991) furthered this notion with the term *intersectionality* when she described "…that the intersection of racism and sexism factors into Black women's lives in ways that cannot be captured wholly by looking at the race or gender dimensions of those experiences separately" (p. 1244). She described structural, political, and representational intersectionality. In addition,

intersectionality does not stop with race and gender, but can be expanded to include all aspects of identity. Considering care and the power differentials within personally-and socially-constructed identities, an examination of the coach-athlete relationship seems crucial.

Power

Power has multiple definitions, but one is "Power is the capacity or potential to influence. People have power when they have the ability to affect others' beliefs, attitudes, and courses of action" (Northouse, 2007, p. 7). *How* this power is used by leaders is significant. Traditionally, power has been considered hierarchical because it is exerted over someone (Giddens, 1977). Miller (1986) wrote, "Power has generally meant the ability to advance oneself and, simultaneously, to control, limit, and if possible, destroy the power of others. That is, power, so far, has had at least two components: power *for* oneself and power *over* others" (p. 116). Theberge (1990) suggested those with power have access to scarce resources including power itself and that when there are conflicting interests between people with and without this power, force may be used by the person in power.

Athletic coaches have "traditional" power and control over their support staff and others; however, coaches could be considered "middle management" because they are subordinate to athletic directors and the NCAA even though many are very recognizable. Walter Camp, who is a very important figure in the development of American football, helped implement the rule changes to evolve it from English rugby (Smith, 1988). These changes allowed centralized power for coaches. Camp was Yale's head football coach

from 1888-1892 and led the team to a 68-2 record, attributed his success to "the czar effect," clearly connecting his power over athletes to his remarkable record (Fox, 1998). Coaches in today's society have traditional power over athletes. Coaches who use the phrase "my way or the highway" are another example of centralized power.

Success is based on wins and losses and coaches are under great pressure to prepare athletes for competition (Coakley, 1986). Coakley (1990) found coaches (mostly male participants) did want to positively influence athletes, but because of the pressure to win, they focused on performance rather than social and psychological growth. Those who wield hierarchical power oftentimes do not recognize the agency of others to resist and challenge power dynamics (Brackenridge, 2001; Fisher, Butryn, & Roper, 2003).

Feminist critiques of power start with its traditional hierarchical and organizational definition. As researchers have studied women, they have noted that women perceive power not as domination or force. Gilligan (1982) connected an ethic of care with relationship and responsibility. Hartsock (1985) discussed energy, capacity, and potential when describing differences between political theorists' writing. Jones (1988) talked about horizontal relationships when describing political action. Each of these theorists focused on women's perceptions of connection and influence when discussing power. Theberge (1990) noted that power may not solely be about force, conflicting interests, control, and hierarchies and suggested more research about a feminist theory of power. With the current hierarchical model of collegiate sport, it seems like there could be conflicts for those with a traditional view of power and those who espouse an ethic of care.

There are both statistical and perceived gender differences in sport related to power. Title IX, an educational act of 1972 that prohibits discrimination based on sex, has allowed women's participation in sport at the college level to drastically increase (Acosta & Carpenter, 2012; Walker & Bopp, 2011). In 2012, there were more female athletes and female head coaches than ever before; however, men still held more positions of power in sports. In 2012, 10.6% of NCAA Division I Athletic Directors were female and 42.3% of NCAA Division I women's teams had a female head coach (Acosta & Carpenter, 2012). Because women are underrepresented in the coaching and athletic administrative professions, their voices may not be heard (Demers, 2007; Walker & Bopp, 2011).

Perceptions of gender stereotypes differentiate male and female athletes. "Masculine" or "real" sports (e.g., football, hockey) are for strong, powerful athletes while "feminine" sports (e.g., ice skating, gymnastics) are for aesthetic and graceful athletes (Theberge, 1993). These stereotypes affect perceptions of athleticism. In a qualitative study, Theberge (1993) found that parents perceived men were better athletes and coaches than women. Because femininity is a stigma for athletes, it can be more difficult for a female to establish legitimacy as a coach or athlete, particularly in a sport that is deemed "masculine" (Theberge, 1993).

Noddings' (2005) conceptualization of care centers the cared-for's needs within a relationship. Because the cared-for's needs take priority through engrossment and motivational displacement, power would be less hierarchical.

Female Coaches

Female coaches may be experiencing challenges because of how power is structured in the NCAA. Related to identity, Theberge (1993) found that female coaches identified as coaches first and females second. Because female coaches' definitions and experiences of power may be different than the hierarchical model, this could lead to internal and external conflict. It is true that there are more female coaches in the NCAA than ever before; however, they are still in the minority (Acosta & Carpenter, 2012). In general, female coaches are just beginning to challenge the masculine dominance they experience by voicing their personal views and experiences.

Some women may, in fact, coach differently than men because of how they view power. Theberge (1990, 1993) found that female coaches resisted positions of traditional power and recast it as supporting or empowering. Most coaches in Theberge's studies described their power as influence rather than control. Inclusive environments are better for some women; some female coaches promote this through participation, allowing athletes to have a voice, and allowing them to make some decisions (Fletcher, 1999; Inglis, Danylchuck, & Pastore, 2000). Werthner (2005) suggested that successful female coaches are active learners, seek mentors, listen to and learn from others, and self-reflect. It seems interactions and relationships are extremely important to female coaches.

Women coach for a variety of reasons, some female athletes seem to identify better with some female coaches' styles. Coaches choose their profession because of their abilities, family and friend support, interest in coaching, previous experiences, personality, and situational factors that allow them the freedom to coach (e.g., single, no

children) (Demers, 2007). The positive aspects of the coaching profession include relationships built, being able to help develop the whole person, and the family environment (Demers, 2007). Theberge (1990) found female coaches had a strong influence on the coach-athlete relationship. They viewed the responsibilities of coaching as similar to parenting in the investment of time and energy. Some coaches chose to change their approach from "my way or the highway" to becoming more open and accessible. These coaches felt the responsibility of their power to "make or break" these athletes. They also tried to help develop independence. Demers (2007) found that female athletes seemed to identify with female coaches' styles more than males' because they experienced female coaches to be more focused on interpersonal relationships, more available, and open to discussing their personal life.

There are numerous internal and external barriers that deter women from coaching or that lead to retirement. Internal barriers for female coaches include perfectionism, lack of assertiveness, the lack of promoting one's accomplishments, and the high stress of balancing work and personal life (Kilty, 2006). In addition, female coaches cited a lack of interest and self-efficacy as other internal deterrents to coaching (Cunningham, Doherty, & Gregg, 2007; Cunningham, Sagas, & Ashley, 2003; Sagas, Paetzold, & Ashley, 2005). External barriers for female coaches include a lack of female mentors (Avery, Tonidandel, & Phillips, 2008; Demers, 2007; Gogol, 2002), gender-role stereotyping (Burton, Barr, Fink, & Bruening, 2009; Demers, 2007; Theberge, 1990), lack of female role models (Acosta & Carpenter, 2012), media influence (Duncan, 1990), homologous reproduction (Kanter, 1977; Lovett & Lowry, 1994; Stangl & Kane, 1991),

perceived competence (Kilty, 2006) and homophobia (Griffin, 1998; Krane & Barber, 2005). Demers (2007) described male control of sport, lack of female role models, the "old boys' club," family responsibilities, and administrators' risk of hiring a female coach as other external factors. Negative aspects of coaching included the lack of recognition and less attention from the administration (Demers, 2007). Marshall (2001) found that female coaches retired because of burnout, lack of financial incentive, lack of experience, lack of family support, discrimination, conflict with the "good old boys' club," and expectations of success. There has not been a study connecting Noddings' (2005) conceptions of care to female coaches; however, care may be related to how female coaches use their power within the hierarchical system.

Coach-Athlete Relationships

According to Thibault and Kelley (1959), interaction is the basis of interpersonal relationships. As they state: "By interaction it is meant that [two individuals] emit behavior in each other's presence, they create products for each other, or they communicate with each other" (p. 10). Considering the coach-athlete relationship, a coach and an athlete emit behaviors, create products for each other (e.g., strategies and performance), and communicate verbally and nonverbally with each other; therefore, they have an interpersonal relationship. In order to better understand dyadic relationships, Thibault and Kelley (1959, 1978) conceptualized interdependence theory based on the: (a) outcomes of the dyad's interactions; and (b) the evaluation of these outcomes. These outcomes may be perceived as positive (e.g., "rewards received") or negative (e.g., "costs incurred") (Kelley & Thibault, 1978, p. 8). Within the framework of interdependence

theory, the coach-athlete relationship has been defined as the interpersonal process that affects the quality of the athletes' and coaches' athletic performance and personal experiences (e.g., Horn, 2002; Jowett & Cockerill, 2003; Poczwardowski et al., 2002; Reinboth, Duda, & Ntoumanis, 2004; Smith & Smoll, 1990; Turman & Schrodt, 2004; Wylleman, 2000). Various studies have highlighted the central position of coaches in sport and their role in creating a team culture that is adapted to the needs of athletes so that they are able to strive toward their potential (Csikszentimihayli & Csikszentimihayli, 1993; Dimec & Kajtna; Schroeder, 2007). To me, this highlights the power coaches have in the relationship.

Sport psychology models. Various sport psychology conceptual models depicting the coach-athlete relationship have been proposed. However, the following theorists recognize the interdependence of a coach-athlete relationship: (a) Wylleman (2000); (b) Jowett and colleagues (e.g., Jowett, 2005; Jowett & Ntoumanis, 2004); (c) LaVoi (2004); and (d) Poczwardowski and colleagues (Poczwardowski, 1997; Poczwardowski, Barrott, & Henschen, 2002; Poczwardowski, Barrott, & Peregoy, 2002). Each of the models shares commonalities with Noddings' (1984, 2005) framework of care. For example, Wylleman's (2000) model is made up of three dimensions including: acceptance-rejection (i.e., attitude), dominance-submission (i.e., power), and the social-emotional dimension (i.e., personal relationship). Noddings' (1984, 2005) concepts of engrossment (e.g., receptivity toward the cared-for) and motivational displacement (e.g., the sense that our energy is flowing toward others and their goals) could be reflected in a coach's "accepting" attitude and "personal relationship" toward his/her athletes. The

power differential – the second dimension of Wylleman's model – could be aligned with Noddings' definition of the reciprocal nature of a caring relationship.

Jowett and colleagues' (e.g., Jowett & Chaundy, 2004; Jowett & Cockerill, 2002, 2003; Jowett & Meek, 2000; Jowett & Ntoumanis, 2004) 3+1Cs conceptual framework has been operationalized by integrating four constructs that all begin with the letter C: closeness (Berscheid, Snyder, & Omoto, 1989), commitment (Rosenblatt, 1977), complementarity (Kiesler, 1997), and co-orientation (Newcomb, 1953). Closeness, commitment, and complementarity seem to reflect a mutually caring relationship while not emphasizing the power differential between a coach and an athlete. Therefore, this is not the best fit with Noddings' (1984, 2005) model of care.

LaVoi's (2004) conceptual model suggests the coach-athlete relationship fulfills human needs to belong and feel close to others. It is based on the relational-cultural theory from the Stone Center at Wellesley (c.f., Miller, Jordan, Kaplan, Stiver, & Surrey, 1991; Miller & Stiver, 1997). LaVoi posited that athletes develop psychologically through closeness and interdependence with their coaches and teammates. Authenticity, engagement, empowerment, and the ability to deal with conflict are the foundation of each relationship. These foundational relationships pieces dovetail nicely with Noddings' (1984, 2005) four components of moral education. For example, empowerment seems to correspond directly to confirmation and flatten the power differential. Authenticity and engagement are also comparable to engrossment. LaVoi's (2004) model, therefore, seems the most strongly connected to Noddings' (1984, 2005) work because of its interpersonal nature and focus on the development of the athlete *in relationship*.

Poczwardowski et al. (Poczwardowski, 1997; Poczwardowski, Barott, & Henschen, 2002; Poczwardowski, Barott, & Peregoy, 2002) suggested that the coach-athlete relationship is conceptualized by patterned caring behavior between the coach and athlete. In this model, interpersonal activities and exchanges are either instructional/technical or social-psychological/affective. Although Poczwardowski and colleagues suggested care is at the center of the coach-athlete relationship, the power differential between a coach and an athlete is not emphasized; therefore, this model is not the best fit with Noddings' (1984, 2005) model of care nor the conceptualization that I think fits best with the guiding research questions and proposed methodology of the current study.

Fisher (1997) and Fisher and Bredemeier (2000) examined professional female bodybuilders' conceptions of care, specifically related to relationships between self and other in the hierarchical structure of professional bodybuilding. Fisher used Gilligan's (1982) Moral Conflict and Choice Interview to flesh out how bodybuilders weighed the rights and responsibilities between themselves and others such as the professional judges, the Joe Weider Corporation, etc., who had power over them. Results suggested female bodybuilders' conceptions of identity – and moral decision-making - were inextricably intertwined within the power relational matrices of which they were a part. Noddings' (2005) care model is the basis for some people as they make moral decisions within hierarchical structures.

Finally, Newton et al. (2007) developed the Caring Climate Survey (CCS) to "…measure the extent to which youngsters perceive social and interpersonal context to

be caring" (p. 72). They developed the items from the conceptual frameworks and literature of Cohen (2001), Hellison (1995), and Noddings (1984, 1992, 1995) who all discussed care in youth contexts. The items included the ideas of: respect, kindness, care, fairness, helpfulness, being known, liking, listening, acceptance, safety, comfort, and feeling welcomed. Examples of items included "Kids are treated with respect," "The leaders try to help kids," and "The leaders listen to kids" (p. 78). Thirteen items of the CCS were found to have satisfactory factor validity, internal reliability, and factor loadings with participants in the National Youth Sport Program who were between the ages of 9 and 17 years and of whom, 90% were from underserved populations. Gano-Overway et al. (2009) suggested sport leaders who facilitate a caring environment take responsibility for the moral development of the athletes they interact with so the athletes may experience physical, psychological, social, and emotional benefits of sport. Fry and Gano-Overway (2010) suggested a coach could impact young athletes and their experience in sport. In addition, with a caring climate, youth athletes might be more likely to appreciate their coaches and teammates and be more open to learning life lessons. Fry, Gano-Overway, and colleagues (i.e., Newton et al., 2007; Gano-Overway et al., 2009; Fry & Gano-Overway, 2010) used Noddings' (1984, 1992, 1995) components of engrossment and motivational displacement to study care in youth sport.

Conclusions

Care is "the psychological logic of relationships" (Gilligan, 1993, p. 73) and Noddings (2005) suggested that care is comprised of engrossment and motivational displacement. Engrossment also seemed to correspond to one of LaVoi's (2004)

components of the coach-athlete relationship. Identity is both personally- and socially-constructed; therefore, people experience both internalized power differentials and hierarchies that are built into institutional systems (Baca Zinn & Thornton Dill, 1996). The coach-athlete relationship has been conceptualized as an interpersonal relationship (e.g., Jowett, 2005; LaVoi, 2004; Poczwardowski, 1997; Wylleman, 2000) and caring is implicitly or explicitly discussed in each. Theberge (1990, 1993) found female coaches emphasized their role as supportive or empowering.

Care, identity, and the coach-athlete relationship have all been studied individually within the discipline of sport psychology and several models have been suggested (e.g., Jowett & Ntoumanis, 2004; Newton et al., 2007; Schinke et al., 2009); however, there has not been a study that has examined caring coaches at the NCAA Division I level. Therefore, it is important to study head female coaches of women's teams who have been identified as "exemplar" carers to learn how they navigate the coach-athlete relationship and other relationships pertinent to their position (e.g., administrators, assistant coaches) because they experience power differentials and hierarchies within institutional systems.

In the next chapter, I detail the methodology used in this study. This includes describing qualitative research, my conceptual framework, the role of the researcher, procedures, and data analysis techniques.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

Introduction

This study was designed to use qualitative methods to examine "exemplar" caring female coaches' perspectives and experiences with care as they worked within an NCAA Division I Athletic Department. Semi-structured interviews were used to gain this information. The purpose of this chapter is to present an overview of the methods, participants, procedures, and data analysis used in this study.

Methods

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research gives researchers a variety of methods for understanding people's socially-constructed meaning of their experiences. In simple terms, "…qualitative researchers are interested in *understanding the meaning people have constructed*…" (Merriam, 2009, p. 13). Van Maanen (1979) stated that qualitative research is "…an umbrella term covering an array of interpretive techniques which seek to describe, decode, translate, and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency, of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world" (p. 520.) Denzin and Lincoln (1994) added more characteristics to their definition when they suggested qualitative researchers focused "…on processes and meanings…" and "…stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry" (p. 4). After reviewing and synthesizing numerous sources, Hatch (2002) suggested there are ten

characteristics of qualitative research including: natural settings, participant perspectives, researcher as data gathering instrument, extended first hand engagement, centrality of meaning, wholeness and complexity, subjectivity, emergent design, inductive data analysis, and reflexivity.

Due to the complexity of qualitative research, Piantanida and Garman (1999) suggested the importance of knowing the discourses related to qualitative research. They suggest learning more about "…discourse communities—groups of thinkers/writers who share common assumptions about the nature of knowledge and how legitimate knowledge is generated through qualitative inquiry" (p. xvi). Hatch (2002) emphasized that qualitative researchers need to consider their research paradigm prior to beginning a study because it fundamentally informs the research process. He discussed the ontology and epistemology for each of five research paradigms: positivist, postpositivist, constructivist, critical/feminist, and postructuralist. A positivist believes there are universal laws that shape reality and that researchers can know objective truth and do not influence these laws through their work. Postpositivists believe reality exists; however, they may only approximate it because of their limitations. Constructivists believe people construct their own realities based on their unique experiences and that researchers co-construct knowledge with participants. A critical or feminist theorist believes people are treated differently because of their race, class, and gender and this is based in societal structures that strongly affect the course of people's lives. These theorists also believe "…knowledge is always mediated through the political positionings of the researcher" (p. 17). Finally, a poststructuralist believes there are multiple realities, we know the world

through discourse, and there is no universal Truth.

Each paradigm influences how researchers gain and reproduce knowledge. Qualitative researchers may employ multiple methods to gain knowledge and these include using observation, interviewing, visual data, documents, and artifacts (e.g., Glesne, 2011; Hatch, 2002; Merriam, 2009). Based on the paradigm, the researcher may choose to reproduce the knowledge in ways such as: predicting, generalizing, interpreting, critiquing, and deconstructing (Hatch, 2002).

Feminist Research

Feminist knowledge is based on "…the politics of ["geo-political" and "temporal"] location…" (Braidotti, 2003, pp. 197-198). Feminists believe women are treated differently because of their gendered location; therefore, "gender is a basic organizing principle that shapes the conditions of their lives" (Creswell, 2007, p. 27). Feminist theory allows researchers to try "…to make intellectual sense of, and then to critique the subordination of women to men" (Hesse-Biber, 2007, p. 1). Feminist theories and frameworks allow for the celebration of the progress made by women as well as the critique of shortcomings of a society where sexist and other oppression continues to occur (e.g., Alcoff & Potter, 1993). This oppression can be magnified based on other marginalized identities or locations. With awareness of such intersectionality of identities (Crenshaw, 1991), feminism has become more inclusive. As Alcoff and Potter (1993) stated, "…if feminism is to liberate women, it must address virtually all forms of domination because women fill the ranks of every category of oppressed people" (p. 4).

Feminists ask "new questions that upend traditional knowledge by asking new

questions that expose the power dynamics of knowledge building …[and building] on the understanding of difference and [translating] these insights by emphasizing the importance of taking issues of power, authority, ethics, and reflexivity into the practice of social research" (Hesse-Biber, 2007, p. 16). For feminists, it is important to not only ask questions that are important to women, particularly in how they are impacted by power relationships and their social positions (e.g., Glesne, 2011; Harding, 2005; Stewart, 1994) but then also critique those power differentials (Braidotti, 2003). For example, these questions may be related to identity, domestic violence, and affirmative action (Stewart, 1994).

"Feminist knowledge is an interactive process…" (Braidotti, 2003, p. 198). Within the methodology, it is vital for researchers to raise consciousness (e.g., Braidotti, 2003; Grewal & Kaplan, 1994; Hatch, 2002; Humm, 1995), be critically reflexive (e.g., Braidotti, 2003; Glesne, 2011; Harding, 2005, 2007), and try to build a strong rapport with co-participants[1] (Glesne, 2011). Discourse is extremely important for critical feminist theorists because it allows the researcher to expose its socio-historical construction and how it reinforces the patriarchal conditions (Glesne, 2011) and raise the consciousness of the co-participants (e.g., Braidotti, 2003; Grewal & Kaplan, 1994; Hatch, 2002; Humm, 1995). The production of knowledge is about social justice and results of this are a more integrated praxis (e.g., Glesne, 2011; Hatch, 2002; Hesse-Biber,

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[1] Co-participants are not just research subjects, they are "…active subjects empowered to understand and change their situations" (Lather, 1991, p. 59).

2007).

Feminist Standpoint Theory

In order to understand feminist standpoint theory, it is important to recognize that research is shaped by cultural assumptions and all knowledge is culturally and socially located (Harding, 2007). "…[I]n societies stratified by race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, or some other such politics shaping the very structure of a society, the *activities* of those at the top both organize and set limits on what persons who perform such activities can understand about themselves and the world around them" (Harding, 2005, p. 221). By researching the dominant group, it is be difficult to gain a critical understanding of the society. Standpoint theorists choose a starting point from people in oppressed groups because "the activities of those at the bottom of such social hierarchies can provide starting points for thought – for *everyone's* research and scholarship – from which humans' relations with each other and the natural world can become visible" (Harding, 2005, p. 221). Harding (2007) described five themes of feminist standpoint theory including: (a) the internal link between knowledge and power; (b) the oppressor and the oppressed most likely have different understandings of the hierarchical relations; (c) the oppressor's perceptions of hierarchical relations are made "real"; (d) both science and politics are needed to perceive hierarchical relations from the oppressed's perspective; and (e) liberation is made possible through the realization of a standpoint.

For feminist standpoint theorists, women are the starting point because of their experience in a patriarchal society (Harding, 2005, 2007). These theorists recognize there are differences between men and women, but rather than comparing supposed superior

and inferior traits, they consider these differences as positive (e.g., Braidotti, 2003; Gilligan, 1982).

Considering women are the subjects of knowledge for feminist standpoint theorists, it is valuable to understand their epistemology. The four distinctions that feminist standpoint theorists have regarding subjects of knowledge include: (a) "[subjects of knowledge] are embodied and visible;" (b) "[subjects of knowledge] are not fundamentally different from objects of knowledge;" (c) "communities…produce knowledge;" and (d) "there is no typical or essential woman's life from which feminisms start their thought" (Harding, 2005, pp. 226-227). These characteristics are notable because of different feminist research methods (e.g., feminist empiricism) (Harding, 2005).

Methodological Approach

Because feminist theory is the framework for this study, orientational qualitative inquiry was used because it "…begins with an explicit theoretical or ideological perspective [i.e. feminist] that determines what variable and concepts are most important and how the findings will be interpreted…Such inquiry is aimed at confirmation and elucidation rather than discovery" (Patton, 1990, p. 86). In order to learn coaches' thoughts about their experiences, I chose to interview them because "the purpose of interviewing is to find out what is in and on someone else's mind" (Patton, 1990, p. 278). The semi-structured interview guide allowed me to structure questions in a sequence that is based on the literature; it also allowed me the flexibility to ask follow-up questions and probe deeper into interesting topics along the way (Glesne, 2011) while gaining a thick

and rich description of co-participant's life experiences (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). Therefore, a semi-structured interview guide (see Appendix B) was produced for NCAA Division I female head coaches of women's teams who are considered to be "exemplar" carers as determined by people associated with NCAA Division I Athletics. I desired to learn more about coaches' experiences as carers within the athletic structures that they worked, including the team, athletic department, and the NCAA as well as their own personally- and socially-constructed identity (Baca Zinn & Thornton Dill, 1996; Layton, 1998). Not only did the coaches have the opportunity to discuss how they cared, but they also discussed the systemic and institutional barriers to caring that they have encountered as well as any actions they have taken to overcome or remove such barriers. As mentioned in the section about care, Brown and Gilligan (1992) found that women's voices connect their psyche to both their body and culture and that voice, for them, is naturally relational. Voice is central to women's experiences; therefore, I chose to use qualitative semi-structured interviewing to allow me to listen to the experiences of these women.

Role of the Researcher

Researchers influence the research process from beginning to end. "The gendered, multiculturally situated researcher approaches the world with a set of ideas, a framework (theory, ontology) that specifies a set of questions (epistemology) that are then examined (methodology, analysis) in specific ways" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 11). Because of these reasons, self-reflexivity is an important part of the qualitative research process (e.g., Creswell, 2007; Glesne, 2011; Goodall, 2000; Hatch, 2002; Lincoln & Guba, 2000;

Merriam, 2009).

Statement of positionality. As a feminist researcher, I have begun to take seriously Brown and Gilligan's (1992) charge to listen to and share women's voices, as they have often been ignored or silenced:

> …we [the researchers] use our authority and power to make it easier for girls' and women's voices to be heard and engaged openly in relationship—to encourage the open trouble of political resistance, the insistence on knowing what one knows and the willingness to be outspoken, rather than to collude in the silencing and avoidance of conflict that fosters the corrosive suffering of psychological resistance: the reluctance to know what one knows and the fear that one's experience, if spoken, will endanger relationships and threaten survival. (p. 41)

I believe knowledge is subjective and co-constructed. I also believe I only learned a slice of each co-participant's experiences as they shared thoughts and feelings in and related to that particular time and space. We worked together to make meaning of their experiences (Hatch, 2002; Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Therefore, it was important both the co-participant and I were actively engaged in the interview process. Using Gilligan et al.'s (2003) Listening Guide (described later) allowed me to uncover some contrapuntal voices, thus potentially gaining more insight into the psyche of each co-participant.

Noddings (2003) wrote about the dynamics of power in a teacher-student relationship and the coach-athlete relationship seems similar. As a former teacher and former coach, I believe coaches, like teachers, are responsible for educating those

entrusted to them in their areas of expertise. However, for teachers and coaches, I also believe these responsibilities are not limited to writing essays, learning the quadratic equation, the proper mechanics for throwing a softball, or strategies for a corner kick. Teaching students and athletes to act in moral and ethical ways is part of the responsibility that comes with power. Teachers and coaches are influencing the lives of the students in their classrooms and athletes on their teams and these adults are affecting them positively or negatively whether they recognize it or not. Being aware of the influence they have is important. Within the realm of sport, there are numerous anecdotes of young people who were abused psychologically, physically, and sexually by coaches. There are also many people who claim they learned "life lessons" and have experienced life success because of their athletic participation.

I wanted to interview coaches of women's teams not only because I wanted to allow their voices to be heard but also because I have spent most of my time as a athlete on women's teams, a coach of women's teams, and a sport psychology consultant with women's teams. I deeply want female athletes have the best collegiate athletic experience possible and I believe coaches have the power to affect athletes' lives. More specifically, I believe coaches affect athletes' performance, athletic experience, and overall well-being (e.g., Côté & Gilbert, 2009; Jowett & Poczwardowski, 2007; Mageau & Vallerand, 2003) for as long as they are in that setting and beyond.

I chose to interview coaches at the NCAA Division I level because this is the highest level of organized amateur athletics for women in the United States. Because of the limited opportunities in professional sport for women, competing and coaching at this

level will be the pinnacle of many of their careers. I wanted to interview women, too, because of my own experience of the social construction of athlete and coach identity. As a former NCAA Division III student-athlete, my head softball coach, Dr. Amber Warners, had a great impact on me. She not only encouraged me to pursue coaching, but also to become a scholar of sport. She showed me it is possible to experience success as a female coach and scholar in a traditionally male-dominated field such as sport psychology. This is partially what motivated me to want to learn more about NCAA Division I female coaches of women's teams and how they perceive their impact on their female athletes.

Procedures

In this section, I describe my bracketing interview, the pilot study, and the main study. I then describe data analysis procedures and methodological issues.

Bracketing Interview

After obtaining IRB approval (see Appendix A), I conducted a bracketing interview in order for me to become more aware of my own biases. Bracketing is important in qualitative research as it "…requires that we work to become aware of our own assumptions, feelings, and preconceptions, and then, that we strive to put them aside—to bracket them—in order to be open and receptive to what we are attempting to understand" (Ely, Anzul, Friedman, Garner, & Steinmetz, 1991, p. 50). For feminist researchers, being aware of researcher biases is important but it is not necessary to set them aside (Hatch, 2002). A member of my research group conducted a bracketing interview with me. During this time, I responded to questions in the interview guide (see

Appendix B). My philosophy of coaching includes a holistic perspective of student-athletes and the desire for a connection and their growth; however, my emphasis tended to be on physical and social aspects of sport with an increased emphasis on the psychological components as I earned my Master's degree. I recognized that I worked diligently to respect the student-athletes; however, I felt the tension between focusing on performance and competition and focusing on relationships. I regulated how much control I gave to assistant coaches and team captains based on my perceptions of their competence. I had more distant relationships with administrators and bounded relationships with parents.

My bracketing interview reflected my belief that coaches do impact student-athletes positively and negatively. I recognized I could not make all student-athletes happy and I had to think about the team, or the "big picture," in order to have the best opportunity to win. I know I appreciated John Wooden's philosophy of making sure that all student-athletes knew they were valuable to the team. For caring coaches, I would expect this is part of their philosophy if they do care about student-athletes as people. Care is not only based on their performance during competition.

Because I had such positive experiences with athletics through college, I am biased about the value coaches have in young adults' development. I see how I have been shaped specifically by Coach Amber Warners and I hoped I would be able to leave this type of legacy. I would think that caring coaches would also have this type of philosophy.

I have not been a coach at the NCAA Division I level and yet as I work with student-athletes who compete at this level. Their travel schedules are often severely

affected their academic work. The lack of understanding demonstrated by many professors frustrated me. Not only do coaches have responsibilities to student-athletes, but professors also have a responsibility to these young men and women. Additionally, I have not had to coach within NCAA rules and therefore I did not necessarily know how they might discourage care and could not anticipate the reactions that coaches might have to that question.

Access and Entry Procedures

Pilot study. I conducted a pilot study with an NCAA Division I female assistant basketball coach. A pilot study is "an abbreviated research project with the purpose of practicing and testing procedures that could be used in a full-scale inquiry" (Glesne, 2011, p. 282). The co-participant and I were both content with the flow, breadth, and depth of the interview questions. Based on her responses, I determined I would not make changes to the interview guide. The following points were highlighted through the interview: the athletic, academic, and personal connections with student-athletes, the desire for student-athletes' athletic and academic success, the perception that care can be turned on and off by the head coach, the isolation of student-athletes from the non-student-athlete populations, the mutual and reciprocal coach-athlete relationships, the university resources facilitate that care, the NCAA's good intentions, the excessive NCAA rules, the exploitation of some male student-athletes, and the fans' sense a caring head coach. Because I had 12 head coach co-participants and this assistant coach did not have head coaching experience at the collegiate level, I chose not to use her data in the results section.

Main study. I used purposeful and snowball sampling to locate participants (Hatch, 2002). Because of their interaction with coaches at the NCAA Division I level, I communicated with known contacts (i.e., current NCAA Division I coaches, both head and assistant, former NCAA Division I student-athletes, NCAA Division I athletic trainers, NCAA Division I strength and conditioning coaches, and a sport professional who works with African-American coaches) who regularly interacted with NCAA head coaches and student-athlete population. I asked for suggestions of NCAA Division I head female coaches of women's teams who, in their opinion, exemplified care. I did not give them a definition of care. From those contacts, I generated a list of possible co-participants. Because I had to travel to interview these coaches, I divided the list of locations of the coaches into five regions in the Eastern United States. One coach in the Western United States was also recommended as an "exemplar" carer.

Data Collection

I initiated communication via an email (see Appendix C) with head coaches who were recognized as "exemplar" carers based on their geographical location. I presented the premise of the study. If the coach was amenable, I set up a time to meet with her in a place convenient to her or to do a phone interview.

Of the first five emails I sent, three responded and were willing to be interviewed; however, none wanted me to drive to their university to interview them. One of these coaches called me to be interviewed. Because of another's international travel schedule, we were unable to find a time for an interview. The third coach never responded to try to set up a time. In the next closest geographical cluster, I contacted six coaches and five

responded they were willing to be interviewed. Four were agreeable to be interviewed in person. I found a convenient time to drive to the region. I set up one interview for each of three days; however, a relative of the fourth coach had surgery so she chose to be interviewed by phone two weeks later. The fifth co-participant from this region preferred to be interviewed by phone so we set up a time. In the third region, I contacted three coaches and all three responded and were willing to be interviewed in person. I interviewed them over a two-day period. I contacted eight coaches in the fourth region and two responded they were willing to be interviewed. Because of holiday traveling, I interviewed them by phone. In the fifth region, two coaches were recommended and both responded they were willing participants. Because of holiday travel, one preferred to be interviewed by phone and the other assented to an in-person interview. Prior to in-person interviews, coaches signed an informed consent statement (see Appendix D). Prior to telephone interviews, I read the informed consent statement and they verbally agreed. After the interview and prior to transcription, I sent them the paper copy of the informed consent statement they signed and returned. In sum, 24 coaches were contacted, 13 participated, seven were interviewed in person, and six were interviewed over the phone.

The interviews lasted between 15 minutes and 1 hour, 40 minutes. After each interview and throughout the study, I recorded my thoughts and feelings on a digital recorder to help make sense of the process (Denzin, 1994; Hatch, 2002). I then transcribed all of the interviews. This helped me make sense of coaches' words, relationship, patterns, and themes that began to emerge. Coaches were each sent their transcripts as a member-check. Member-checking is used so I could "…solicit feedback

on [the] emerging findings from…the people [I] interviewed" (Merriam, 2009, p. 217). This was used to increase trustworthiness. One coach chose to discontinue her participation in the study after she read her transcript. She did not feel comfortable with how much she divulged when discussing her institution. Therefore, only 12 coaches were part of the data analysis.

Co-Participants

Co-participants were 13 female NCAA Division I head coaches of female teams who exemplified care as determined by people associated with NCAA Division I Athletics. Each coach chose her own pseudonym. One coach chose to remove her data from the study so a total of 12 coaches' descriptors are presented. In the following section, I describe the demographic characteristics associated with each coach (see Table 1) and the group in general. The table is ordered by greatest amount of annual salary earned because coaches may experience different pressures based on how much they are paid.

Group descriptors allow the co-participants to be understood as a whole. The coaches' average age was 39 and they had been coaching for an average of 20 years. One had coached in the AIAW. Seven coaches were a major conference institutions and five were at mid-major conference institutions. Collectively, their average salary was a little more than $100,000. Five of the coaches were married and all of these had at least one child. One coach had five children. Another coach stated she was engaged to a man. The other six coaches were single and did not have children. Nine coaches practiced Christianity, one Catholicism, and two did not have a religious affiliation. Five coaches

had earned a Master's degree and seven had earned a bachelor's degree.

Table 1. Coach Demographic Information

Pseudonym	**Annual Salary**	**Sport**	**Years Coached**	**Race**
Gladys*	430K	Basketball	>30	Caucasian
Tricia*	230K	Basketball	>20	Caucasian
Sylvia*	170K	Volleyball	>20	Caucasian
Jennifer*	160K	Basketball	>10	African-American
Stacey*	150K	Swimming	>20	Caucasian
Samantha*	140K	Golf	>10	Caucasian
Jane#	120K	Volleyball	<10	Caucasian
Anna#	100K	Basketball	>20	Caucasian
Quinn*	70K	Gymnastics	>20	African-American
Jen#	60K	Softball	>10	Caucasian
Gabby#	50K	Gymnastics	>30	Caucasian
Nancy#	40K	Softball	<10	African-American

*In-person interview #Phone interview

Data Analysis

As described earlier, discourse is extremely important for feminist research.

Therefore, after transcribing each interview, I used an adaptation of Hatch's (2002) Political Analysis Model combined with Gilligan and colleagues' (Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan et al., 2003) Listening Guide to analyze "voice, resonance, and relationship as ports of entry into the human psyche" (Gilligan et al., 2003, p. 157). My advisor, Dr. Leslee Fisher, received training from Dr. Gilligan during her own dissertation data collection and analysis; therefore, she helped in the analysis of the coaches' transcripts. In addition, I also employed a five-member research group, each of whom signed a confidentiality agreement (see Appendix E). Each person individually read and thematized the transcripts. We then came to a consensus of the themes we found.

In order to use the Listening Guide as an analytic tool, I read through each transcript six times, each time being considered a listening:

> The need for a series of listenings arises from the assumption that the psyche, like voice, is contrapuntal (not monotonic) so that simultaneous voices are co-occurring. These voices may be in tension with one another, with the self, with the voices of others with whom the person is in relationship, and the culture or context within which the person lives. (Gilligan et al., 2003, p. 159)

Each listening had a different focus: In my analysis, I underlined pertinent words with different colored pens. After each listening, I wrote notes and "interpretive summaries" (Gilligan et al., 2003, p. 159). These helped me remain immersed in the text and maintain a trail of my thoughts (Brown, Tappan, Gilligan, Miller, & Argyris, 1989).

Gilligan et al. (2003) also described the intent and order of multiple listenings. The first listening focuses on the plot and setting. The second listening focuses on "I" poems. The final listenings focus on contrapuntal voices. The first listening - the plot and setting – allowed me, the listener, to gain bearings in the co-participant's space. The second listening – the "I" poems - was important because the listener is able to focus on how the co-participant talked about herself. These first two steps "bring the listener into responsive relationship with the person speaking" (Brown & Gilligan, 1992, p. 28). In the first two listenings, I was able to gain "a sense of the whole" (Hatch, 2002, p. 192). Then, I wrote a self-reflexive statement about the ideological issues in the study (Hatch, 2002).

Finally, I chose to listen for contrapuntal voices or ideological issues related to care, power, gender, and sport psychology (Gilligan et al., 2003; Hatch, 2002). Based on these, I wrote generalizations that potentially connected the ideological issues and the data (Hatch, 2002). Subsequently, I re-read the transcripts (Hatch, 2002) and used in vivo and descriptive coding (Saldaña, 2009) based on the generalizations (Hatch, 2002). I then wrote a draft summary of preliminary findings (see Appendix F) based on generalizations that were supported and sent it to coaches to communicate what I had found (Hatch, 2002). Five coaches responded they appreciated receiving the summary. The other seven coaches did not respond. No coach suggested any changes.

To compose an analysis, I returned to the research questions and generalizations to reflect on the learning that came from the co-participants' responses and on the evidence I used for my interpretations. Finally, as I wrote the analysis, I had to reconnect the separate listenings so I did not "…reduce or lose the complexity of a person's

expressed experience" (Gilligan et al., 2003, p. 169). I compared and contrasted themes the research group found and the voices I heard across the listenings. Then I synthesized the different voices within each interview and across interviews.

Methodological Issues

The very nature of conducting a feminist qualitative study means the interpretations will be subjective (Glesne, 2011; Hatch, 2002). I believe individuals experience their circumstances differently based on their identities, life experiences, and personality dispositions. That I sought to learn about the subjective perspectives of NCAA Division I female head coaches of women's teams is an important aspect of this study because I identify with feminist standpoint theory. By using the Listening Guide (Gilligan et al., 2003), I encouraged myself to listen to these coaches' voices throughout the analysis; however, I recognize I am an active participant in the research process, so I also know I made choices that affect the results during each phase of the process.

Trustworthiness is a methodological issue in qualitative study (Denzin, 1970; Flick, 2007; Glesne, 2011; Miles & Huberman, 1984; Patton, 2002). To allow other readers to judge trustworthiness, I utilized clarification of researcher bias, negative case analysis, member-checking, rich and thick description, and an external audit (Creswell, 1998). I wrote my positionality statement (in another part of this document), allowing readers to judge my bias and I participated in a bracketing interview, further learning of my biases. While reading the transcripts and doing the listenings, I searched for and analyzed cases that contradicted or did not support my findings to that point. Each co-participant had the opportunity to member check, or read her transcripts and summary of

the major themes in order to make sure I had accurately reflected her position. Three of the 12 coaches asked that I remove "filler" words such as "um" and "uh." My research group read the transcripts independently and we met together and came to a consensus about the themes we found. As I had the opportunity to enter into the co-participants' psyches, I used these thick and rich descriptions to allow the reader the same opportunity.

In the next chapter, I present the results of this study. These include the four major themes of: (a) *Team as "Family"*; (b) *Holistic Care of Student-Athletes*; (c) *Development of Self-As-Coach*; and (d) *Institutional Care*.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

The primary focus of this study was to investigate "exemplar" caring coaches' demonstration of care to athletes within an NCAA Division I athletic system. In order to accomplish this, five primary questions were used to guide the semi-structured interviews: (a) What are the components/philosophy of an "exemplar" care orientation/caring coach in NCAA Division I Athletics?; (b) How is such a care orientation implemented between coach and athlete?; (c) Is being a "good" coach the same as being a "caring" coach?; (d) What institutional structures are in place that either encourage or prohibit caring behavior?; and (e) What NCAA structures are in place that either encourage or prohibit caring behavior? Interview data were collected by the investigator and data were analyzed by the investigator and five additional research group members to achieve consensus related to themes.

As a result of the analysis, four themes emerged to describe these coaches' experiences. The major themes included (a) *Team as "Family";* (b) *Holistic Care of Student-Athletes*; (c) *Development of the Self-as-Coach*; and (d) *Institutional Care.* Each theme had multiple subthemes (see Table 2). Throughout the results section, each theme and subtheme is presented along with co-participant quotes.

Theme 1: Team as "Family"

Coaches in this study considered their teams as "families." For coaches, these "families" consisted of the head coach, assistant coach(es), and student-athletes. Co-participants described their team as a family (e.g., coach as parent, student-athletes as

Table 2. Themes and Subthemes

Major Themes	Subthemes
1. Team as "Family"	1A Transitional parent
	1B Heteronormative family structure
	1C Care for assistant coaches
2. Holistic Care of Student-Athletes	2A Listening and communicating
	2B Understanding student-athlete development
	2C Individualized caring
	2D "Tough love"
3. Development of Self-as-Coach	3A Care as a core personality element
	3B Learning through experience
	3C Self-evaluation as carer
4. Institutional Care	4A The "entangled web" of the NCAA
	4B Advocating for student-athlete welfare
	4C Support services for student-athletes

children or sisters, assistant coaches as parents or siblings) and half stated they demonstrated care in very similar ways to both student-athletes and assistants. Some coaches described a hierarchy of decision-making and told me they typically make the ultimate decision, taking a role similar to the "head" of a family, a father-figure in a heteronormative family.

Subtheme 1A: Transitional parent. Coaches saw their role as a transitional parent, someone who took responsibility for the growth and development of young adults. During the recruiting process, they worked to convince parents that they would take care of their daughters. Anna discussed what she said to families during recruiting visits and highlighted the coaching staff's relationships with and responsibilities to the student-athletes as well the importance of education for women:

> We sell family. We sell a comprehensive growth experience…We sell education, which at the end of a day for a female, it's a decision that will affect the next forty years of their life…But then we also talk about family and how that's huge. I will treat them as my own child whether they need a hug or a kick in the butt, they're going to get it. And I feel, my responsibility and the responsibility of our staff, if they spend four years with us, we will continue to give them the skills that their parents have instilled for the past 18 years that will help them be successful in life after basketball.

Samantha considered her role to be that of a transition parent:

> I've always said that as a coach, I'm the transition parent. I transition them from their parents to the real world. And…so it's finding the balance of wearing all sorts of hats. Big sister to mom to coach to counselor to…giving them a kick in the butt when they need it. But through it all, I think they know that you…are concerned about their welfare and their well-being. And their successes and being there for them in their failures

too.

Nancy cared for athletes by modeling desired behavior and discussing it with student-athletes: “I always try to tell my girls I hope to facilitate a family environment and so I try to treat them the way that I'd like them to treat each other.” Tricia discussed the supportive role that a “family” can play when a teammate is struggling personally: “…we just had a player that just lost her godfather and…it's expected that she's not having the best week because of it…But, we are working through it and we try to provide a great family atmosphere so she can excel.”

Coaches recognized parents were entrusting them with their daughters and they believed they still had responsibilities to the student-athletes’ parents to help the young women transition. This informed coaches’ treatment of parents. Quinn said:

> …your daughter which is one of your most prized possessions, your finances are going to (university), at least you can have a person talk to you about any issues that are going on so that they feel that confident that [your] child is okay. I would want that.”

Subtheme 1B: Heteronormative family structure. Teams had a heteronormative family structure as demonstrated by traditional gendered roles and activities. Two of Sylvia’s assistant coaches took on family roles figuratively as coaches were called “Papa (name)” and “Brother (name)” by both coaches and student-athletes. She commented on the importance of a “home environment” for athletes and coaches:

> I think we have a humble group of coaches that do really care about

> people. And so that's what you surround yourself with. And we've all seen coaches out that it's not really about the team and…we have a home environment. I think it's important to have a home environment…So we've got Papa (name) who's been with me for 19 years…and then there's Brother (name)…and he's the funny…older brother…

Gladys had an "open home policy" and described a recent interaction with athletes: "…my home is open to my athletes…A couple weeks ago, I had three kids call and say 'You know, can we come over for dinner?' 'Sure.' 'We want to cook,' and I said, 'Great. Come on over.'" Gladys had them each bake a pie, a traditionally feminine activity.

Quinn further discussed her experience with decision-making in the context of a business with an implied traditional heteronormative family system:

> I ran a business for 20 years or 18 years…for any system to work, there has to be some type of order and I think with my business, we had the amount of success that we had because I knew my ex-husband was the head coach and I was the co-coach, but when it came down to any decisions we couldn't agree upon, he had the final say. And that's kind of how I run the office with my assistants. I let all of us have total input on what we're doing. We develop our skills, our playbooks, any of our stuff; we develop all of those things together. When there is a decision that needs to be made, I make that decision…

Subtheme 1C: Care for assistant coaches. Most coaches said they treated their assistant coaches in similar ways as student-athletes. Most coaches described having a

personal relationship with assistant coaches. Jennifer stated:

> I tried very hard to let [the assistant coaches] know that I appreciate them…we'll go out to eat together. We laugh a lot. I just really think with as much time as we spend together…[if] you can't enjoy the people, this is just really a bad idea.

Coaches also specifically discussed their desire for assistant coaches to be happy. Tricia said, "…I would hope that at the end of the day too, that in addition to our players feeling like they were cared for, that our assistants would be happy, content in the jobs that they have…" Some coaches described how they demonstrated appreciation for assistant coaches. Jennifer said:

> …I just take different opportunities to call them out in front of our players in a positive way…, publically praise them…whether it's on Twitter or Facebook or any radio interviews, any time we have an opportunity to appear some place as a staff, you know just always, making sure that they are out in front as well…I think it's rewarding for them to be known and understand that I have no real interest in being THE face of this thing because it is really so much bigger than me.

Coaches emphasized that assistant coaches worked *with* them and not *for* them. Samantha said:

> I always hesitate to say that 'cause I always think of it as we work together. They work with me; they don't work for me…maybe it's just semantics, but I try to be sensitive to that because I was an assistant

> coach…and I think my boss did a good job of making me feel like I was a part of the decision-making process rather than I just work for her.

Within the athletic setting, head coaches asked for input from their assistants and gave them responsibilities. Coaches discussed how they made decisions with their coaching staffs. Stacey described how she would interact with assistant coaches when preparing to make coaching decisions: "I would listen to them, take their opinions seriously…" Tricia and her assistant coaches demonstrated care for each other and the team by modeling cohesiveness. She stated:

> If our staff's not cohesive, how can our team be?…we talk about that a lot. We will not agree all the time when we are in a staff meeting but when we go out of my office that we do our best to head one direction.

Some coaches cared for their assistant coaches and teams by striving to develop their assistant coaches, particularly if had a desire to be a head coach. Anna took the responsibility to prepare her assistant coaches for their next steps just as she does for her student-athletes:

> I mean especially…at the mid-major level where perhaps you are not able to pay your assistants exorbitant amounts of money and your turnover is going to be greater...as the head coach, I make it my job to make sure they are as good as they can possibly be to prepare them for their next job…there's a lot of congruence between my players and my coaches.

Tricia added:

> You're actually making your team stronger by giving them opportunities

> to grow. …I think the worst thing you could do to an assistant is to keep them in a box and not let them grow. I know that some people are afraid of losing their assistants if they become experienced. I kind of feel the opposite, I feel it is a huge compliment.

And, Samantha stated,

> …it's an incredibly important thing so you want to be able to delegate and give them projects…that they have control over, that they don't feel like they have to check in with the teacher…let them make their impact on the program too. So some of it is allowing them to be themselves.

Some coaches described how they cared for assistant coaches by emphasizing the importance of having balanced lives. Gladys said:

> Last night I told [my assistant coaches] as soon as this game is over, you're off,…I was on the court and I had spoken to the crowd and I walked right up to them and said "Okay guys, you get out of here. You're out. Get out right now."…And I just think that…for them, their days started early. Maybe they wanted to go to a nice dinner with their friend or maybe they wanted to go home and watch TV or maybe they wanted to go out. I don't know what they wanted to do, but…I think you have to have balance in your life and too many coaches and too many programs think that it's all encompassing and it's just a job.

Theme 2: Holistic Care of Student-Athletes

All coaches described the importance of caring about student-athletes as "people"

and not just "athletes." Coaches in this study spent much time listening and communicating about a variety of topics, tried to understand the student-athletes' perspectives, cared for individuals as individuals, and dealt with conflict with student-athletes. Gabby simply said, "…the welfare of the student-athlete is [the] primary consideration in what [I] do [as a coach]." In order for athletes to reach their potential, Samantha described the importance of a reciprocal trusting relationship between a coach and a student-athlete:

> …when you talk about care, there has to be trust and if there isn't trust, you can't care about someone; it'd just be a one-way street. And so if they trust you, they're going to allow you to be there for them and caring is not always being nice to them…It's about helping get where they want to go, stretching them and helping them grow outside of the little boxes that they come into.

Gabby highlighted the holistic nature of care when the coaching staff interacted with the student-athletes, making sure they keep track of their experiences outside of sport: "…the kids aren't just a number. We meet with them. We work with them. We inquire. We look after their health, their academics, their personal-social trials and tribulations."

Subtheme 2A: Listening and communicating. Coaches discussed how often they listened to and tried to understand student-athletes better as they talked about sport, school, and life. Coaches communicated honestly with student-athletes. Samantha said:

> You have to really be able to listen and sometimes you have to let them babble on and on and on so that they feel better…there's

> some…catharsis…for them in that. Sometimes they just need to talk and be heard, even if it doesn't make any sense.

In addition to listening, coaches emphasized the importance of observing student-athletes' nonverbal behavior. Jennifer discussed the importance of being aware of altered behavior:

> More often than not, the issues that negatively impact players' performance on the court have nothing to do with basketball…That's the truth of working with 18-22 year old women…I'm standing there looking at you in practice, not sure why you don't remember the play and you're thinking about something that has something…that's going on at home or you failed a test or something like that…it's just a matter of being aware of the changes in performance on the court or if a young lady stops by our offices and obviously looks distressed…

All coaches described the importance of communication. Anna said:

> …I try to get to know them as people and not just student-athletes...so there's a lot of communication that way. There's communication on the court and I try to spend as much time with them as I can. It's really hard to make 15 women happy and the only way to do that is to try to communicate as much as possible so they need to get to know me and get to know my expectations for them so I need to keep talking about them.

Jane described the importance of inquiring and then following up with student-athletes:

> I think they would tell you we ask about their families. We are constantly

> checking in on how they are feeling physically, mentally…communication isn't just something we say we're going to do, we have many follow-up meetings, we stay connected with all the different technologies out there to communicate with them outside of our 3-6 practice time slot.

Coaches described doing their best to know and understand the student-athletes' situations. Gladys said:

> [The student-athletes] wanna know you know that their mom or their dad are in the hospital or that you know they have a seven-page paper due. They wanna know that [you know] they're having problems with their boyfriend or their girlfriend…that's what they care about.

Anna said her monthly individual meetings are for her to know her student-athletes: "They're welcome to come in and ask questions, talk about playing time or whatever. Talk about their families, boyfriends, whatever. Different things. So I try to get to know them as people and not just student-athletes."

Subtheme 2B: Understanding student-athlete development. All coaches discussed their responsibility for the development of the young women who choose to play on their team. Coaches said understanding student-athletes' upbringing, being patient and honest through the development process, and how to encourage selfish student-athletes to become selfless were important aspects related to this subtheme. Jen highlighted the idea that understanding individuals' backgrounds may help coaches work more effectively with them as they develop:

> Well, I think part of it is understanding people's backgrounds. Everybody

> comes from different walks of life. People were raised differently…and maybe [that is] why one of my athletes is real easy to get frustrated or real easy to yell at somebody. It might be the environment they grew up in…but…my staff is going to take our time, figuring out what the issue is[,] why is there the issue[,] and what we can do better to change some of the behaviors that are associated with it.

Stacey emphasized the patience needed for coaches as student-athletes develop: "Sometimes it take a long time for someone to grow up and fix things so you have to be understanding and nonjudgmental." She added the importance of honesty to promote development: "…you're not afraid to be honest with them…and you take the time to talk to them about the hard stuff."

Jennifer also strove to facilitate growth in relationships between teammates. She had implemented a program where the student-athletes learned how to interact and care about each other:

> So, it's a one-to-one relationship and you know, it's a buddy system where they're learning how to give and take because oftentimes when you set up something like that, the older players are expected to care for the younger players exclusively so we're trying to help our youngsters understand that it's a two-way street so we've created this system and…given [them] certain tasks to complete together…if you come in to chat, I'll…ask you how your buddy is doing, not just how you're doing. So they're learning to kind of open their vision and their hearts to each other because I think at

> that age, it is really difficult to see somebody else because…the temptation is to worry about what I need to do…to establish myself.

Sylvia acknowledged student-athletes were typically selfish. She worked hard to develop a selfless mutuality:

> …there's a thing in team that I think is so vital and is something I strive for all the time with the team…it's to reach a level of almost true release and that sense of being for each other. There's this team sense that everything operates together and you truly love each other despite differences and you are just willing to let go of self and you're able to just fall into this place…that's the chemistry. And to me, that's the most fulfilling part of the game…and if you can help them get there…they're going to be successful. They are going to overachieve. If they hold onto their selfish desires…it will start to undermine the team's process…

Subtheme 2C: Individualized caring. Coaches recognized their power as they described their various responsibilities to individual student-athletes and assistant coaches as well as how much energy and effort they gave to others because they cared. Coaches discussed the responsibility they felt to treat the young women on their teams as athletes and individuals. Student-athletes responded to individualized approaches. Samantha stated her job allowed her to care for individuals, "I've said my goal getting into coaching is to help people get where they want to go and, um, golf happens to be my vehicle for that," while Anna said, I "…[use] basketball as the vehicle by which to be successful on the floor but give my kids what they will need to be successful in life."

Gladys said:

> So I think caring is being positive when positivism is needed and I think caring is…having a constructive voice when perhaps someone is settling...And it's my role to not allow the student-athlete to settle…If they settle as a student-athlete, then they will settle as people.

Coaches said student-athlete development was individualized through communication and interaction; however, coaches described the impersonal nature that coaching has at times, particularly when focusing solely on the athlete rather than the athlete as a person. Samantha indicated how she demonstrated care to student-athletes:

> So when I think about someone who cares, you really are concerned about their well-being in all areas of interest and helping them grow, you know, I've always said that the main part, the most important part of my job is that my student-athletes are happy, healthy, and successful and at various points, they rank in different orders, those three things…but it's obviously most important that they are mentally and emotionally healthy because if they're not, they're not going to perform well in the classroom or on the golf course.

Some coaches discussed being available when athletes made "non-athletic" mistakes that got them in legal or academic trouble. These coaches believed their responsibility extended beyond the athletic field. Jen said her coaching staff supported and guided student-athletes through their struggles: "And we're there for them through everything whether it's a legal issue, whether it's they spoke to a support staff

wrong…we're there to help them, support them, but also teach them the right way to do things."

Coaches also described the potential for losing sight of the individual because of the demands of the profession. Anna said: "We're not a basketball factory. But we want to be a great basketball team…we want to be like a mini-Duke or a mini-Stanford." Quinn commented on the lack of attention she gave to the athlete as a person when she coached at a gymnastics club:

> If you have national team members…it's almost like you cannot care because all you care about is how many numbers you're going to do so you can produce this type of product. And the athletes almost don't seem like people. They almost seem like [they're] just a machine.

Gladys became frustrated with support staff who lacked awareness of an individual student-athlete's struggles:

> …she was obviously a cutter and [it] pissed me off that the damn trainers and strength coach didn't see it cause they fuckin' lift weights with her everyday. They didn't see it. So I flipped on that and I get frustrated because I don't understand how people don't notice obvious things about people…it's not about technique, but it's about people…

Subtheme 2D: "Tough love." Most coaches expressed they had high expectations for their athletes and were not necessarily easy to play for. Of these, some coaches described how they used "tough love" and that they believed this had the potential to develop these women. Tricia talked about how she desired for them,

particularly the seniors, to achieve success:

> …You know, I think our players will tell you that I'm not always the easiest person to play for, but at the end of the day, I want what's best for them and that I will not settle until I get their best. But at the end of the day, they can call me any hour and I'll be there. And so I want to be tough but in the same vein, I don't want them to feel like I treated them like…[their] social security number…for instance, we just won three games in a row and I think our players thought that when we came back this week that I was going to take it easy on them this week in practice…I think if you ask all of them right now, it's been a very difficult week. I want more than anything for our senior group to go to the NCAA tournament…and so I'm trying to continually expect their best even on days when they don't even think they have more to give.

Jane also described how care included "tough love":

> I think sometimes…some of the most caring moments are…those "tough love" experiences where they might feel like it isn't, they aren't getting exactly what they want at that moment and I think that's a huge piece to the development of these kids right now…I think that's a very important point is that caring doesn't mean that they get whatever they want…It's not that way as a parent. It's not that way as a coach you know with college kids either.

Gladys shared that care is not always nice, especially when student-athletes are "settling."

"Caring is compassion and positive, but caring can be a bitch as well." And, Sylvia described how she got closer with student-athletes when there were issues: "…if I've had to deal with you, you've been a problem with me. We've had some problems. We've had issues; we've worked this out. We've gotten closer through that…"

Theme 3: Development of Self-as-Coach

Coaches discussed that being caring was a part of their personality. In addition, they described their own development as caring coaches by learning through experiences. Finally, they talked about how they evaluated themselves as carers.

Subtheme 3A: Care as a core personality element. Coaches believed their caring nature was part of their identity or personality. Gladys simply said, "I am who I am." When contemplating using a militaristic coaching style, Jennifer said, "I'm not wired that way…I think it takes one of my strengths out of the equation and I think it would end up being counterproductive." Quinn described her awareness of her lack of care with regard the athletes she worked with at the club level compared to the college level. She recognized her own growth in this area:

> …it is just comforting to know I know all of these [college] girls. I know 'em and I like 'em. Sounds really weird. It wasn't like that before. I knew my [club] athletes. I liked them because maybe she had the best split leap on beam and it was going to win state championships and I knew it…But it was a different type of like…I think it's [my] development. I think it's about transitioning to a different point.

Subtheme 3B: Learning through experience. Coaches developed as carers by

learning through their mistakes and life experiences. As they matured, they realized their interactions changed. For example, Tricia stated:

> …I think our parents realize [I care] when I'm having an issue with the player. Instead of just dealing with the player, I'll call the parent and get them involved. Sometimes together we can "circle the wagon" and get the player to adapt to the way of thinking…I've found that sometimes the parent doesn't always get the accurate picture of what is going on when they know sometimes it really does help. You know, I've got one of those situations happening right now and it seems to be working. I didn't used to always do that. And that was a mistake.

Anna learned to regulate her "caring mechanism" because of experiences with student-athletes:

> You're going to get stabbed in the back every now and then. You're going to get your heart broken. And that's the part you really have to learn to, it took years for me, I grew up as a coach and person and I really had to regulate that whole caring mechanism.

Five of the twelve coaches had children, but only Quinn discussed how having children increased her care for student-athletes. Two specific realizations influenced her to choose to be more caring:

> When I had children and I coached my own children, that changed my style of coaching because now I have to understand…this is someone's child that I'm coaching and this person that I'm developing into this

> awesome gymnast has to go home and…they're going to cry. So my kids came home and said, "Mom, you hurt my feelings…when you said this this way to me in front of everyone." It really put me on the spot. And I had to decide then what kind of person do I want to be…I didn't want to be a jerk coach, I wanted to be a coach who was effective at producing what type of athlete that I wanted. But I wanted them to like me at the end of the day too.

Quinn further described how her current student-athletes reminded her of her own daughters:

> …what actually ended up happening is I accidentally cared first [about these student-athletes] because they were so broken when I got here…I had individual meetings so they could get to know me…But it really has led me to being in a great place because I thought about my own daughters. These kids were 17, 18, 19 years old. And they were hurting. They were mad. They had a coach that, some of them loved the coach, some of them didn't. Some of them had things that were said to them by the coach that they didn't like. Others felt like the coach was wrong being fired…I had everything in every sense of the point. You know, that chair right there, we had a box of Kleenex and they just cried and I went and I had 36 hours, it seemed of crying. And I was like, damn, God is trying to tell me something and I need to get this message…I was like, "Something is wrong here. This is not a coaching job." And I think that really affected

> things that happened in the gym where I normally would have been like [stomps foot] "you better do another one cause you fell and you better get that done." And I didn't and sometimes I would beat myself up, like why am I not pushing them, but it wasn't the time.

Quinn came to the realization that "…winning is very important to me, but I think people are more important to me at this point in my life."

Subtheme 3C: Self-evaluation as carer. Coaches described evaluating their caring through noting others' responses or concluding they were caring because of their own thoughts about and feelings toward student-athletes. Some coaches stated they could not determine if others perceived them as caring. As for the evaluation of care, most coaches said they interpreted student-athlete cues as indicators that they were caring. Jennifer said, "I think it's…reinforced when our student-athletes come by and share things with you. Having those conversations that sometimes don't have anything to do with basketball…" Coaches evaluated their own thoughts and feelings to determine if they were caring. Gabby said, "…I spend a lot of time obsessing about them…If I didn't care, I wouldn't think about them after I left the office."

Some coaches said they could not really know if student-athletes perceived them as caring. Anna's response was: "I don't think you ever know. I think it's similar to parenting. You just do your best to communicate with your kids that you love them and that you will take care of them in whatever way you can." Coaches evaluated their own success in a variety of ways. All coaches described their evaluation of their coaching in terms of impacting the student-athletes' lives. Stacey said, "I'm successful because I

know I have helped people be better people." Tricia described how she judged her success with student-athletes:

> When we recruit a player, I basically tell them there are three things we want to accomplish when they come here. One is that they graduate in the major that they want to be in. Some coaches will have them change their major to fit the practice schedule and we want them to make the best grades that they possibly can and then…we will help them find a job when they're done…I don't want our players just to be here for basketball and to get an education…I want to prepare them for what's next…The second part of it is that they become the best basketball player they can be. They've got to meet me halfway. I'm doing everything I can to develop them individually, but I need them to work hard too and do the things we ask. And then the third thing would be if they had a chance to do the decision all over again, that they would choose our place because they had such a good experience.

A few coaches emphasized it may take a long time for the coaches to know that they were perceived as caring. Gladys said:

> …I think success to me is that…you truly have made a difference in one's life…they might not think it's positive, but 10, 20 years down the road. They usually come around and say 'wow, what, you really taught me a valuable lesson.' I think that's what makes a…successful coach.

Theme 4: Institutional Care

The NCAA presented most coaches obstacles to caring for student-athletes because of rules and revenue; however, many also acknowledged the NCAA sought to promote the well-being of student-athletes, particularly their academic achievement. Coaches expressed "picking and choosing battles" when advocating for student-athlete welfare. Two specifically stated there was a hierarchical order of power related to revenue and their sport was not the top priority in the athletic department. Care for some student-athletes seemed to have been discouraged because of their lack of revenue generation. Finally, all coaches were impressed with the support services available to student-athletes and deemed this as a way that individual institutions provided care for student-athletes.

Subtheme 4A: The "entangled web" of the NCAA. Jane and others described the NCAA as an "entangled web" and coaches faced many challenges presented by the NCAA, including the conflicting interests of promoting the student-athletes' well-being versus generating revenue. Half of the coaches shared strong negative opinions about the NCAA, five described mixed positive and negative opinions, and one expressed positive opinions about the NCAA. Several coaches expressed frustration with the rules set forth by the NCAA. A few coaches described how the NCAA prioritized revenue over student-athlete welfare. Some coaches discussed the reality of cheating by other coaches. A few coaches described the differences in the NCAA's care for revenue-generating sports versus non-revenue-generating sports and three described the differences in care for major versus mid-major conferences. Two coaches described the positive intentions but negative consequences of NCAA rules in specific situations. Only one coach said she had

not experienced that the NCAA prohibited care in any way.

All twelve coaches sounded uncomfortable describing the impact of the NCAA on care whether because of the nature of their opinions or their lack of knowledge. It seemed this was when the coaches felt most vulnerable and were the most cautious during the interview. Several coaches paused before they responded. For example, after a significant pause, Gladys said, "You know, I think that, the NCAA is us…We are the NCAA. So if we don't care about our athletes, shame on us." During her interview, I continued with the next question because she seemed like she did not want to elaborate. Eventually she critiqued the business model that the NCAA and her athletic department use. Quinn and Samantha asked if they would indeed be anonymous in my representation of their data; both had strong negative opinions about the NCAA's lack of concern for student-athletes. Nancy and Jen seemed to have the most positive opinions about the NCAA.

Jane stated: "I think…unfortunately, the NCAA has, it's such an entangled web that it's hard to decipher where that care is really stemming from." Sylvia added to this idea when she said,

> …the NCAA is about providing opportunities for athletes; however, they are also about making money. And so I think that they're set up to help athletes in general, but I think that where the money is lies the care…[they're] sponsoring so many different sports and so many different championships from a Title IX perspective…Is it because [they] care or is

> it because the law is telling [them]? And I think that there's a difference between what the law tells us and what, what is done based on true, genuine care. And the people that are recipients of genuine care versus by law care know the difference.

Gabby said, "You have a rulebook that is so thick because of the needs of sports other than the one I am coaching." Stacey confirmed Gabby's conclusions: "…all the rules the NCAA make are around basketball and football." Samantha was also frustrated with both the number of rules and their origin:

> I think the more you try to control it…that's why our rulebook keeps getting bigger…The more you try to control it, the harder it is. And there are always going to be people out there who cheat…the rules are definitely made for the very few[,]…look at women's golf…nobody's sending FedEx envelops with money to anybody."

The NCAA's rules seemed to cause social injustices. Jennifer illustrated the "entangled web" with this story and how NCAA rules prohibited care for a student-athlete:

> We have a walk-on on our team this year who doesn't come from great means and so she needed a book for class and she's not receiving any aid of any kind…from us. She needed $35 to buy this book. And so we asked our compliance people if we could use the Student-Athlete Opportunity Fund which is a fund available for that purpose for student-athletes. So, NCAA, kudos to you…has that Student-Athlete Opportunity Fund. The

> problem is because she's a walk-on, she doesn't qualify for access to the Student-Athlete Opportunity Fund so we could not give this young lady $35 to pay for a book that she needed for class…on the one hand, the fact that the fund is available, outstanding. On the other hand,…this was a book that she needed desperately. She felt like she had exhausted all of her resources…we couldn't buy the book because she's not on scholarship. Well, it's less expensive for us to buy her a $35 book that to give this young lady a $10,000 scholarship that would pay for her room and board and tuition. It was $35 versus multiple thousands of dollars but because that's…the NCAA rule…

Tricia described a "gray [moral] area" where the NCAA has made a firm rule that prohibited care for one student-athlete while there is so much money available:

> …you have a kid that is from a difficult background and there's still rules that prohibit you from helping as much as you wish you could. I understand why the rules are in place. There are times…a kid goes home to a shelter for Christmas, that you wish you could do more. And then you see all the money coming in for NCAA tournament to all the schools and you wonder why you can't give money to a kid who doesn't have a house. I think that's hard to stomach sometimes, but you know, I think for the most part, a lot of rules are in place to try to help student-athletes…

Four coaches (all in major conferences) suggested that the NCAA has "drifted" and came to prioritize maintaining power over the welfare of the student-athlete. Samantha

described how the NCAA's priorities have shifted from focusing on the welfare of the student-athlete to profit and power:

> I think [the NCAA] started out…with the right intentions and the right execution of those intentions. And then, when money became involved, it drifted from what it was really supposed to be about. I don't think they care about the student-athlete. I think they care about control and money and… maybe I'm wrong, but…like everything else, it drifts. You know it started with the right ideas…It drifted from like 'Yea, we started this to make sure these guys *didn't* die from trying to wear a leather football on their head' to 'Oh no, we know better than the NFL and what science says about the number of hits somebody's head can take.'

Stacey said:

> The NCAA is selfish. The NCAA is governed by money and is selfish and they don't understand our culture…they're concerned about basketball and football and all the rules the NCAA make are around basketball and football…They're just regulating it for money so it doesn't really, it's almost so hypocritical that you would just have to get rid of it…

Samantha also believed the NCAA prioritized money and marketing over caring about student-athlete welfare and the organization lacks accountability and consistency:

> [The NCAA doesn't] report to anybody and so you look at some of the penalties they hand out and…They're incredibly inconsistent. They want complete control of everything and yet don't do things in a timely manner

> and actually make decisions that impact the welfare of the student-athlete…I think that, I don't think they care about the student-athlete. I think they care about control and money… I don't know why they suspended those guys from Ohio State because at what point are their jerseys and their national championship rings theirs, their own property and when are they not?…[or] back when Minnesota had its academic scandal, and Wisconsin…had some athletes getting discounted footwear at a sporting goods store as opposed to tutors writing and taking tests and the kids at Wisconsin got far worse penalties than the kids at Minnesota. I'm like "Wait, that's academic fraud! These kids got a discount on a pair of tennis shoes"…And then some of these basketball suspensions. They either dealt with an agent or they didn't. You get three games and you get nine…it's a hard pill to swallow to actually believe that [the NCAA is] really and truly about the welfare of the student-athlete…but they do some pretty good marketing.

Jennifer discussed the widening differences between major and mid-major NCAA Division I schools and how deregulation could affect coaches' abilities to demonstrate care for student-athletes and parents:

> …[the NCAA is] talking about deregulating everything so that if I'm at (major conference university) and I can afford to travel your parents as a student-athlete on our roster to a post-season tournament…All I know is that it will hurt [mid-major programs] if they deregulate everything. It

> hurts schools of this size. Um, and it will further widen the gaps between the haves and the have-nots. And we just end up doing different jobs and that's, we're already doing different jobs to a certain extent, but this makes it a very different job. It almost makes it a slightly different profession if you start talking about if you got it, do it; if you don't got it, sorry for ya.

Anna agreed and believed she had more freedom to demonstrate care to student-athletes:

> I had a very different experience when I worked in the [major conference]. At the end of the day, the goals were very different. The goals in the [major conference] were to win a national championship. And so you're pushing the limit on everything you can, give your kids everything you can give them, recruit as hard as you can recruit to get the Brittany Griner and have it all…it's very different at the mid-major level. You can be a little more real at the mid-major level. Certainly, my job depends on winning and losing, but not like [major conference] coaches. Cause they're making an awful lot more money than I am. And they have an awful lot more pressure on a bigger scale.

This "pushing the limit" for recruits appeared to blur some of the NCAA recruiting lines. Four coaches (all in major conferences) described the reality of cheating and that with the current rules, lack of enforcement, and pressure to win, there was no end to cheating. This discouraged care for student-athletes because of the need to play through injury or not take care of a student-athlete who was suicidal. Gladys discussed the business model of the NCAA and her own administrators:

> I think the student-athletes are getting paid at an alarming rate. Transcripts are being changed…the NCAA, I think as much as they want to preach or our administrators want to preach that it's about the welfare of the student-athletes, it's about winning. And it's bottom line. It's about winning. And it doesn't really matter if you have three injuries or if you have someone who's having a nervous breakdown or someone that's going to jump [off] the (name) bridge…"What's wrong with you? What's wrong with your program?" And I think that for me, it's a very different beast today that it was [more than 30] years ago.

Nancy was the only coach who said that the NCAA encouraged care for athletes. Interestingly, she worked at a mid-major institution in softball and her institution was in the midst of dealing with severe penalties for NCAA rule violations. She said:

> They limit the number of hours that you can obviously work with the athletes…I think [academic control is] the biggest part of caring about the athlete piece that I've seen and that they put a much greater emphasis on graduating them…as opposed to getting them in and getting them through their years of eligibility.

Subtheme 4B: Advocating for student-athlete welfare. Coaches described how they demonstrated care through advocacy for student-athletes' welfare and working relationships with administrators. Gabby prioritized what she fought for with administrators; the most important things "…directly affect the welfare of the student-athletes. How much I spend on a leotard isn't a mountain to die for. But what they're

getting in the cafeteria is." Sylvia said, "I am the one that needs to fight for them, but I also know that it's not always part of the plan and…that can hurt." In contrast, Quinn described a situation when one of her administrators advocated for her student-athletes:

> …When I was hired, my athletic director…said, "You know what? I do care about winning, but I don't care about it as much as I care about these athletes being happy, having a good time being on this team, and really feeling like that have a coach that cares…" My AD, my boss, does not give a flip if we win championships. She does, but that's not first. First for her is happy athletes.

Nancy had four different athletic directors since 2009. With the chaos of the situation, she seemed to have resigned herself to only approaching the administrators if something was *absolutely* necessary because of the hierarchy. This may have discouraged care. She said:

> …I know that the people that I'm dealing with now are good people. They're getting the job done, but I also know that there's definitely an order of things that have to be taken care of and so not all of my needs are going to be immediately met…I don't go to my bosses and gripe about every single little thing unless I absolutely need their assistance with it.

Tricia also discussed choosing wisely when to advocate for the program so that she potentially allows for better success in some battles:

> And the last thing that they want to know everyday is what…they can do for you…and to understand the pressures that they feel and pick and

> choose your moments of when you need to go in and fight for your program because they have a lot of other sports that are doing the same thing constantly. And…if I'm constantly in there begging for things, sooner or later, I'd shut the door on me too. So, you know there will come a time when I maybe do need a lot of help with something and if I pick and choose my moments, maybe I'm more successful with the battles that I win.

Samantha was inspired when an administrator worked with her to solve problems. She felt her administrator was demonstrating care for her when she said:

> Show each other that you care about each other by being a good problem solver. So it's not always the listening and the sharing and the really hearing someone, but saying, "Hey, let's see if we can't figure this out together. I'm going to lock arms with you. I'm going to get in the trenches with you. I'm going to get dirty with you and get muddy and that's fine. We're going to figure this out." And I think when you have people that want to jump in the trenches with you, for someone like me, that is really inspiring. All you want to do is make them proud, it's not why you do it, but it's, "Ah, we're going to do this together" and you know, when you feel like the administration is on your side and willing to get their hands dirty with you and really go after something, then that's a really inspiring environment to work in.

Subtheme 4C: Support services for student-athletes. Coaches commented on

the easy access that student-athletes had to resources such as academic support, sports medicine, strength and conditioning, nutrition, sport psychology consultants, psychological counseling, campus ministers, Champs Life Skills, and career placement. However, some coaches believed with too much care came a sense of entitlement in student-athletes. Jane described the separate availability student-athletes had to support staff and other resources:

> I think universities in general kind of have done a fantastic job of providing with a little bit, I don't want to say quicker care. That sounds like it is a 'fast food' shop, but you know, with the time commitment and schedules that these student-athletes have, their windows of time are very structured and it's oftentimes very chaotic and I think athletic departments in particular have done a really nice job of, maybe I'm a little bit biased, because I have been at some great institutions that have a lot of funding. I think athletic departments do a really nice job of providing a separate availability, you know, a little bit more immediate of care in terms of sports medicine, regular doctors if you've got a cough. They have a little bit of a different lane to walk through which you know, is really beneficial in terms of their schedules and time commitments that they do give to this university.

Sylvia described the assistance available to the student-athletes at her university:

> …[the athletic department has] gone all out on that and…each athlete can get individual tutors, each athlete has their advisor come to the (former

> student-athlete name) Center to advise them. They have a career placement services that reaches out to (alumni) all over the country and helps them in their post-graduate.

Stacey described how the convenient access may create issues for student-athletes and that too much care may lead to a sense of entitlement. "Sometimes I think it can backfire because they think they can get everything, maybe a little bit of entitlement kind of culture…where they can't do stuff on their own."

Summary

Throughout the interviews, coaches discussed the structure of the team, total-person care, the development of coaches, and how the athletic department and NCAA structures affected care. These coaches desired to make a difference in student-athletes' lives and help them reach their potential as athletes and people. To do that, they invested time, communicated, and held the student-athletes accountable.

In the next chapter, I discuss the results, suggest implications for student-athletes and practitioners, recommend future directions in research, and give my concluding thoughts.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion, Implications, Future Directions, and Final Thoughts

The purpose of this study was to interview NCAA Division I "exemplar" caring coaches in order to learn how such coaches demonstrate care to athletes within NCAA Division I athletic systems. In this chapter, I discuss the connections between the results and the previous literature as well as how the results differ from previous research. Guiding research questions included: (a) What are the components/philosophy of an "exemplar" care orientation/caring coach in NCAA Division I Athletics?; (b) How is such a care orientation implemented between coach and athlete?; (c) Is being a "good" coach the same as being a "caring" coach?; (d) What institutional structures are in place that either encourage or prohibit caring behavior?; and (e) What NCAA structures are in place that either encourage or prohibit caring behavior? Results indicated four themes including: (a) *Team as "Family,"* (b) *Holistic Care of Student-Athletes*, (c) *Development of Self-as-Coach,* and (d) *Institutional Care*.

Sections are organized by the guiding research questions. Because I used the Listening Guide (Gilligan et al., 2003) for data analysis, it is important to consider both what the coaches did say as well as what they did not say so I discuss instances of silence also.

Guiding Research Question #1: What Are the Components/Philosophy of an "Exemplar" Caring Coach in NCAA Division I Athletics?

Overall, coaches seemed to believe that care consisted of concern for student-athletes' well-being and helping them to develop as athletes, students, and people. Within

the athletic department and NCAA institutions, coaches in this study believed care was demonstrated by integrity. This institutional care seemed demonstrate care for student-athletes, the institutions' rules, and the sport.

Coaches took an individual approach to developing student-athletes as people. They realized student-athletes were not products although there was a tension between individualized and automated approaches toward coaching. Anna said her program was not a "basketball factory" and Quinn's coaching style was shifting away from creating "machines." The tension between individualized caring and the internal and external expectations of student-athlete production was apparent. However, these coaches stated they wanted to encourage the student-athletes to become independent women, thus supporting Theberge's (1990) findings. To accomplish this, they listened to and communicated with student-athletes, tried to understand student-athlete development, and demonstrated individualized caring toward the student-athletes. The findings of this study also firmly support three domains of presented in *Quality Coaches, Quality Sports: National Standards for Sports Coaches* including philosophy and ethics; growth and development; and teaching and communication (Brylinsky, 2006). The overarching coaching philosophy promoted in this book is an athlete-centered one (Brylinsky, 2006).

All coaches were actively trying to influence the moral development of the student-athlete as they recognized that their job was to help student-athletes develop and transition to adulthood. They communicated that their job was about relationships *and* teaching strategies and skills. Coaches indirectly described using the four components of moral development (Noddings, 2005). In this, they recognized their influence (Northouse,

2007) and that the structure of the team gave them this power. All twelve coaches used modeling, eight incorporated dialogue, four facilitated practice, and one, Jennifer, described using confirmation. Whether she intentionally added this to her program because she learned it while growing up, in her psychology major, through her Achieving Coaching Excellence coaching certification, or elsewhere is unknown. For coaches to consider their job as more than wins and losses, techniques and tactics, or revenue generation, they may become more aware of how they impact the student-athletes. This supports Fry, Gano-Overway, and colleagues' (e.g., Fry & Gano-Overway, 2010; Newton et al., 2007) findings that coaches who promote a caring environment are aware of their responsibility for the moral development of student-athletes. This caring climate seems to dovetail with holistic care of student-athletes. Although it was the desire of the coaches, it is unknown if NCAA Division I student-athletes were more likely to appreciate their coaches and teammates or be more open to learning life lessons if they competed in a caring climate.

All coaches modeled moral behavior, but Jennifer, Gladys, Sylvia, and Jane (basketball and volleyball) coaches described giving intentional opportunities for student-athletes to practice positive interactions with teammates, possibly because of the demands (i.e., interdependence) of the sports and the desire for team cohesion. There was much more of a dyadic focus between coaches and student-athletes in individual sports like gymnastics, golf, and swimming. It would be valuable to specifically study coach-athlete dyad and coach-team care in both individual and team sports.

Coaches in this study described the importance of the academic careers of

student-athletes. Opportunities for professional athletic careers are more limited and less lucrative for women than men. There are various reasons for this; however, it is a reality for female athletes who want to pursue professional athletics. In 2012, the average individual salaries for the "big four" men's American sports leagues were: $5.15 million (NBA), $3.2 million (MLB), $2.4 million (NHL), and $1.9 million (NFL) (Burke, 2012). The WNBA's *team* salary cap in 2013 was $913,000 (WNBA Salaries 2013, 2013), less than the average of one professional male athlete's individual contract. In addition, National Pro Fastpitch, a professional women's softball league has a $150,000 *team* salary cap (salaries range from $4,000-$25,000) and rosters have between 16 and 20 athletes for the three-month season (Janes, 2011). Women's professional football leagues have had several teams; however, salaries were not found (IWFL, n.d.). Women do not have a comparable professional hockey league in the United States. As cited on ESPN Golf (LPGA tour money leaders, n.d.; PGA tour money leaders, n.d.), there was a significant disparity between golf's male and female earners in 2012. Rory McIlroy, the PGA's money list leader, earned more than $8 million dollars, while Stacy Lewis, the LPGA's money list leader, earned $560,126. Bob Estes earned more than $1 million and was 100th on the 2012 list of PGA earners and Kristy McPherson earned $5,484 as the 100th player on the 2012 LPGA earner list. Even if women have the ability to play professionally, the reality is most still need to have another job that allows them the flexibility to compete.

Coaches used the metaphor "family" to help describe team structure and roles. Family is considered to be in the private sphere; however, NCAA Division I Athletics are

in the public sphere (Duquin, 1984). In the public sphere, moral development is usually defined as the socialization of rules, principles, and rights, while in the private sphere, it is the ethic of care, relationships, responsibilities to others, and empathy (Duquin, 1984). This may be another reason the family metaphor was used, particularly with smaller teams. Most coaches described their role as a "transitional parent" or "parent" rather than specifically a "mother" or "father." In a heteronormative family structure, mothers become the sole nurturers while fathers accept other responsibilities (hooks, 1984). Coaches in this study took on a caring role, but they enlisted their assistant coaches(male and female) to help. The head coaches also took on professional responsibilities and encouraged the assistant coaches in this way as well. Also demonstrating a heteronormative structure, hooks (2000) pointed out children are considered the "property" of their parents (p. 73). Quinn's phrase—children as parents' "most prized possessions"—although well intentioned by acknowledging the value children have to their parents, still assume children are property.

While analyzing the structure of the teams, it seemed team size and the coach:student-athlete ratio also affected coaches' discourse related to their teams. All but two of the co-participants had fewer than 20 student-athletes on their team and nine had ratios of one coach to less than six student-athletes. (Coaches did not include other support staff such as Directors of Operations or administrative assistants). Quinn, Stacey, and Nancy all had coach:student-athlete ratios of approximately 1:14. Quinn and Stacey (coaches with at least 29 players on the team) did not discuss the team being like a family, except Quinn, who called the team a "sisterhood," which may have meant that the

team is more like sorority than a family. On Stacey's swim team, she had more than 20 student-athletes and was exhausted from dealing with the demands of her job. Quinn also remarked about the challenge of meeting with 36 student-athletes individually during her first year. The size of the team and number of assistants (i.e., organizational structure) seemed to matter to the type of care given. When a basketball team has 13 student-athletes and four coaches, it is much easier to give individual attention; however, when a swim team has 29 student-athletes and two coaches, it was much more difficult. Basketball and volleyball teams had the best coach:student-athlete ratios ranging from 1:3 (Sylvia) to 1:3.75 (Jane, Tricia). In having these small ratios, it appeared creating a family atmosphere was much easier than teams with higher ratios. Noddings (2006) promoted smaller classroom sizes and suggested this would allow for a greater quantity of time and better quality time with the teacher. By nature of some sports, team size cannot be adjusted; however, perhaps coach:student-athlete ratio could be decreased.

Investing in relationships (i.e., caring) takes time. So, in addition to team size, another consideration is the time coaches are expected to invest in outside activities such as fundraising, public relations, departmental staff meetings, committees, community events, among others. It makes sense that a more hierarchical structure would be more efficient, particularly when coaches' schedules are so full.

How coaches discussed care for assistant coaches was also an addition to the literature. This was demonstrated in both interactions (e.g., listening and communicating, helping assistant coaches develop, letting assistant coaches be themselves) and heteronormative family structures (e.g., giving assistant coaches responsibilities,

modeling how to be a coach). These coaches suggested ego may have been a factor for coaches who do not treat their assistant coaches with care.

Guiding Research Question #2: How is Such a Care Orientation Implemented Between Coach and Athlete?

The most important approaches cited by coaches related to implementing a caring coach-athlete relationship seemed to be treating student-athletes as people, helping them to develop as people, and recruiting legally. It seems if these were upheld, the coach was demonstrating care for student-athletes, the institutions, and the game. Student-athletes would have the opportunity to develop as adolescents, compete at a high level, and get a college education.

Noddings' (2005) two components of care, engrossment and motivational displacement, seem to correspond to the themes coaches described, namely that caring coach-athlete relationships are in concern for the well-being of others and in facilitating their development. Strategies to gain awareness of the well-being of others included listening, communicating, and individualized caring. This supports the inclusion of engrossment in a conceptualization of care. Engrossment is similar to engagement, a component of LaVoi's (2004) coach-athlete relationship model. If coaches are demonstrating engrossment or engagement with student-athletes, it seems they would be concerned about their individual well-being. Coaches' advocacy for student-athletes to administrators seemed to also dovetail with this model, as coaches often fought for things that impacted the well-being of individuals associated with the program.

Holistic Care for Student-Athletes and its subthemes: listening and

communicating, understanding student-athlete development, individualized caring, and "tough love" seem to correspond with Noddings' (2005) motivational displacement. The coaches interviewed all said they wanted to help student-athletes mature as athletes, students, and people. They described ways they expended energy to help them develop. Empowerment, another of LaVoi's (2004) components of the coach-athlete relationship, fit with this theme as well. These coaches wanted student-athletes to be prepared to go into the "real world."

At times, motivational displacement, empowerment, or this desire to facilitate development, may have led to conflict because of differing opinions between a coach and a student-athlete or between a coach and an assistant coach. Some of coaches who were interviewed chose to use a "tough love" approach with student-athletes when they believed the student-athletes were making poor decisions in hopes they might make wiser choices. Many coached remarked that they were aware of how student-athletes developed and that the coaches spent a lot of time communicating with student-athletes through this process. Sylvia said when she had to deal with conflicts with student-athletes, they often developed a stronger relationship. When coaches had disagreements with assistant coaches about coaching decisions, there seemed to be a lot of communication among the staff members; however, head coaches made the ultimate decisions and expected the assistants to support them so they were a united front. How coaches worked with student-athletes and assistant coaches supported Gilligan's (1993) finding that women deal with conflict through communication as well as a third component of LaVoi's (2004) coach-athlete relationship model, the ability to deal with conflict.

When implementing a care orientation, there were several risks involved. With all their other responsibilities, Stacey, Gladys, Gabby, and Sylvia described how exhausting it was to care as a coach. One of the risks for caring is that the carer may become overwhelmed with responsibilities (Noddings, 2005). Another risk may come from guilt (Noddings, 2005). For coaches, this came with divided engrossment, when two or more needs conflict. Jane described the need for delayed gratification, not giving student-athletes what they thought they wanted in a given moment. Divided engrossment possibly reflected coaches' inner turmoil because of the unknown consequences for the student-athlete, team, and interpersonal relationships. This raised questions related to care and coaches' understanding of what was best for student-athletes as well as dyadic and team care. How does a coach know what is best for a student-athlete? Are coaches imposing what they think is best or are they listening and communicating so they understand the student-athletes' needs and potentials? When contemplating the effects of divided engrossment within a team, it is important to look beyond the coach-athlete dyad. An action of a coach might be perceived as caring for a student-athlete and not the team or vice versa. Who determines what care is?

Caring choices often affect more than just the student-athlete and the coach. Noddings' (1984, 2005) conceptualization of care seems to emphasize a dyadic relationship rather than relationships in an interdependent group. Jen's description of a "tough love" experience brought up interesting ideas related to the perception of care. She deselected a star student-athlete from the team because of academic reasons. Jen and her coaching staff struggled with the decision because they wanted the best for the

student-athlete and the team. Jen stated she genuinely wanted the best for this young woman *and* the team. It was unknown if the student-athlete would ever perceive Jen's choice as caring. If the student-athlete never perceived an act as caring, was it caring? It was also unknown if the team would perceive Jen's decision as caring because of the additional losses that they incurred. If the team perceived the act as caring but the individual did not, was it caring? How does a coach balance care for individual student-athletes and the team? Listening, communication, and individualized caring seem extremely important to help with these challenging decisions as Anna highlighted.

Some coaches did not know if student-athletes considered them caring until years after they graduated. So, the question is: If care is not acknowledged, is it still care in that moment? Some coaches believed they knew they were caring because of their own motives, thoughts, feelings, and actions. However, according to Noddings (1984), this is not the case. For a caring act to be complete, the cared-for has to acknowledge the caring act (Noddings, 1984). Therefore, this notion of care was only partially supported.

Guiding Question #3: Is Being a "Good" Coach the Same as Being a "Caring" Coach?

There is scant literature related to coach identities. However, one of LaVoi's (2004) components of a coach-athlete relationship is authenticity. If care is a core personality element of a coach, it follows that coach would be caring when being authentic. This was supported as coaches talked about their own identities as carers and how that naturally fit with their coaching philosophy.

Coaches evaluated being a "good" and/or "caring" coach in different ways. Eight believed being a "good" coach and being a "caring" coach were synonymous. Two believed all coaches cared about student-athletes or they would not become coaches. Four said "good" and "caring" were not necessarily synonymous because coaches can be good at getting student-athletes to compete well but not care about them beyond practice and competition. Two said coaches can be "caring" but may not be "good." Because of the lack of research related to coach identity, studying this further could be beneficial research.

Guiding Question #4: What Institutional Structures are in Place That Either Encourage or Prohibit Caring Behavior?

The culture of athletic departments mattered to these coaches. With the exception of Gladys, the coaches seemed to have similar philosophies as their administrators. These coaches described their athletic departments as supportive of their coaching efforts as they could be considering budgets and "the order of things." At times, coaches chose not to advocate for student-athletes and their programs because of this "order." They wanted good working relationships with administrators and knew they would not receive everything they asked for and that it may hurt their advocacy in the long-run.

As Jennifer said and Anna confirmed, coaching at the major and mid-major levels were two different jobs. Several non-revenue generating sport coaches in this study suggested coaching football and basketball were quite different than coaching their sports, particularly with extreme pressure and high expectations. With these also came bigger budgets, larger contracts, and better facilities for the revenue-generating sports.

Coaches reinforced that there was a tension between money and education (Gearity & Denison, 2012). These coaches described institutionalized constraints and this happened because of budgets and potential for revenue generation. Women's basketball, particularly in Gladys' situation, did not seem to face the same issues as non-revenue-generating sport coaches at major conference universities. There was a hierarchical order, with football and men's basketball showcased. Women's basketball was also reported as typically elevated. The amount of money spent on coaches' salaries and resources for the program revealed the priorities of an athletic department. Gladys was the only coach who thought her athletic department lacked an ethic of care because of the extreme pressure she faced to win *no matter what*. This may have been because there was more money involved in women's basketball, particularly in major conferences compared to non-revenue-generating sports or sports in mid-major conferences.

Gladys decried the lack of care demonstrated by coaches, particularly at the top levels of sport. Some coaches lie to, degrade, neglect, abuse, coerce, and discipline student-athletes regularly (Denison, 2007; Gearity, 2009; Kirby, Greaves, & Hankivsky, 2000). Gearity and Denison (2012) suggest that "guided by an ethic of care and the responsible use of power, however, sport could legitimately call itself a valuable educational experience" (p. 355).

Even with the pressure, no coaches in the current study admitted to cheating to secure a recruit or to changing a transcript to make a student-athlete eligible. However, among the coaches at the major conference level, there was more discussion of cheating than by coaches at the mid-major level. There was also more insinuation of cheating with

football and basketball than other sports. Sylvia said these coaches cheated to survive and keep their jobs.

Duquin (1984) stated that institutions lacked an ethic of care. However, results from the current study suggest coaches were content with the resources provided for student-athletes such as tutors, nutritionists, sport psychology consultants, mental health providers, athletic trainers, and physicians. Because of student-athletes' limited availability and the fact that any delay in care may have hindered performance, these resources were provided separately for student-athletes. This quicker care or "one-stop" care had become a standardized routine because of the demands of bureaucracy (Hughes, 2002). Two coaches discussed this type of care leading student-athletes to develop a sense of entitlement.

Tricia wanted student-athletes to be able to graduate in the major of their choice to help them take steps toward a fulfilling career. Academic clustering has been shown to exist (Schneider, Roy, & Fisher, 2010); however, there are various possible explanations for this, including: academic underpreparation of student-athletes, time demands of certain majors (e.g., pre-medicine), and time schedules (i.e., courses overlap with practice or travel schedule).

Guiding Research Question #5: What NCAA Structures are in Place That Either Encourage or Prohibit Caring Behavior?

Based on the research of the NCAA, economists believe it is a cartel and student-athletes are unpaid professionals (Zimbalist, 2001). Football and men's and women's basketball student-athletes earn a low income compared to the revenue they help

generate; however, those who benefit from the revenue generated by their performance are football coaches, basketball coaches, athletic directors, conference commissioners, non-revenue sports, and NCAA Division II and III programs. Byers (1995) considered the NCAA system a monopoly when he wrote, "Collegiate amateurism is not a moral issue. It is an economic camouflage for monopoly practice" (p. 376). Several coaches in this study believed the NCAA was hypocritical as they perceived student-athlete welfare was a distant second to revenue generation. Enforcement of the rules was inconsistent. Samantha compared the more severe consequences for student-athletes at Wisconsin who got discounted athletic equipment at a local sport store while Minnesota student-athletes had people writing papers for them. Allowing student-athletes to cheat academically was not demonstrating care for them and their potential.

However, most coaches recognized the challenges the NCAA faced. Jennifer and Tricia both were affected by Proposition 48 and they were frustrated because student-athletes were isolated because of their academic performance when they could have benefited from being surrounded by a support system. Walter Byers (1995), former executive director of the NCAA, shared his opinions about Proposition 48, a rule that limited collegiate entrance to underprepared student-athletes. He believed a minimum set of academic expectations was not unreasonable and if student-athletes could not achieve even these low standards, then the NCAA may not have been the best place for them. He did not see how student-athletes would be able to catch up academically. He believed other student-athletes who had prepared academically should receive the opportunity to play at the NCAA level. He recognized people cheated by changing transcripts and

helping certain student-athletes achieve eligibility by receiving course credit for classes they did not actually take.

Byers (1995) detailed some of the challenges he faced while being employed by the NCAA. He acknowledged corruption was rampant; however, it was difficult to assess because of the lack of resources at the NCAA's disposal and the numerous institutions. He shared his disappointment in being informed of cheating by coaches such as former Oklahoma football coach Barry Switzer and former UNLV men's basketball coach, Jerry Tarkanian. Byers also said there was significant evidence and recognized how much money and power influenced the system.

The social injustices that NCAA rules produced frustrated some coaches. For example, Tricia would have liked to have done something for a student-athlete who returned to a homeless shelter to be with her family for Christmas. Jennifer wished the NCAA's Student-Athletes Opportunity (or she) could have provided a walk-on student-athlete with $35 for a textbook because the student-athlete could not afford it. Coaches acknowledged rules were made for the few and most of these rules were made because of football and basketball coaches and players.

To be sure, the NCAA provided institutional constraints. Basketball coaches (major and mid-major) discussed issues like Proposition 16, Proposition 48, and cheating; however, other coaches (at major universities) discussed that the NCAA rules enacted were for basketball and football but not their sports. This caused significant frustration for the latter group. In addition, it appeared those who coached basketball did not recognize the privilege they had within the NCAA.

Silences: Critical Self-Awareness

I noticed silences related to race, sexual orientation, and religion throughout the interviews. In this study, coaches were not specifically asked how race, sexual orientation, or religion may impact care. Also, these three topics might be taboo as for they are for their regular media interviews.

No coaches discussed how race might impact care. Was this because I did not ask? Or could it have been because I am Caucasian or coaches did not think it was pertinent? The sexual orientation of the six single coaches was unknown. Of those who discussed student-athletes' significant others, only one talked about having lesbians on her team. There is significant research about the challenges that lesbian coaches and student-athletes face (e.g., Calhoun, LaVoi, & Johnson, 2011; Chawansky, 2011; Galst, 1998; Griffin, 1998; Ionnatta & Kane, 2002; Kilty, 2006; Krane, 1996, 1997; Krane & Barber, 2005; Thorngren, 1996; Wellman & Blinde, 1997). As Moshak and Schriver (2013) wrote:

> …today, sexual orientation is the target of overt and silent discrimination at every level of sports—professional, Olympic, college, high school, and youth. And fear should have nothing to do with sports, because—just as with an athlete's race, gender, ethnicity, or religion—sexual orientation or identity has no bearing on athletic ability, leadership skills, or capacity for [sportspersonship] and heart…Homophobia is so menacing and powerful that it stops people from coming out, from being who they are, from reaching their full potential, and it discourages them from playing sports

or participating fully in society. (pp. 65-66)

Eleven of the coaches had religious backgrounds and two mentioned that their religious beliefs affected their moral code and another alluded to her beliefs about abortion when discussing worrying about losses compared to the importance of caring about student-athletes' life situations. Learning more about the moral and/or religious development of coaches could inform how they developed their coaching philosophy.

Implications for Coaches

For coaches who believe their care orientation is important, choosing an athletic department that is supportive of this philosophy is crucial. In addition, selecting assistant coaches and student-athletes who work hard and care also are an important part of a caring environment. Having mentors and being willing to mentor can also be a significant method of development (Noe, 1988; Werthner & Trudel, 2006).

Conflict between a coach and a student-athlete presents difficulties. Conflict can arise for a variety of reasons and many stem from divided engrossment. Coaches may have to balance the conflicting needs of one student-athlete, multiple student-athletes, or a student-athlete and the team. Where does care start and end in situations where there is divided engrossment? Removing someone from a team may be the most caring act for the team but not the individual. *Or* it could be the most caring act for the individual but not the team. Dealing with conflict takes time and Noddings (2005) might suggest that coaches could demonstrate care when they work through conflict with student-athletes by not having an agenda and a chosen outcome prior to engaging in conversation. For the most part, coaches did not address punishment in the interviews except for those who

talked about deselecting student-athletes from their respective teams.

Another important consideration for coaches is related to the desire to guide student-athletes' development. Who is deciding what is best for the student-athletes? Are the coaches really listening to the student-athletes throughout their time together? Are the coaches really trying to understand the student-athletes or is their judgment clouded by other factors? For coaches, motivational displacement is meant to help the student-athletes get where they want, not where the coach wants them or thinks they want to get to. For motivational displacement to occur, coaches need to be engrossed when in communication with student-athletes; therefore, coaches should consider if they are *really* listening to the student-athletes.

In this study, coaches suggested that caring coaches communicate regularly with assistant coaches and student-athletes. In addition, an "open door" policy might be beneficial to help maintain the relationships with student-athletes. This diminishes the power differentials and empowers others. Coaches in this study cited giving up control to others and the overall individual and team benefits that these actions produced.

These coaches recognized the importance of awareness of adolescent development. Coaches who understand this process might be better informed and be able to deal with student-athletes better. Most of these coaches believed it was their job to help them transition from their parents to the real world and they knew there would be challenges along the way. Finally, *Quality Coaches, Quality Sports: National Standards for Sports Coaches* (Brylinsky, 2006) could be a valuable tool to determine coaching strengths and areas for growth.

Implications for Student-Athletes

Based on the results of this study, it is important to empower student-athletes as they work with coaches. An important part of the agency that student-athletes have is choosing their college coach. Making an informed decision about the coach's philosophy, style, reputation, and the history of NCAA violations is important. As long as institutions continue to employ coaches who do not care about student-athletes' well-being or overall development, these coaches will have jobs. To obtain as much information as possible about coaches and programs takes time but is crucial. Athletes should consider talking with staff members who are associated with the program, talk with current and former student-athletes, and listen to current student-athletes' sound bites about the coaching staff. They also could to look at graduation rates, transfer rates, the reputations of coaches regarding recruiting, and how the coach treats athletes who play for her. It is the coaches' job to "sell" the program to recruits and they know what to say and how to say it. This is why it is important to make an informed decision beyond the coach's words and promises.

If there are problems with the coaching staff that are not reparable, considering a transfer is an option. A. J. Barker, former University of Minnesota wide receiver wrote and posted a letter to head coach Jerry Kill alleging mistreatment by him and the athletic training staff (Rittenberg, 2012). Barker described the psychological mistreatment he experienced:

> "Thank you for showing me your true colors; that you will stop at nothing to prove you have control over me...In light of that pathetic, manipulative

> display of rage and love you put on this past Thursday, I have come to the decision, with the guidance of my parents and my closest friends, that my time on this team has come to an end. It kills me that I have to do this before the season's over, but this is the only way I can protect myself against the manipulation and abuse I'd have to endure from you the rest of this season" (See Rittenberg, 2012).

Barker knew he would no longer be playing for that coach and he decided to share his experience with the world. Taking this type of action should not be reactionary; a person who does this should be prepared for expected and unexpected consequences.

Implications for Administrators

It seems that selecting caring coaches and keeping lines of communication open with coaches are very important for administrators as well. Choosing head coaches wisely, empowering them, and holding them accountable for NCAA rules violations were also important to coaches in this study. Coaches appreciated administrators who helped solve problems and empowered them.

Implications for Sport Psychology Consultants (SPCs)

As SPCs, empowering student-athletes to embrace their agency rather than accept the status quo may help bring about change (Fisher et al., 2003). Some student-athletes believe that coaches are not treating them in a caring way or are abusing them. For SPCs, listening to and understanding the student-athletes' concern is the first step. Encouraging communication with coaches or administrators and role-playing possible scenarios are another form of empowerment. Although there may be backlash, standing up for oneself

is important throughout life.

While working with a coach, it is important to build a respectful relationship with him or her. To do this, working within the coach's philosophy will help build trust. As trust is built, the coach may be more willing to take advice related to care, communication, and student-athlete development.

Future Directions for Research

As previously stated, some coaches who described leadership as "democratic" and "empowering" (Northouse, 2007) may not be perceived as such by student-athletes. It would be extremely important to learn of student-athletes' perceptions of their coaches' caring interactions (or lack thereof) and if they consider the team leadership structure to be hierarchical or flattened. Determining if care is important to student-athletes (particularly recruits), what their experiences are with caring and uncaring coaches, and how this care affects their school selection, shapes their experiences, and influences transfers will be crucial. Exploring how caring coaches select and implement punishment would be beneficial for coaches who struggle with this. Researching coach-athlete dyads or coaching staffs-team groupings could also be beneficial.

Because "care" is typically considered a "feminine" quality, it would also be interesting to replicate this study with male coaches of women's teams and male coaches of men's teams. Learning about assistant coaches', sport psychology consultants' and athletic trainers' experiences with care would add to the developing representation of care in NCAA Division I Athletics. Considering there are different pressures and expectations in NCAA Division II and III levels, learning more about these coaches' experiences

would be valuable. And, it would be interesting to determine if and how team size and/or coach:student-athlete ratio affects the perceptions of a student-athlete's experience of a caring coach at the college level. Student-athletes who are on larger teams and teams with lower coach:student-athlete ratios may not perceive their coach as overly caring. Learning how coaches perceive that race, class, sexual orientation, and religion impact care is another area to research. Finally, because some coaches discussed using social media in order to demonstrate care to student-athletes, researching how caring coaches use this form of communication could be enlightening.

Final Thoughts

Is there a place for care in the current business model of the NCAA and athletic departments? When are student-athletes only valuable because of their achievements (Noddings, 2005)? As Duquin (1984) wrote, "…in today's big-business mode of modern athleticism, the traditional ethic-of-care morality does not lie comfortably with the bedfellows of capitalism and self-interest" (p. 302). I believe however, there is a place for care in athletic departments, particularly in non-revenue-generating sports and at the mid-major level. Coaches need to become more aware that their philosophy – either caring or non-caring - directly impacts the welfare of the athletes they work with. Being critically aware of the expected and unexpected consequences student-athletes experience because of the business model is the first step toward any type of structural change.

Coaches can be "people of significance" in student-athletes' lives. To do this, more than just teaching techniques and tactics is necessary. To impact student-athletes, coaches could resolve to get to know student-athletes, help them develop holistically, and

maintain personal integrity.

Interviewing each of these coaches was truly an honor. I became even more inspired as I poured over the transcripts. These women were not afraid to be themselves. They cared deeply about the welfare and development of the student-athletes on their teams. They helped student-athletes see and reach their potentials both on and off the field. *They understood the opportunities they had to make a difference in student-athletes' lives on a daily basis.*

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: IRB

FORM B APPLICATION

All applicants are encouraged to read the Form B guidelines. If you have any questions as you develop your Form B, contact your Departmental Review Committee (DRC) or Research Compliance Services at the Office of Research.

FORM B

IRB # _____

Date Received in OR _____

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
Application for Review of Research Involving Human Subjects

I. IDENTIFICATION OF PROJECT

1. **Investigators:** Susannah K. Knust, UTK Ph.D. Candidate and Dr. Leslee A. Fisher, UTK

   Departments: Department of Kinesiology, Recreation, And Sport Studies
   336 HPER Building, UT
   Knoxville, TN 37996-2700
   (865) 974-9973
   sknust@utk.edu; Lfisher2@utk.edu

2. **Project Classification:** Research Project

3. **Title of Project:** A Qualitative Investigation of Division I Exemplar "Caring" Coaches

4. **Starting Date: Upon IRB Approval**

5. **Estimated Completion Date: May 11, 2013**

6. **External Funding** *(if any)**:*** None
   - **Grant/Contract Submission Deadline: N/A**
   - **Funding Agency:**
   - **Sponsor ID Number** ***(if known)*****:**
   - **UT Proposal Number** ***(if known):***

II. PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

The purpose of this study is to learn about how coaches who are known as having athlete-centered programs demonstrate care to athletes within athletic systems.

III. DESCRIPTION AND SOURCE OF RESEARCH CO-PARTICIPANTS:

Co-participants will be 8-12 female Division I head coaches of female teams from around the United States. Coaches will also fit the criteria of being considered "exemplar" caring coaches via word-of-mouth, popular culture media, and personal contacts within Division

IV. METHODS AND PROCEDURES:

Potential interviewees will be initially contacted via phone call after being identified as defined above. At that time, the purpose of the study will be described and an invitation to participation will be extended. For those who agree to participate, a date, time, and location will be set convenient to co-participants to engage in face-to-face interviews. Co-participants will be asked to read and sign the informed consent form prior to the start of the interview (see Appendix D). Face-to-face interviews will then be conducted and audio recorded. The student researcher will conduct all the interviews. Each interviewee will also be asked to select a pseudonym in place of her actual name. All other details that might identify the participant during the interview will be given pseudonyms while being transcribed.

The semi-structured interviews will last between 30-60 minutes (see Appendix B). Interviews will focus on understanding coaches as exemplar "carers." Initial questions focus on demographic information and proceed to questions related to co-participants' definitions of care and how they implement a caring philosophy in their coaching relationships with athletes. Each interview will be transcribed by the student researcher. Participant interviews will be stored in an encrypted computer file that is password protected. Once the interviews are transcribed, the printed transcripts will be kept in a locked cabinet in The UT Sport Psychology Lab, HPER 119. All notes written by the investigator during the interviews and demographic information recorded on the interview sheet will also be stored in HPER 119; only the student researcher and faculty advisor will have access to the data. All copies of the audio computer file will be deleted after the interviews are transcribed. The identity of the co-participants will remain confidential in all presentations and publications that result from the collected data.

In addition, analyses of the transcripts will be done with the help of a research group consisting of fellow graduate students familiar with qualitative research. They will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement (see Appendix E). The faculty advisor will also review and supervise the interpretation of the data with the student researcher and research group.

V. SPECIFIC RISKS AND PROTECTION MEASURES:

Anonymity cannot be guaranteed to all participants, but all measures will be taken to ensure each participant's confidentiality. Pseudonyms will also be used for dates, times, names, locations, etc., of the participants. Further, data will only be shared between the student researcher, faculty advisor, and research group in an effort to preserve participant confidentiality. All background information will be aggregated in a table so as to avoid any personal identification. Participants will be asked if they would like to review their transcripts; should they feel that any part of the transcript does not represent them accurately, we will make the corrections. Corrections will be noted in the methods

section of the final paper. If a participant withdraws from the study before data collection is completed, the data for that participant will be destroyed.

Prior to the interview the participants will be specifically advised that: (a) the interview will be audio-taped for accuracy; (b) they may decline to be interviewed or stop the interview at anytime: (c) they may inquire about the procedures at any time; (d) they will receive no payment for participation; (e) a copy of the transcript will be provided for them to review upon request; (f) the transcripts will be reviewed by the student researcher and faculty researcher for identification of themes.

There are no known physical risks due to participating in this study. Should any participant become distressed during the interview, the student researcher will help the participant find a local Counseling Center phone number and address. This information is also included on the consent form.

VI. BENEFITS:

It is hoped that this interview experience will provide participants with an increased self-awareness and understanding regarding their experiences as caring coaches in Division I Athletics. Other sport constituents such as sport psychology consultants, athletes, coaches, administrators, and NCAA representatives may also benefit from the findings from this study.

VII. METHODS FOR OBTAINING "INFORMED CONSENT" FROM PARTICIPANTS:

Participants will be informed of their rights and advised that they may discontinue participation with no negative repercussions. Participation will be voluntary and there will be no compensation of any type for participation. Written informed consent will be obtained before the start of the interview. A copy of the consent form will be given to the participants for their personal records. Signed informed consent forms will be kept in a secure cabinet in HPER 119 for three years following completion of the study.

VIII. QUALIFICATIONS OF THE INVESTIGATOR(S) TO CONDUCT RESEARCH:

The student investigator is a third-year doctoral student in the UT Sport Psychology and Motor Behavior program. She has taken multiple graduate courses in qualitative research as well as conducted a qualitative research study. The faculty advisor is an Associate Professor in Sport Psychology with over 25 years of qualitative research experience.

IX. FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT TO BE USED IN THE RESEARCH:

A digital audio recorder and an audio program on a MacBook Pro will be used to capture participants' in-person interviews. Interviews will take place at a time and location of convenience to each participant.

X. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PRINCIPAL/CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S)

The following information must be entered verbatim into this section:

By compliance with the policies established by the Institutional Review Board of The University of Tennessee the principal investigator(s) subscribe to the principles stated in "The Belmont Report" and standards of professional ethics in all research, development, and related activities involving human subjects under the auspices of The University of Tennessee. The principal investigator(s) further agree that:

1. Approval will be obtained from the Institutional Review Board prior to instituting any change in this research project.

2. Development of any unexpected risks will be immediately reported to Research Compliance Services.

3. An annual review and progress report (Form R) will be completed and submitted when requested by the Institutional Review Board.
4. Signed informed consent documents will be kept for the duration of the project and for at least three years thereafter at a location approved by the Institutional Review Board.

XI. SIGNATURES

ALL SIGNATURES MUST BE ORIGINAL. The principal investigator should keep the original copy of the Form B and submit a copy with original signatures for review. Type the name of each individual above the appropriate signature line. Add signature lines for all co-principal investigators, collaborating and student investigators, faculty advisor(s), department head of the principal investigator, and the Chair of the Departmental Review Committee. The following information should be typed verbatim, with added categories where needed:

Investigator: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Investigator: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

XII. DEPARTMENT REVIEW AND APPROVAL

The application described above has been reviewed by the IRB departmental review committee and has been approved. The DRC further recommends that this application be reviewed as:

[ ] Expedited Review -- Category(s): _____

OR

[ ] Full IRB Review

Chair, DRC: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Department Head: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Protocol sent to Research Compliance Services for final approval on (Date):

_____

Approved:
Research Compliance Services
Office of Research
1534 White Avenue

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix B: Interview Guide

Demographic/Background Information Questions

Age _____
Nationality _____
Race _____
Ethnicity_____
Injuries, body issues that make it difficult to coach? _____
Average yearly salary _____
Family structure (both now, e.g., partner/no partner and growing up)
_____
Any religious affiliation? _____
Sport coaching? _____
Total years coaching sport? _____

Questions

1. You have been identified by another as a caring coach. What does that mean to you when you hear that?
2. What is "care"?
3. How do you "do" care? (e.g., behaviors, philosophy)
4. How do you "know" that you are caring?
5. In your opinion, how do the athletes you coach know they are "cared" for?
6. How does your philosophy of care reveal itself in relationships with assistant coaches?
7. How does your philosophy of care reveal itself in relationships with other coaches?
8. How does your philosophy of care reveal itself in relationships with administrators?
9. How does your philosophy of care reveal itself in relationships with parents?
10. What does it mean to be a "good"/"successful" coach? Is being a "good"/"successful" coach the same as being a "caring" coach? In what ways? When do these things mesh/integrate well and when do they conflict?
11. What institutional structures (e.g., university) are in place that either encourage or prohibit caring behavior (e.g., practice time, interactions inside and outside of practice and games, resource allocation, an "athlete-centered" philosophy)?
12. How does the university figure into – or not – caring for athletes?
13. How does the NCAA figure into – or not – caring for athletes?
14. Is there anything else you think we need to discuss related to care?

Adapted from Fisher's (1997) and Fisher and Bredemeier's (2000) Social Self-Identity interview guide)

Appendix C: Introductory Email

Hello Coach (NAME),

My name is Susannah Knust and I am a sport psychology doctoral student at the University of Tennessee. I am interested in caring coaches, and I am currently in the process of collecting data for my dissertation research on this topic. You have been highly recommended to me as a Division I head female coach who exemplifies care. If you would be willing to share your experiences related to coaching with me, I would like to set up an interview time when I can travel to (UNIVERSITY). The interview should last between 30 and 60 minutes. Could we set a time and date for an interview?

Thank you for your time and I hope you have great day!
Best,
Susannah Knust
PhD Candidate, Sport Psychology & Motor Behavior
University of Tennessee

Appendix D: Informed Consent Statement

Project Title: A Qualitative Investigation of Division I Caring Coaches

Investigators: Susannah K. Knust, M.A., Doctoral candidate and Leslee A. Fisher, Ph.D.

What is the purpose of this research study?
You are invited to participate in an interview focusing on how Division I female coaches care about their athletes. *This study has been approved by the institutional review board of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.*

How many people will take part in this study?
It is anticipated that 8-12 NCAA Division I female head coaches of female teams who have been identified as caring coaches will be asked to participate in this study.

How long will your part in this study last?
In-person interviews should last between 30-60 minutes. If at any time you wish to remove yourself from the study, you may leave with no negative consequences.

What will happen if you take part in the study?
At a time and location convenient to you, you will be interviewed and asked how you conceptualize "caring" in the context of Division I Athletics. **The audio of the interview will be recorded.** You will receive no monetary compensation for this study. You may review the transcript of your interview and tell us to make any changes to it to better reflect your experience.

What are the possible risks from being in this study?
There are no known physical risks to participating in this study. During the interview should you talk about any events that were distressing to you in the past, and you feel at any time that you should speak to a mental health professional, the student researcher, Susannah Knust, will help you find a local Counseling center number and address, if needed.

What are the possible benefits from being in this study?
It is hoped that this experience will provide you with an increased self-awareness of your own conceptualization of care for athletes and how this works within Division I Athletics. Other sport constituents such as sport psychology consultants, researchers, professors, athletes, coaches, administrators, or NCAA representatives may also benefit from the results of this study.

Initials: _____

How will your privacy be protected?

The student researcher will exercise every possible effort to ensure that your privacy is protected. The information in the study records will be kept confidential. Your name or any reference that could link you to the study will not be used in any oral or written reports of the results. Additionally, all of the interview recordings will be destroyed once they are transcribed. The informed consent forms will be stored in a secure location, and the recorded interviews will only be accessible to the investigators. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed your data will be destroyed.

Contact Information

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures (or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this study), you may contact the researcher Susannah Knust, 258 Stokely Athletic Center, University of Tennessee, 1720 Volunteer Blvd; Knoxville, TN 37996; 865-974-3850 or Dr. Leslee Fisher, 336 HPER Building, University of Tennessee, 1914 Andy Holt Ave.; Knoxville TN 37996-2700; 865-974-9973. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, contact the Office of Research Compliance Officer at (865) 974-3466.

Participant's Agreement:

I have read all of the information provided above, and I have asked any questions that I may have at this time. I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study, and I am aware that I may withdraw at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled. I have received a copy of this form

_____ _____

Signature of Participant Date

_____ _____

Investigator Signature Date

Appendix E: Confidentiality Statement: Research Group

As a member of the Thematizing Group, by signing below, I agree to keep any information discussed regarding interview transcripts from the study **A Qualitative Investigation of Division I Exemplar "Caring" Coaches** by Susannah K. Knust, confidential.

Name: _____ Date: _____
Name: _____ Date: _____
Name: _____ Date: _____
Name: _____ Date: _____
Name: _____ Date: _____
Name: _____ Date: _____

Appendix F: Preliminary Findings

Preliminary Findings

After reading through the twelve interview transcripts several times and reading literature related to "care" and "power." I wanted to share how your collective words and experiences are lining up with the related literature:

I. Coaching is defined by co-participants as relationships *and* responsibility.

All coaches emphasized that they demonstrated concern for each student-athlete as a "total person." They also described a responsibility to develop the "total person."

The relationship and responsibility were not limited to student-athletes as coaches described the nature of their relationships with assistant coaches as being similar.

Relationships with administrators tend to be described as vertical although two coaches described close personal relationships with administrators.

Relationships with opposing coaches were described as lateral relationships. Some have close friends and feel very comfortable calling with issues that might arise on their teams.

Relationships with parents were described as (a) important during the recruiting process, and (b) distant once the student-athlete begins school unless parents want to discuss the physical and/or psychological health of their daughter.

Most coaches measure the worth of their coaching based on relationships although many acknowledged their competitive nature. Some said this

occupation allows them to effect change in the world.

II. Communication is the cornerstone of relationships and coaches' caring behavior.

Coaches discussed open communication/free expression as the primary way that they demonstrate care (particularly outside of practice and competition).

- This may allow coaches to understand alternate perspectives and encourage parity (diminish power differentials).

Coaches directly and indirectly communicated the "community of 'we-ness.'"

- This was recognized in relationships with student-athletes, assistant coaches, and administrators.

III. Coaches described conflicts in caring.

Coaches may encounter the challenge of dealing with engrossment of two different people and/or entities (e.g., individual v. team).

- Some coaches have removed athletes from the team in the best interests of the individual and/or the team.

Coaches and student-athletes may have different opinions about the best interests of the student-athletes or team.

- The result might be "tough love."

Coaches may not have the personal resources (e.g., energy, time) to deal with situations.

- Coaches are exhausted.

Some coaches described the reality of dealing with student-athletes or administrators who did not respond well to care.

- Some continued to care while others protected themselves, thus only caring for and not caring about the other.

IV. There are institutional constraints to caring.

Athletic departments have an "order to things" and this can prohibit care in sports that are not a high priority; however, athletes have easy (and almost immediate) access to many resources.

- One coach discussed "legal care" and "genuine care" and that the recipients of each knew what type of care they were receiving from the athletic department.

The NCAA seems to focus on revenue-generating sports (i.e., football and basketball) more than Olympic sports. Several Olympic sport coaches described how the rules enacted by the NCAA are for football and basketball teams and should not apply to non-revenue-generating sports.

Some coaches described the difference between coaching in a major conference and a mid-major conference as being like two different occupations.

- One coach was particularly concerned about the effects of deregulation and the impact on the coaching profession.
- One coach who had coached basketball at both the major and mid-major level equated money with pressure.

Some coaches discussed policies in place (e.g., Student-Athlete Opportunity Fund, Proposition 48) and said that these were positive in some situations and negative in others.

(See Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan, 1993; McClean Taylor, Gilligan, & Sullivan, 1995; Miller, 1986; Noddings, 2005)

VITA

Susannah Kaye Knust was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish Education (Spanish major) with a minor in Social Studies from Calvin College in Grand Rapids, MI where she played softball. She taught Spanish at Grand Rapids Christian High School for one year and then at Ada Christian School for six years. Meanwhile, she was coaching softball at Grand Rapids Christian High School. During this time, she earned her Master of Arts degree from Western Michigan University in Sports Studies and was an assistant softball coach at Cornerstone University. Soon after completion of this degree, she chose to attend the University of Tennessee to earn her Doctor of Philosophy degree in Education with an emphasis in Kinesiology and a concentration in Sport Psychology.