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# MORAL REASONING IN COLLEGIATE ATHLETES

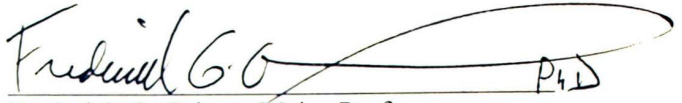
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SHERLEAN D. KING

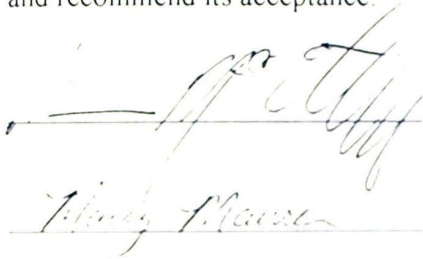


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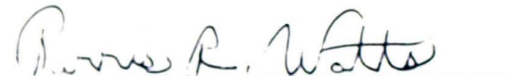
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# MORAL REASONING IN COLLEGIATE ATHLETES

A Thesis

Presented for the

Master of Arts

Degree

Austin Peay State University

Sherlean D. King

December, 1999



## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my fiancé

Mr. Everett C. Lybolt

and my mother

Mrs. Delia Connell

who have given me invaluable educational opportunities

and immeasurable love and support.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my major professor, Dr. Frederick Grieve, for his guidance, patience, and talents, which helped me to persevere through this study. My gratitude for his commitment of time is immeasurable. I would also like to thank the other committee members, Dr. Maureen McCarthy and Dr. Marcy Maurer, for their comments and assistance over the past two years. I would like to express my thanks to Dr. Sharon Stoll for her advice and instruction regarding the use of the Hahm Beller Values Choice Inventory. And finally, I would like to express my thanks to my fiancé, Everett, for his understanding and sense of humor during those times when my goal appeared unreachable. His confidence in me and encouragement made me stick with it.

The intent of this study was to evaluate the relationship between moral reasoning and level of contact in sport. Specifically, the study was performed to determine whether moral reasoning patterns differ between athletes who participate in competitive sports of varying degrees of contact, as well as comparing athletes to nonathletes. The study examined athletes divided into groups by the level of contact involved in each sport and nonathletes as a control group. The specific hypotheses under study were: 1) increased level of contact in sport is associated with lower levels of moral reasoning; and 2) nonathletes will score higher in moral reasoning than athletes who compete in medium or high contact sport. Participants included 142 athletes and 45 nonathletes. Athletes represented varying levels of contact sports including low contact (baseball, softball, golf, tennis, and track), medium contact (basketball and volleyball) and high contact (football). All participants completed the Hahm-Beller Values Choice Inventory (HBVCI). Scores on the HBVCI reflected each participant's level of moral reasoning in the sport milieu. At all levels of contact, athletes' moral reasoning scores were lower than nonathletes. Athletes who participated in high contact sports had lower moral reasoning scores than all other participants. Gender differences were found for both athletes and nonathletes as well. The results lend support to the existing hypothesis that moral reasoning is influenced by participation in competitive sport, specifically that increased contact in sport leads to lower levels of moral reasoning. This research adds to our understanding of the moral reasoning patterns of college athletes.



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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Proponents say that participation in an organized sport builds character and instills a sense of teamwork, comradery, and fair play. This adage has come under serious criticism given today's climate of intentional injuries during sporting events. Is aggression an acceptable part of team sports or is it morally unacceptable? According to Bredemeier and Shields (1986a), sport is a world within a world, where the rules and moral restraints that we follow in everyday life do not apply. The usual concerns are temporarily set aside and infliction of pain is accepted, and even applauded, in many cases. There appears to be a difference between moral reasoning in "real life" and moral reasoning in sport. In other words, participating in sports can be seen as stepping out of real life into a unique context or play realm.

### Competition, Aggression, and Injurious Acts

Because of the popularity of competitive sports and the importance placed on winning at all costs, athletes are often called upon to make difficult moral decisions. Stoll, Beller, Cole, & Burwell (1995) determined that intercollegiate athletes have significantly lower levels of moral reasoning than their nonathlete peers. Both Division I and Division III National College Athletic Association (NCAA) athletes were included in the study. These authors suggest that the manner in which competitive activity is perceived may be responsible for these athletes' deficiencies in moral reasoning maturity. The source of the problem may be the exclusionary, selfish nature of sports competition, in which responsibility is externalized. This objectifying of opponents, as well as the



selfish win-at-all-cost orientation, may affect athletes' moral judgments (Stoll et al., 1995).

While highly competitive behavior is a natural occurrence at this level of sport competition, hostile aggression has no relationship to the goals of sport (Tenenbaum, Stewart, Singer, & Duda, 1996). However, aggressive acts have long been accepted as a part of sport and are often encouraged by spectators. Unfortunately, aggressive acts in sports have become hostile and violent, and are now recognized as a social problem, both on the field and off (Tenenbaum et al., 1996). These authors define aggression in sports as a case of one person inflicting an aversive stimulus on another, physically, verbally, or even gesturally, and with the intent to injure. A number of aggressive acts, ranging from verbal abuse to physical contact, are frequently engaged in by athletes and coaches and, surprisingly, spectators.

Few studies have examined the effect of competition on aggressive behavior in sport. According to Tenenbaum et al. (1996), the primary goal of aggression in the athletic setting is to bring about victory, and some athletes and coaches feel that in order to win, cheating and aggression are necessary. This winning-is-everything mentality increases the likelihood of intentionally injurious acts and makes them more acceptable to athletes.

In a study of 40 high school and college basketball players, Bredemeier (1985) found moral reasoning to be inversely related to the athletes' legitimacy judgements regarding injurious acts. These athletes were interviewed and asked to make judgements in two different contexts, a hypothetical context and an engaged context. The hypothetical context involved a set of four moral dilemmas, two that were sport-specific

and two that were about daily life. The athletes were asked to reason about and respond to the four dilemmas. The engaged context involved a postgame interview, conducted immediately after the players finished competing in an important game.

After the athletes responded to the moral dilemmas in the hypothetical context, they were administered a measure designed by Bredemeier (1985) called the Continuum of Injurious Acts (CIA). It was specifically designed to assess legitimacy judgments of athletes' concerning intentionally injurious acts in the context of sport. The CIA consists of 6 cards depicting sport acts with increasingly more serious consequences (Bredemeier, 1985). Participants were asked to sort the cards into two piles, with one pile considered legitimate and the other not legitimate. The context was considered hypothetical because the athletes were asked to make their judgments based on a fictitious protagonist in the last dilemma presented. This dilemma involved a professional football player who could increase his team's chances of playing in the Super Bowl by injuring a key opponent. The results of this card sort were used to determine participants' level of moral reasoning.

The engaged context, measured 3 weeks later, after an important game, consisted of a 45 minute interview in which the players described any injurious acts which they or their opponents engaged in during the game (Bredemeier, 1985). Following this discussion, the CIA was administered once again; however, this time the players were asked to base their judgments concerning intentionally injurious acts within the context of a critical game. They were instructed to imagine themselves in this game and consider the acts as personally conducted.

Bredemeier (1985) found that moral reasoning for both life and sport situations was negatively correlated ( $r$ 's ranged from  $-.27$  to  $-.83$ ) with legitimacy judgments. In

addition, all the athletes accepted a greater number of injurious acts as legitimate in the engaged context than in the hypothetical context, and the college basketball players endorsed larger numbers of injurious acts as legitimate than the high school basketball players.

### Physical Contact and Moral Reasoning

Bredemeier, Weiss, Shields, and Cooper (1986) organized sports into three categories based on the level of contact involved. Swimming, tennis, baseball, and track are examples of low contact sports while soccer and basketball would be considered medium contact sports. Football, wrestling, and judo are examples of high contact sports. These authors suggest that moral growth may be hindered due to the interactions that take place between athletes during high contact sports.

The participants in the study were middle elementary school children in grades four through seven. A total of 42 girls and 64 boys participated in this study, which was designed to investigate the relationship of sport involvement variables with children's moral reasoning maturity. Aggressive tendencies in both life and sport contexts were also measured (Bredemeier, Weiss, Shields, & Cooper, 1986). The sports related variables of interest were sport participation and interest in sports. The children reported each type of organized sport in which they had participated, the number of seasons they had participated in each sport, who their favorite athlete was, and which sport they liked to watch the most. All of the sports were categorized as low, medium, or high contact.

The children were also interviewed to determine their level of moral development, and two self-report measures were used to assess aggression tendencies. Responses to hypothetical moral dilemmas were used to assess the childrens' levels of moral



reasoning. The scoring of the responses for this study was based on Haan's interactional model of moral development (Haan, 1978). Each child was given an average score based on responses to four stories, two sports related and two based on everyday life.

Aggression tendencies were assessed based on responses to the Children's Action Tendency Scale (CATS; Deluty, 1979), which involves everyday situations, and the Scale of Children's Action Tendencies (SCATS; Bredemeier & Shields, 1986a), which is related to sport-specific contexts. Scores on the CATS and SCATS are derived from the types of behavioral responses children choose in reaction to conflicts encountered in life and sport settings. The responses are categorized as assertive, aggressive, or submissive, with aggressive alternatives further subdivided into physical or nonphysical categories.

It was found that the length of time that boys and girls had competed in their respective level of contact sports was inversely related to moral reasoning in sport and everyday life. Boys and girls who had participated longer in sport had lower levels of moral reasoning. It was also found that boys who participated in high contact sports and girls who participated in medium contact sports (the highest level of contact in which girls participated) indicated greater tendencies to aggress both in daily and sport contexts. Boys who had reported that they enjoyed watching high contact sports also tended to have lower levels of moral reasoning than boys who reported they liked watching low or medium contact sports. These results suggest that aggressive behavioral tendencies may extend from the playing field into other areas of life. Observing high contact sports may also increase children's aggressive tendencies (Bredemeier, Weiss, Shields, & Cooper, 1986).

In a similar study of children in fourth through seventh grade, Bredemeier (1994) found that moral reasoning and aggression scores again predicted assertive and aggressive tendencies in both sport context and daily life context. These children were assessed by 45-minute individual interviews, the CATS, and the SCATS. The interview consisted of two moral dilemmas concerning daily life situations and two reflecting experiences common to children participating in sport. The children's responses to questions about each dilemma were recorded and each child was assigned scores representing his or her level of moral reasoning about life and sport. The results of this study suggest that aggressive and assertive tendencies are closely linked to moral reasoning during conflict situations.

The behavioral responses children choose when they experience conflict have moral implications. Assertiveness is seen as neither essentially egocentric nor altruistic, and is considered the most appropriate response to conflict situations. Aggression is consistent with egocentrism, but not congruent with altruism. It is the least adequate response to a conflict because aggressors are likely to impose their will on others and are often hostile or coercive. Submission is also an undesirable response to a conflict because others' needs or rights are considered, while one's own interests are forfeited (Bredemeier, 1994).

Bredemeier (1994) found a clear correlational pattern across scores on sport and life moral reasoning and sport and life action tendencies. There was a strong negative correlation between moral reasoning and aggression and a strong positive relationship between moral reasoning and assertion. A weak positive correlation was found between moral reasoning and submission. The only significant difference found regarding school

level was an increase in aggression and a decrease in assertion in the context of sport from younger to older children.

These findings may have implications regarding the link between moral reasoning and behavior in sports, especially with regard to the decrease in assertion as children move from elementary school sports to the more competitive league of youth sports. Bredemeier (1994) suggests that fewer opportunities for negotiation and an increased emphasis on winning in competitive leagues places power relations above personal expression. As play becomes more structured and competitive at higher levels, there is less opportunity for children to settle matters themselves and learn to compromise, thus achieving moral balance. An increase in aggression and submission coincides with a decrease in assertion. Although tendencies towards aggressive actions may only surface when children enter the sport realm, a clear correlation was seen across sport and life contexts (Bredemeier, 1994).

### Moral Reasoning, Age, and Education

Research involving cross-sectional and longitudinal data, as well as sequential analyses show evidence for a positive correlation between age and moral reasoning. As people age, moral reasoning scores tend to increase (Rest, 1986). As individuals become older there is a presumption that they become more advanced in their ability to think logically and their moral stage responses are higher. A person is categorized as reasoning at a particular stage as defined by his or her scores on the measure of moral judgment used. Rest states that although the data on age trends tells us that there is moral development in people over time, it does not explain the mechanisms involved. The question as to the causes and conditions of development remains to be answered.



Rest (1986) also argues that formal education has an even more significant relationship to moral development than age does. Although it is not clear what formal education actually represents in terms of moral growth, or whether it is something about the people who seek higher education, there is an empirical link regarding formal education and more mature moral reasoning scores (Rest & Thoma, 1985). The results of this study provide longitudinal and cross-sectional data indicating that the moral judgment scores of those who attend college continue to rise, while the moral judgment scores of those with little or no college usually plateau.

There is also empirical evidence that the length of time an athlete has participated in an organized sport is negatively related to moral reasoning maturity. Bredemeier, Weiss, Shields, & Cooper (1986) found that the number of seasons boys competed in high contact sports was inversely related to their moral reasoning maturity. Girls who had more experience in medium contact sports, the highest level of contact in which girls compete, were found to reason at a lower moral level than girls who had little or no experience. Both the boys and girls, who were in grades four through seven, demonstrated greater tendencies towards physical aggressiveness in the context of daily life as well as sport. On the other hand, there is also evidence to the contrary; when the sports context is designed with moral reasoning growth in mind (Bredemeier, Weiss, Shields, & Shewchuk, 1986; Wandzilak, Carroll, & Ansorge, 1988). The results of these studies indicate that intervention techniques are successful in changing sportsmanship perceptions and promoting moral reasoning.

Bredemeier, Weiss, Shields, and Shewchuk (1986) studied five to seven year old children in a camp setting, implementing an intervention program to promote morally



correct behavior. Participants in the sport camp received either extrinsic rewards such as stickers, or learned appropriate behavior through peer oriented dialogue. While neither strategy was found to be superior, the researchers found that both reinforcements and dialogue increased moral growth by increasing sportsmanlike behaviors.

Wandzilak et al. (1988) conducted a study of male junior high school basketball players to determine the effectiveness of intervention on moral reasoning and behavior in a sport setting. Participants included two teams of 10 players, with one team serving as the control group. The athletes in the experimental group were asked to define sportsmanship at the beginning of the intervention. After the first practice they were asked to give examples of good sportsmanship and bad sportsmanship. A 15-minute discussion of issues common to basketball was also conducted at each practice. Specific dilemmas as well as guidelines to consider during decision making were presented each day for two weeks, and three players from each group were carefully observed all season.

Results of pre- and postseason measures did not reveal significant differences between the experimental group, who received the intervention, and the control group (Wandzilak et al.). However, these authors were able to detect distinct changes in the behavior patterns of the groups. They concluded that the behavior pattern of the control group supports the notion that athletic experience is related to decreased sportsmanship, but, it is possible to alter those behaviors. Throughout the nine-week season, the experimental group showed a decrease in the number of unsportsmanlike behaviors and an increase in sportsmanlike behaviors.

Eventually morality becomes a characteristic of action, and moral behavior is a consequence of moral development (Blasi, 1980). But what determines whether an action is considered moral? Mwamwenda (1992) believes it would be unreasonable to contend that moral behavior is not influenced by moral knowledge. Therefore, individuals will ultimately do what they think is right, because that is what they believe to be true. If they did not hold this knowledge, expecting them to behave morally would be inconceivable. Consequently, a person's moral reasoning is what gives moral significance to his or her action (Smoll & Smith, 1996).

As an example, if an athlete (Kim) were to stop and help an opponent who was gasping for air during the open-water swim phase of a triathlon, the act of helping could be interpreted in various ways. If Kim was leading, and gave up her chances of winning because she sincerely wanted to help, she would be acting morally. On the other hand, if she felt that she probably wasn't going to win, and she stopped to help in order to obtain media coverage as a hero, her act would not be considered morally motivated (Shields & Bredemeier, 1995).

Theories of moral development and philosophy are multiple and diverse. We can only touch upon the major contemporary approaches to the understanding of morality in order to keep a very complex subject manageable. According to Shields and Bredemeier (1995), Lawrence Kohlberg's (1984) theory of moral development is the most detailed theory in existence and his influence on the subject remains unparalleled even after his death in 1987. Kohlberg's influence lives on through his students and colleagues via modifications of his work.

Kohlberg's cognitive-developmental approach to the study of moral development resulted in a six stage hierarchical model in which each stage is assigned to a level of moral development (Kohlberg, 1984). The six stages are then grouped into three levels known as preconventional, conventional, and postconventional. The identification of each stage is, by necessity, based solely on moral reasoning (Kohlberg, 1984).

Kohlberg's developmental stage theory includes the fundamental principles of cognitive disequilibrium and justice (Beller, Stoll, & Hahm, 1992). When individuals must make decisions which involve or affect others, cognitive disequilibrium is said to occur. In essence, concern for others results in inadequate reasoning. This disequilibrium promotes the formation of new principles, through higher order thinking, thus leading to advances in stages of moral development. The principle of justice is concerned with equality and human rights, and is fundamental to moral development.

Kohlberg (1981) argues that morality is a philosophical (ethical), rather than a behavioral, concept and recommends that philosophical principles be integrated with empirical psychological findings. He suggests that there are basic moral principles that are universal and moral behavior is motivated by these principles. Individuals are seen as moving through invariant stages of development, from lower to higher, and expressing a level of moral reasoning corresponding to the stage they are in. When moral conflict arises, we use the principle of justice to find resolution.

Justice is the central and most universal principle of morality, therefore moral development is the development of justice reasoning (Kohlberg, 1984). However, Kohlberg recognizes that justice alone does not entirely define what constitutes moral



domain. In addition to justice, he also includes a virtue emphasized in teachings of Christian ethics. The Greek word for this virtue is *agape* and it is defined as “the virtue we call charity, love, caring, brotherhood, or community” (Kohlberg, 1984, p. 227). This virtue is known in contemporary research as prosocial behavior.

Kohlberg’s stage theory of moral development (Kohlberg, 1981; 1984) began as a dissertation proposal in 1955 and one result is a questionnaire that is widely recognized as a measure of moral development. The questionnaire consists of nine scenarios which are used to assess which stage an individual is functioning at and, thus, his or her level of moral development (Hall, 1981). According to Hall, Kohlberg’s questionnaire is not only considered to be highly subjective, it is also difficult to score. With each dilemma the participant is required to respond to a number of questions, indicating that the ability to express oneself verbally may affect an individual’s stage scores.

### Rest

One of the most influential modifications of Kohlberg’s theory is one by James Rest (1986). He is responsible for developing the Defining Issues Test (DIT; Rest, 1986) a well-known measure of moral development. The DIT posits that people interpret moral dilemmas and the critical issues involved according to their level of development.

A simple overview of the processes or psychological functions necessary for a person to act morally will be given as an example of what is meant when we discuss moral reasoning. Rest’s Four-Component Model of moral development was chosen to illustrate this process because it appears the most straightforward and uses everyday language. Rest’s model appears to be the major theoretical advance that has developed from research on moral development, in that it incorporates the relationship between



thought, emotion, and behavior. According to Rest, moral behavior results from the involvement of the following four components or psychological processes:

1. A person must interpret the situation in terms of what courses of actions are possible and who will be affected by the action(s). The welfare and interests of each party involved must be considered as well as the expectations of the interested parties.
2. A person must decide which course of action is morally right, or fair, and realize that this is what they should (morally) do regarding this situation.
3. A person must prioritize his or her moral values and they must come before personal values or desires. The intention must be to do what is right (morally).
4. A person must be able to execute and implement his or her good intentions by following through with an action. This is the moral behavior.

Rest's DIT has been used to assess moral reasoning in various contexts, including the study of moral reasoning in athletic populations (Brower, 1992; Brown, 1992; Wandzilak, et al., 1988). It is a six-item scale, with each of the six dilemmas requiring twelve responses, and is defined as an easily administered, objective measurement tool. However, according to Hall (1981), "the perceived need to maintain a high degree of consistency with the theoretical concept put forth by Kohlberg" (p. 45) does not allow the DIT to meet its objectives. Beller et al. (1992) agree, describing the DIT as difficult to administer and score. They also suggest that meaningful results may not be found with small samples because of response inconsistencies.

Haan

Haan (1978) developed an interactionist model of moral development that is based on three concepts: moral balance, moral dialogue, and moral levels. Moral balance involves mutually agreed upon rights and obligations. Moral dialogue is seen as what achieves and sustains moral balance and can include body language and action as well as explicit statements. Haan's conceptualization of interpersonal morality has five levels and is based on the premise that morality is constructed through social living, balancing one's own interests against those of others. Moral development is said to begin from an egocentric perspective (Levels 1 and 2), progress to an other-oriented perspective (Levels 3 and 4), and reach equilibration, or mutual-interest balancing at Level 5.

The most important component of Haan's model of moral interaction is communication (Bredemeier & Shields, 1986b). Bredemeier and Shields report that human exchange leads to the formation of moral balances, which in turn serve to regulate moral life. Moral balances also help define mutual rights and responsibilities, thus play an important role in constructing resolutions during conflict situations. Haan's model has been employed in several studies of moral reasoning in athletic populations (Bredemeier, 1985 & 1994; Bredemeier & Shields, 1986a, 1986b, & 1986c; Bredemeier, Weiss, Shields, & Cooper, 1986). Bredemeier and colleagues have found Haan's model applicable to the study of moral reasoning in physical activity contexts.

### Moral Reasoning and Athletics

The moral reasoning which guides the behavior is what interests us in regards to aggression and potentially injurious acts in sport. Bredemeier and Shields (1986b) suggest that a type of bracketed morality may exist in sport, in which the usual moral obligations that one feels are temporarily suspended and there is little or no regard for the

other persons involved. Bredemeier and Shields refer to this bracketed morality as game reasoning. There is a sort of moral rationalization that takes place where behavior that would normally be considered inappropriate is accepted and often applauded in the context of sport. Winning appears to be what counts, rather than how you play the game.

Bredemeier and Shields (1986b) used Haan's model of interactional morality to explore the concept of game reasoning and demonstrate the level of egocentricity involved in athletes' moral reasoning about sports. They conducted individual interviews with 100 high school and college basketball players and nonathletes, using four hypothetical moral dilemmas. Two dilemmas were sport specific and two were from everyday life contexts. In addition, 20 of the high school basketball players and 20 of the college basketball players were randomly selected to participate in a post-game interview. This second interview, conducted several weeks after the first, occurred following an important game late in the season. Moral judgments regarding specific aggressive acts and motivations behind instances of physical contact were discussed.

Results of this study empirically support the contention that a moral transformation takes place in sport (Bredemeier & Shields, 1986b). Egocentricity was seen as appropriate, according to the athletes' responses, and game reasoning was substituted for moral reasoning. Game reasoning is socially legitimated due to the goal of competitive sport and the common belief that sport is morally nonconsequential. Responses also indicated that sport related morality is more egocentric than moral reasoning related to everyday life, particularly in males.

In a comparison of moral reasoning of basketball players and nonathletes, Bredemeier and Shields (1986a) found college basketball players to be lower in moral



reasoning than college nonathletes. The study consisted of 100 high school and college basketball players and nonathletes and had an equal distribution of males and females. All participants responded to four hypothetical moral dilemmas, two stories about moral situations in everyday life (Haanian) and two stories about moral situations in sports. All were scored by trained research assistants, and were assigned two scores. One score was called a life score and represented the participants' level of moral reasoning about dilemmas occurring in everyday life. The other score, or sport score, represented their average level of moral reasoning on the sport dilemmas.

Bredemeier and Shields (1986a) found no difference in the moral reasoning scores of high school athletes and high school nonathletes. College nonathletes' moral reasoning was significantly more mature than college basketball players in both life and sport related events, and females' moral reasoning, regarding sport, was more mature than males' moral reasoning. In a second study, 20 college level swimmers were added. There was no significant difference found in moral reasoning scores of college swimmers compared to college nonathletes. Consequently, Bredemeier and Shields cautioned against making generalizations about the relationship between moral reasoning and participation in sports.

In a study of male and female intercollegiate basketball players, Hall (1981) used Kohlberg's moral judgment questionnaire and four self-developed sport specific scenarios to analyze stages of moral development in 65 intercollegiate basketball players. The athletes were significantly more mature in their reasoning about sport specific situations than in dilemmas not related to sport. Older athletes, those ages 20 to 23, were found to be less mature than younger athletes in non-sporting dilemmas. No relationship



was found between length of time an athlete had participated in sports and moral reasoning maturity. Hall concluded that participation in athletics does not adversely affect an individual's moral judgment.

Brower (1992) used the DIT to compare moral reasoning levels of basketball athletes, swimming athletes, and nonathletes. Male and female varsity basketball players and swimmers were recruited from two universities (a NCAA Division I school and a NCAA Division III school) in the Chicago area. A group of nonathletes from the same institutions were also included. Several differences were found between these groups and divisions. A total of 141 college students (96 athletes) participated in the study. There were no significant differences found when athletes were compared to nonathletes in either division. Brower also found no differences in the moral reasoning scores of the swimmers and nonathletes at either division. However, basketball players at both the NCAA Division I and NCAA Division III universities scored lower than swimmers and nonathletes. Also, NCAA Division I athletes scored significantly lower than NCAA Division III athletes. This was found both for basketball players and swimmers.

Brown (1992) also used the DIT to assess moral reasoning levels of collegiate athletes. Participants in the study were 312 intramural soccer players, 274 of which were male and 38 of which were female. The athletes were between the ages of 17 and 38. Brown's findings failed to support past research indicating that athletes were lower in moral reasoning maturity than nonathletes. However, through the use of skilled and neutral observers, and the assessment of game behavior and misconduct citations by officials, Brown believes he was able to make more valid determinations of moral conduct than are allowed by hypothetical situations. It was concluded that participants

with the most experience, and those competing at the highest level engaged in misconduct significantly more often. Also, the number of years of soccer experience a participant had was found to be a valid predictor of sport misconduct.

In the Stoll et al. (1995) study, moral reasoning scores of nonathletes and athletes at a NCAA Division I school and eight Division III NCAA schools were compared. The authors do not specify which sport or sports the athletes participated in; however, due to the large sample size it is probable that several different sports were represented. Students from both level colleges were used in separate studies. One compared the general students to athletes at the NCAA Division I level and the other study compared general students to athletes at the NCAA Division III level. Participants from the NCAA Division I school included 718 non-athletes and 277 athletes. The NCAA Division III schools yielded 206 nonathletes and 387 athletes. All were randomly selected and administered the Hahm-Beller Values Choice Inventory in the Sport Milieu (HBVCI; Beller et al., 1992).

Stoll et al. (1995) found nonathletes to be significantly higher in moral reasoning maturity than their athletic counterparts. There were equal differences between the NCAA Division I athletes and their peer groups and the NCAA Division III athletes and their peer groups. These findings suggest that something about the way competitive activity is viewed, rather than money, glamour, and national prestige, may be affecting the moral reasoning of college athletes. As these authors explain, NCAA Division III athletes are not under the same type of pressure to win-at-all-costs as the NCAA Division I athletes. The differences include not only little or no media attention or scholarships, but also much smaller budgets and coaching salaries as well.

## Limitations of Existing Literature

Studies of moral reasoning have primarily focused on comparisons between athletes and nonathletes. Moral research has also focused primarily on very few sports, making it difficult to generalize to other contexts. A broader range of sports needs to be explored to consider the roles of various sport experiences and their relationship to moral reasoning scores of athletes who compete in them. Specifically, moral reasoning levels between athletes who compete in high contact sports have not been examined in relationship to those of athletes who compete in low or medium contact sports.

## Current Study

Although the literature suggests that moral reasoning in athletes is less mature than their nonathlete peers in general, a study assessing the moral reasoning level of athletes in several sports is necessary to add to the existing literature. The purpose here is to investigate whether moral reasoning becomes increasingly negatively impacted as one become involved in higher contact sports. If the children and youth of today view sport figures as their heroes and look to them to set a standard, it is important to find out how college athletes morally reason about everyday life and conduct while playing sports.

A comparison of moral reasoning scores with the level of physical contact an athlete is exposed to may help us in understanding the connection between sports and moral reasoning. Stoll et al. (1995) suggest that the importance we as a society place on winning or excelling at activities may be the problem, rather than money or fame. However, we think a combination of these factors is more likely.

According to S. K. Stoll (personal communication, October 13, 1998), the purpose of collegiate sports is education. However, it appears as though other factors



have diminished the true purpose of sports. Extreme competitiveness, the winning-is-everything mentality, and the involvement of the media and national sponsors have changed the face of competitive sport.

Stoll and colleagues look at competition in sports based on what it “should be” or the classic ideal position (personal communication, October 13, 1998). Beller et al. (1992) developed the Hahm-Beller Values Choice Inventory (HBVCI), which will be used in the current study, based on this position. It is grounded in deontic (ethical) theory. These authors argue that according to deontics there are certain codes of conduct (principles) which are universal, and the HBVCI is based on three of them. Honesty, Responsibility, and Justice are the principles measured by the HBVCI. According to the authors of the HBVCI, honesty is the act of being trustworthy as well as truthful. This code of conduct takes lying and cheating into consideration, and requires that to be an honest person, one must follow rules and laws. Responsibility is being morally accountable for all actions, past, present, and future. Rational conduct is part of being responsible. Justice refers to fairness in the treatment of others, and is based on doing the right (fair) thing.

Beller et al. (1992) believe that applying these three principles to any moral dilemma will result in a solution that can be measured deontologically by the HBVCI. Scores are interpreted as a reflection of moral knowledge, rather than a predictor of moral action. Results can be expressed by four scores, a mean deontological score, an honesty score, a responsibility score, and a justice score.

There is a dynamic interplay in the sports setting between athletes and various socializing agents. Tenenbaum et al. (1996) have found not only that this interplay may



affect moral reasoning in athletes during sporting events, but that the fans like violence. The media is also culpable because of the way it exploits the sports fans' desire for violence.

It is important that we as researchers seek to determine why athletes engage in aggressive and potentially injurious behaviors during competitive sporting events, and whether these behaviors are related to their level of moral reasoning. There is empirical evidence which suggests that the analysis of athletes' moral reasoning can help bring about a better understanding of athletic aggression (Stephens, Bredemeier, & Shields, 1997). However, current studies have not explored the differences in moral reasoning as they relate to level of contact in sport.

Existing research supports a negative relationship between moral reasoning maturity and athletic aggression (Bredemeier, 1994; Bredemeier & Shields, 1984). This study seeks to determine whether there are differences in levels of moral reasoning between collegiate athletes who participate in sports resulting in varying frequency and intensity of contact. If age and level of education are related to moral judgement (Rest, 1986), we would expect collegiate athletes to have reasonably mature, and similar, levels of moral reasoning. According to Rest, there is overwhelming evidence for a developmental trend in moral judgment, and there is an empirical link between moral judgment scores and years of formal education.

The literature indicates that moral reasoning maturity may be influenced by participation in contact sports. Most recent studies have included basketball players and nonathletes. Swimmers are also included in at least two studies. Thus, while we have data representing moral reasoning patterns of athletes who participate in medium contact

sport, as well as those who are in a low (or no) contact sport, there is no research comparing them with athletes who compete in a high contact sport. We chose athletes who compete in a variety of different sports for this study in order to have representation of each level of contact in competitive sport for comparison.

This study can help to determine if the level of contact in sports influences levels of moral reasoning. The use of a measure specifically designed for the sport milieu will add further significance to the results. Results may extend the existing literature regarding the effect of moral reasoning on conduct within competitive sport, and allow us to more clearly define the actual relationship between the two. If level of contact is found to be related to athletes' moral reasoning, implications may exist regarding interventions and facilitation of moral reasoning skills in athletic programs. The specific hypotheses under study are: 1) increased contact in sport is associated with lower levels of moral reasoning maturity, as measured by the HBVCI; 2) nonathletes will score higher in moral reasoning maturity, as measured by the HBVCI, than athletes in medium and high contact sports, but not higher than athletes in low contact sports.

## CHAPTER II

### METHODS

#### Participants and Design

Athletes from all competitive sport teams at a small south-central university, and nonathletes from three psychology classes were recruited to participate in the study for extra credit. A total of 142 athletes from nine teams and 45 nonathletes completed the Hahm-Beller Values Choice Inventory (HBVCI) during the study.

Athletes participating in low contact sports included 43 males and 37 females (age:  $\underline{M}$  = 19.64 years,  $\underline{SD}$  = 1.28). All were undergraduate students ( $\underline{M}$  = 14.35 years of education,  $\underline{SD}$  = 1.10). The number of years these athletes had participated in their respective sport ranged from 1 to 17 ( $\underline{M}$  = 7.59 years,  $\underline{SD}$  = 5.49). These athletes included 63 Caucasians, 10 African Americans, 3 Hispanics, and 4 from other nationalities.

Athletes participating in medium contact sports included 15 males and 25 females (age:  $\underline{M}$  = 19.98 years,  $\underline{SD}$  = 1.27). There was one graduate student who participated in the study, therefore their level of education ranged from 13 to 17 years ( $\underline{M}$  = 14.62,  $\underline{SD}$  = 1.08) and the number of years these athletes had participated in their respective sport ranged from 1 to 15 ( $\underline{M}$  = 7.22,  $\underline{SD}$  = 4.16). Of these, 24 were Caucasian, 15 were African American, and 1 was Hispanic.

All 22 participants at the high level of contact were males (age:  $\underline{M}$  = 18.54,  $\underline{SD}$  = 0.96). All were undergraduate students ( $\underline{M}$  = 13.27 years of education,  $\underline{SD}$  = 0.63). These athletes reported between 1 and 14 years of participation in the game of football ( $\underline{M}$  = 8.21,  $\underline{SD}$  = 4.18). Of these, 17 were Caucasian, 3 were African American, and 2 were Hispanic.

Nonathletes included 11 males and 34 female participants (age:  $\underline{M} = 23.53$ ,  $\underline{SD} = 7.19$ ). Their level of education ranged from 13 to 17 years ( $\underline{M} = 14.62$ ,  $\underline{SD} = 1.37$ ). They were represented by: 33 Caucasians, 7 African Americans, 3 Hispanics and 2 from other nationalities

A consistency measure built into the HBVCI indicated that 25 athletes and 9 nonathletes had responded in a haphazard manner. Therefore these participants scores were dropped from the analysis, yielding a final sample size of 153 subjects. The sample consisted of 117 athletes and 36 nonathletes. The final analysis included 64 athletes from low contact sports (golf, tennis, track, softball, and baseball), 33 athletes from medium contact sports (volleyball and basketball), and 20 athletes from a high contact sport (football).

This was a quasi-experimental study examining naturally occurring levels of contact in sport and levels of moral reasoning. The independent variable was the level of physical contact in each sport, high, medium, or low. The dependent variable was the overall moral reasoning score from the HBVCI.

### Measures

Demographics. Participants reported their gender, age, nationality, education level (freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior), main sport, and years of participation on a separate demographic form (see Appendix A).

Moral Reasoning. The HBVCI (Beller et al., 1992) was used to measure the moral reasoning level of each player (see Appendix B). It is comprised of 25 questions, seven of which concern honesty, seven of which concern responsibility, and seven of which concern justice. The remaining four questions were added as a consistency (validity)



measure in order to determine if participants were answering haphazardly. Each question is answered on a Likert-type scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, with agree, disagree, and neutral in the middle. Respondents were asked to circle the response which best describes their feelings. The HBVCI yields a mean total reasoning score. Higher mean scores reflect a higher level of moral reasoning as indicated by choices of strongly agree or strongly disagree on specific scenarios.

Respondents are asked to reason critically while reading various descriptions of common dilemmas which occur in sport. Reasoning critically is defined by the HBVCI authors as “systematically think[ing] through a moral problem taking into consideration ones’ own values and beliefs while weighing them against what others and society values and believes [sic]” (Stoll et al., 1995, p. 7).

The HBVCI has yielded consistent Chronbach’s Alpha values of .74 to .88 in studies of more than 10,000 athletes and coaches in North America (Beller et al., 1992). Concurrent validity was established by correlating the HBVCI with the DIT. A correlation of  $r = .82$  between the total deontic reasoning score on the HBVCI and the DIT P Index indicates concurrent validity. While the DIT has established itself as a valid and reliable instrument, the HBVCI is considered noteworthy as “the only instrument to assess moral reasoning in the sport milieu” (Beller et al., 1992, p. 6).

### Procedure

After obtaining permission to conduct the study, coaches were contacted by phone, and all agreed to participate. At a workout or practice session, the coach introduced the primary researcher to the players, who then gave the players a brief description of the nature of the study. All players who agreed to participate were told that

the purpose of the study was to determine how college students make decisions about dilemmas that commonly occur in sport. Nonathletes were recruited with the assistance of instructors from the Psychology Department and given the same information about the purpose of the study.

Prior to completing the HBVCI all participants were asked to sign an informed consent document (see Appendix C). All participants were tested in group settings, such as a classroom, during the Fall Semester. All groups were administered the HBVCI by the primary investigator. Participants were read directions and told to read each question carefully and to answer based on their own beliefs or personal feelings. They were told that there are no right or wrong answers. Each group was monitored to eliminate discussions between respondents and to ensure that participants answered based on their own feelings and knowledge. The inventory has an allotted completion time of 45 minutes, but most participants completed all items in 15 to 20 minutes.

## CHAPTER III

### RESULTS

There were five different sets of analyses performed for this study. First, in order to determine if groups were equivalent, demographic information of participants from each of the levels of contact was compared. Next, demographic information of participants who gave invalid responses on the HBVCI was compared to demographic information of participants who gave valid responses to determine if there were systematic differences between those participants retained and those excluded from the analysis. Third, because previous literature was inconclusive regarding the effects of gender on moral reasoning, the HBVCI scores of males and females were compared to determine if there were differences between these participants in level of moral reasoning. Finally, the hypotheses under study were examined by evaluating the HBVCI scores of participants at varying levels of contact (nonathlete, low contact, medium contact, and high contact) to determine differences in moral reasoning.

Each set of analyses was considered to be independent. Therefore, Bonferroni corrections (Pedhazur, 1982) were applied for each set rather than using an experiment wide correction. When a follow-up test was needed, the Scheffe test was used.

#### Comparison of Demographic Information for the Different Groups

Demographic information from all groups in the study was analyzed to determine if systematic differences existed between groups with regard to age, level of education, or years of participation in sport. This set of analyses was performed in the event that existing differences could account for variation in moral reasoning scores between the groups. There were three Analyses of Variance (ANOVAs) performed in this set of

analyses; therefore, the Bonferroni correction was set at  $p < .017$ . Results of a One Way ANOVA examining age revealed that there were significant differences in age between the groups ( $F(3, 183) = 13.96, p < .000$ ). Specifically, nonathletes were older than athletes who participated in low contact, medium contact, and high contact sports. Results from a second One Way ANOVA indicate that there were significant differences in education level among the groups ( $F(3, 183) = 8.37, p < .000$ ). Specifically, participants in high contact sports had significantly less education than participants in medium contact sports, participants in low contact sports, and nonathletes. Finally, results of a One Way ANOVA indicated that there are no differences ( $F(1, 118) = 0.13, p = .71$ ) in the number of years that athletes in low, medium, and high contact sports had participated in that sport.

#### Valid Versus Invalid HBVCI Scores

There were three t-tests performed in this set of analyses, therefore the Bonferroni correction was set at  $p < .017$ . There were no differences ( $t(1,185) = -0.83, p = 0.19$ ) in age between those participants who had valid HBVCI scores ( $M = 20.63; SD = 4.39$ ) and those participants who had invalid HBVCI scores ( $M = 20.00; SD = 1.89$ ). There were no differences ( $t(1,185) = 0.19, p = 0.852$ ) in level of education between those participants who had valid HBVCI scores ( $M = 14.34; SD = 1.20$ ) and those participants who had invalid HBVCI scores ( $M = 14.38; SD = 1.16$ ). There were no differences ( $t(1,185) = 0.91, p = 0.36$ ) in years of participation in sport between those participants who had valid HBVCI scores ( $M = 5.41; SD = 5.16$ ) and those participants who had invalid HBVCI scores ( $M = 6.32; SD = 6.04$ ).



## Moral Reasoning and Gender

There were three t-tests performed in this set of analyses; therefore the Bonferroni correction was set at  $p < .017$ . Results of a paired t-test indicated differences between genders in HBVCI scores ( $t(1,185) = -8.48, p < 0.000$ ). Females ( $M = 65.81; SD = 10.26$ ) were significantly higher in their moral reasoning as compared to males ( $M = 53.13; SD = 10.18$ ). This analysis included all participants. Interestingly, differences in scores obtained by nonathlete males and females ( $t(1,143) = -3.60, p < 0.001$ ) were significant as well as differences in male and female athletes ( $t(1,140) = -6.38, p < 0.000$ ). Once again, scores of female nonathletes ( $M = 72.77; SD = 10.15$ ) were found to be significantly higher than male nonathletes ( $M = 59.46; SD = 12.16$ , and female athlete scores ( $M = 62.00; SD = 8.14$ ) were significantly higher than male athletes ( $M = 52.26; SD = 9.64$ ).

## Moral Reasoning and Level of Contact

As there was only a single analysis in this set, the Bonferroni correction was set at  $p < .05$ . Because there was a significant difference between males and females in HBVCI scores, gender was included as a covariate in the analysis. In addition, age and level of education were included as covariates as participants in different levels of contact differed in these variables. As shown in Figure 1, results of a One-Way Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) indicated that even after controlling for gender, age, and level of education there was a significant difference ( $F(3,149) = 3.94, p = 0.01$ ; see Table 1) on HBVCI scores among levels of contact. Specifically, nonathletes ( $M = 69.67; SD = 12.78$ ), had moral reasoning scores that were significantly higher than athletes in low contact ( $M = 57.84; SD = 11.96$ ), medium contact ( $M = 58.67; SD = 7.65$ ), and high

contact ( $M = 48.50$ ;  $SD = 8.97$ ) sports. Athletes in high contact sports had moral reasoning scores significantly lower than nonathletes and athletes in low and medium contact sports. Athletes in low and medium contact sports did not differ in moral reasoning scores.

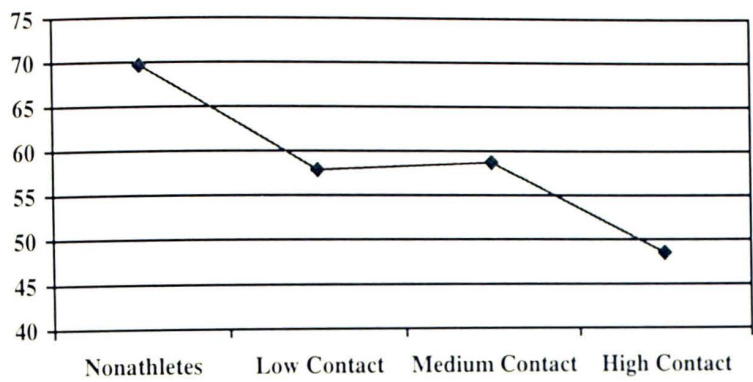


Figure 1. Moral Reasoning Scores as Measured by the HBVCI by Level of Contact.

Table 1

Sum of Squares, Degrees of Freedom, Mean Squares, F-ratios and p-values for the ANCOVA Comparing Moral Reasoning by Level of Contact

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Level of Contact	1091.55	3	363.85	3.94	.01
Level of Education	39.41	1	39.41	0.43	.52
Gender	3882.90	1	3882.90	42.04	< .001
Age	699.74	1	699.74	7.58	.007
Error Variance	13486.20	146	92.37		

Table 2 lists means and standard deviations of each sport, arranged by level of contact. Scores range from highest to lowest in each category.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for HBVCI Scores by Sport

Team	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>
<u>Low Contact</u>		
Tennis Women	69.29	6.05
Track Women	66.50	6.38
Golf Women	61.20	7.60
Track Men	61.00	9.42
Softball	59.80	11.79
Tennis Men	54.71	14.53
Golf Men	51.00	7.21
Baseball	46.87	8.29
<u>Medium Contact</u>		
Basketball Women	61.25	7.96
Volleyball	58.75	5.15
Basketball Men	57.00	9.34
<u>High Contact</u>		
Football	48.50	8.97

## CHAPTER IV

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to compare moral reasoning scores of student athletes who compete in sports with varying levels of contact (low, medium, and high), as well as comparing these athletes with nonathletes from the same institution. The specific hypotheses under study were: 1) that level of moral reasoning was inversely related to level of contact; as level of contact increased, level of moral reasoning would decrease; and 2) nonathletes scores on the HBVCI will be significantly higher than those of athletes who compete in medium and high contact sport.

Based on prior research in the area of athletics and moral reasoning, it was expected that there would be significant differences between one or more of the groups under study. Nonathletes were expected to score significantly higher than athletes competing in medium and high contact sports. No significant difference was expected between scores of athletes who compete in low contact sports and non-athletes.

However, the results indicated significant differences in level of moral reasoning between the scores of athletes at all levels of contact when compared to nonathletes. Athletes were significantly lower in moral reasoning than nonathletes. This finding is consistent with several other studies in which college athletes were found to reason at a significantly lower moral level than nonathletes (Bredemeier & Shields, 1986c; Hall, 1981; Stoll et al., 1995). However, these results represent a partial discrepancy with outcomes of other studies in which athletes who compete in low contact sport (swimmers) did not differ from nonathletes in moral reasoning scores (Bredemeier & Shields, 1986a; Brower, 1992).



## Gender Differences in Moral Reasoning

There are inconsistencies in the literature where moral reasoning levels between gender are concerned. Although Brower (1992) and Brown (1992) reported finding no significant gender differences in studies involving college athletes, gender differences in moral reasoning scores have been found by other researchers (Bredemeier & Shields, 1984, 1986a, 1986c; Hall, 1981). Results from this study support the latter body of research. Not only did female athletes score significantly higher than male athletes, but female nonathletes also scored significantly higher than their male counterparts.

While numerous studies on the general population (c.f., Rest, 1986) have failed to show significant differences between males and females with regard to moral development, the findings of the current study indicate that the athletic environment may have different effects on the moral reasoning of males and females. Hall (1981) reported that “the pressure to win factor was the chief contributing factor to predicting the difference” (p. 81) where gender was concerned. This reasoning may coincide with the idea that many male athletes who participate in collegiate sport have high expectations of entering the professional ranks in their chosen sport (Brower, 1992). Regardless of the reason, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that differences in the moral reasoning levels of males and females do exist, at least with respect to student-athlete populations. In addition, previous research using the HBVCI (Bellar et al., 1992) indicates that female athletes and nonathletes have higher levels of moral reasoning than male athletes and nonathletes. The results of this study are consistent with this finding in that even nonathlete females have higher levels of moral reasoning than nonathlete males. This

indicates that females have higher levels of moral reasoning regarding sport settings regardless of whether they are athletes.

### Level of Contact and Moral Reasoning

Results also indicate that athletes who compete in high contact sport have significantly lower moral reasoning abilities than nonathletes and athletes who compete in both low and medium contact sports. Since high contact sport was represented by only one sport (football) in our study, we cannot generalize to other high contact sports. However, results suggest that football players are significantly lower in their moral reasoning as compared to athletes who compete in medium and low contact sport.

When we analyze the difference in moral reasoning between athletes who compete in low and medium contact sports, there doesn't appear to be a difference. This contradicts previous studies, which have found significant differences between swimmers and basketball players (Bredemeier & Shields, 1986a; and Brower, 1992). While the results of these studies indicate that basketball players (medium contact) have lower levels of moral reasoning than swimmers (low contact), our study indicates that basketball players and athletes who compete in low contact sports, including golf, track, tennis, softball, and baseball, have similar levels of moral reasoning. This difference could be due to a difference in the types of sports used to represent low contact sports.

When interpreting these findings, the fact that only males were included at the level of high contact sport bears some consideration. Since males have lower scores than females overall, the absence of female participants at this level of contact may have affected the results. We must also consider that the athletes competing in high contact sport were significantly lower in their level of education than athletes who participated in

low contact sports, medium contact sports, and nonathletes. There was also a significant difference in age between athletes competing in high contact sport and nonathletes. Because higher levels of moral reasoning are positively correlated with age and education, it is possible that our results are confounded by these variables. However, the effect of level of contact remained significant even when all of these variables were included as covariates in the analysis.

When moral reasoning scores were compared across sport, baseball players scored lower on the HBVCI than would be expected. This finding was unexpected as baseball is considered a low contact sport, which would indicate higher levels of moral reasoning. However, baseball players' scores were similar to the scores of football players. While, once again, we must take into consideration that these athletes were all males, gender is only one component that has been associated with lower moral reasoning scores. Perhaps a more salient factor regarding this finding is the length of participation reported in this particular sport. The average years of participation for the baseball players in this study exceeded 11 years, which is higher than the number of years that athletes in low, medium, and high contact sports had participated. Bredemeier, Weiss, Shields, & Shewchuk (1986) found that length of participation in a particular type of sport was inversely related to moral reasoning. Brown (1992) also found that the number of years soccer players had participated in that sport was a valid predictor of misconduct. The more experienced players, and those at higher levels of competition, exhibited significantly more misconduct. Therefore, it is possible that number of years of participation in sport influenced the moral reasoning scores of baseball players.



It is also possible that baseball, and softball as well, have been categorized incorrectly as low contact sports. When compared to other sports categorized as low contact (Bredemeier, Weiss, Shields, & Cooper, 1986), such as golf, track, tennis, or swimming, there seems to be significantly more contact involved in baseball and softball. For example, many times there is contact between a runner and a catcher at home plate in either baseball or softball. However, seldom do you see any type of physical contact between golfers who are competing against one another.

### Limitations of Study

Conclusions from this study are limited to the athletes at the institution under study. Consequently, athletes at other institutions may differ from the participants examined in this study. It is possible, however, that inferences may be made to populations at similar institutions. The quasi-experimental nature of this study requires that causal statements be made with care. The use of hypothetical vignettes must be considered, as participants may respond based on the social desirability of response choices rather than their actual feelings. Because there are no female athletes participating in high contact sport, gender comparisons cannot be made at this level.

### Conclusions

Results coincide with prior studies, which have indicated that nonathletes have higher levels of moral reasoning maturity than athletes in general. While previous investigators of moral reasoning in sport have been primarily interested in comparing athletes and nonathletes, the differences noted here between level of contact and individual sports suggests the need for continued research. Our findings indicate that there are significant differences in moral reasoning between athletes competing in sports



with varying levels of contact as well as in several individual sports. Additionally, male athletes may reason at significantly lower levels than female athletes. Analysis of pertinent findings could lead to fresh understandings concerning the relationship between moral reasoning and athletic aggression. If these findings facilitate an increase in the research pertaining to moral behavior in sport, we may be a step closer to developing effective intervention strategies to combat this growing social problem.

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## APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY



## APPENDIX A

### Demographic Survey

Please place a check mark in the appropriate spaces below.

\_\_\_\_Male    \_\_\_\_Female

\_\_\_\_Caucasian    \_\_\_\_African American    \_\_\_\_Hispanic    \_\_\_\_Other

\_\_\_\_Freshman    \_\_\_\_Sophomore    \_\_\_\_Junior    \_\_\_\_Senior    \_\_\_\_Graduate

List Main Varsity Sport \_\_\_\_\_

Years of Participation in Main Sport \_\_\_\_\_

Age\_\_\_\_\_

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For Office Use Only

\_\_\_\_A    \_\_\_\_NA

## APPENDIX B

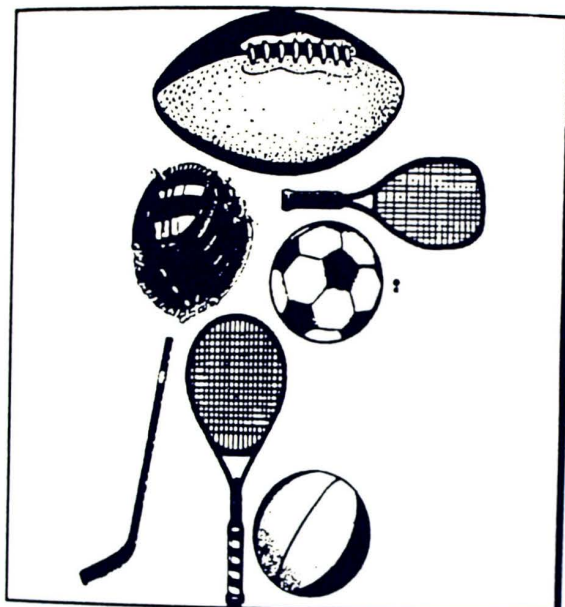
### HAHM-BELLER VALUES CHOICE INVENTORY

# HAHM - BELLER VALUES CHOICE INVENTORY\*

## In The Sport Milieu

The following questionnaire describes incidents that have occurred in sport settings. Each question addresses moral values. Because there are no right or wrong answers, please circle the answer that best describes your feelings. SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree, N = Neutral; D = Disagree; SD = Strongly Disagree.

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Sharon Kay Stoll, Ph.D.  
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### Demographic Information

Athlete ☐ Coach ☐ Teacher ☐ Administrator ☐  
Male ☐ Female ☐

Non-Athlete ☐ Team Sport ☐ Individual Sport ☐

List Main Sport \_\_\_\_\_ How many years have you participated? \_\_\_\_\_

Age ☐ ☐

Citizenship \_\_\_\_\_

Coaching Education: PE Major ☐ ACEP ☐ PACE ☐ Workshop \_\_\_\_\_

List Canadian Level \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_



1. Two rival basketball teams in a well-known conference played a basketball game on team A's court. During the game, team B's star player was consistently heckled whenever she missed a basket, pass, or rebound. In the return game on team B's home court, the home crowd took revenge by heckling team A's players. Such action is fair because both crowds have equal opportunity to heckle players.

SA A N D SD

2. During the double play in baseball, players must tag second base before throwing to first. However, some players deliberately fake the tag, thus delivering a quicker throw to first base. Pretending to tag second base is justified because it is a good strategy. Besides, the umpire's job is to call an illegal play.

SA A N D SD

3. Blood doping is not potentially dangerous to an athlete even though it violates rules in all major competitions. Just before a race, athletes use the technique to freeze their blood and return the red blood cells to the body. The elevated red cell content enables the body to send more oxygen to the muscles, resulting in an enhanced performance. Because there is no physical harm in blood doping, an athlete should be given the choice "to dope or not to dope".

SA A N D SD

4. Swimmers are taught to stand completely still just before the gun shot that starts the race. Some coaches teach their swimmers to move their head and upper body slightly which possibly forces an opponent to false start. If swimmer B false starts he will probably stay in the blocks a fraction longer when the race starts. Consequently, swimmer A may have an advantage during the race. Because all competitors have equal opportunity for this strategy, this is an acceptable means for swimmers to increase their advantage.

SA A N D SD

5. Male Soccer players are allowed to play the ball with any part of their body except the hands or outstretched arms. A soccer player receives a chest high pass and taps the ball to the ground with his hand. The referee does not see this action and the play continues. Because it is the referee's job to see these actions, the player is not obligated to report the foul.

SA A N D SD

6. A female gymnast with Big Time U tries diligently to be a great athlete, but alas the gods are not with her. The more she works, the more she seems to fail at the most inappropriate times: the big meets. She decides to seek help for her mental shortcomings. She sets monthly appointments with her school's sport psychologist. In six months, the meetings prove fruitful, and she begins to see results.

SA A N D SD

7. In golf, there is an unwritten rule that players generally observe silence while other golfers are preparing for and executing shots. Player A is preparing to "tee off". Player B notices that he can break player A's concentration by rattling his clubs and making other noises. Player B believes this is a good strategy. Player B does not believe he is violating a rule because "observed silence" is an unwritten rule.

SA A N D SD

8. Basketball player A skillfully dribbled the ball around her opponents to the basket. Just as she moved toward the basket, she was tripped by player B, causing the basket to be missed. If player A had not been tripped, two points probably would have been made. Player B is charged with a foul and player A must shoot two free throws. Player A missed the two shots from the free throw line. Player B is demonstrating good strategy by forcing player A to shoot two foul shots instead of an easy lay-up.

SA A N D SD



9. A gold medal track athlete was told to undergo drug testing during recent international competition. Because she played by the rules, competed on her merits, and did not use performance enhancing drugs, she opposed the drug testing. She believed that athletic organizations had no moral authority to force her to be tested. Because she and other athletes are truthful and drug testing assumes they are untruthful, drug testing should not be mandatory.

SA A N D SD

10. Certain basketball teams are coached to run plays that cause the opponents to foul. Players and coaches believe this is clever strategy because the opponents may foul out of the game, giving their team an advantage. Because the coach orders this type of play, the players should follow his directions.

SA A N D SD

11. A highly recruited sprinter from Zimbabwe attends every practice, works diligently, and is highly respected by his peers and coaches. He is a good student, sits in front of every class, and is an active participant. He is an NCAA finalist and must miss three days of class for the championships. As per university policy, he contacts all of his professors and receives permission to take his final exams at a different time and place.

SA A N D SD

12. A star football player had a history test on Friday, the day of the cross town rival football game. He knew about the test for several weeks, however he waited until Thursday to study. Other teammates prepared for the test. On Friday he said he was having difficulty concentrating on his studies. If the instructor permits the athlete to take the test at a later date, the instructor would be acting fairly.

SA A N D SD

13. Coaches display confidence and trust in the officials by remaining on the bench and calming their players when questionable calls are made. During a basketball game the center blocked a shot, however she was called for a foul. The players, fans, and coaches clearly believe she blocked the shot by only touching the ball. The team and fans were outraged but the coach calmed her players and encouraged them to forget the call and continue playing. Because the coaches must place mutual confidence in the officials, the coach acted properly.

SA A N D SD

14. A tennis star is preparing to play a match. She complains of not feeling well during the warmup. This star player finally lost a match. When discussing the game, she continually remarked that "I just did not play my best game". Because the player believed her best game was not played, her statement was acceptable.

SA A N D SD

15. Player A who is the center on an ice hockey team skated the puck down the ice, around several opponents. He had a clear shot at the net as he passed player B. Player B, while pretending to go for the puck, decided to turn at the last second to trip player A with his stick. Consequently, player A missed the goal. Because player A must now attempt a penalty shot instead of easy goal, this is demonstrating good strategy.

SA A N D SD

16. During a volleyball game player A hit the ball over the net. The ball barely grazed off player B's fingers and landed out of bounds. However the referee did not see player B touch the ball. Because the referee is responsible for calling rule violations, player B is not obligated to report the violation.

SA A N D SD

17. A starting linebacker for Big Time U is a good person, is known for his hard work and determination. He is also known as a fierce competitor and is aggressive on every play. The best part about him is that he is a consummate player. He loves the game and the experiences gained from it. He is also known as a good sport. He has won every team award for sportsmanlike conduct. After the big interstate rivalry, he shakes hands with all opposing players and coaches.

SA A N D SD



18. A field hockey player is permitted to hit the ball hard, providing the ball is not hit purposely at an opponent. Player A (intently concentrating on the net) hit the ball towards the goal, but hit player B instead. Player B complains that player A purposely hit the ball into her, however the foul was not called. Down the field, player B gained possession of the ball, retaliated, and hit the ball at player A. Player B's action was acceptable.

SA A N D SD

19. Football players are not allowed to move beyond the line of scrimmage until the ball is snapped. Some coaches encourage their players to charge across the line of scrimmage a fraction of a second before the ball is snapped. The officials have difficulty seeing the early movement, therefore, the team has an advantage compared to their opponents. Because the strategy is beneficial and the officials must call the infraction, the team's actions are fair.

SA A N D SD

20. During an intramural basketball game, a student official awarded one free throw shot instead of two to team A. Team B knew the call was wrong, however chose to remain silent, knowing the call was to their advantage. Because the official's job is to make the proper calls, and it is not a formal game, team B's action was acceptable.

SA A N D SD

21. Part of our rights as human beings is the freedom of choice. Because we have freedom of choice, we should be able to take any performance enhancing drug we choose. Also, because drug ingestion only affects our bodies, we are not hurting anyone else. Hence when a governing body bans a drug, our freedom of choice is violated.

SA A N D SD

22. Many athletes use drugs such as steroids to gain maximum strength, while others do not. Some athletes feel that unless they take such drugs, they are at a disadvantage compared to those who do. Athletes, who do not use drugs, state that competition against their drug using opponents results in not having an equal opportunity to win the game. For an equal opportunity, these athletes decide to take drugs. This decision is acceptable.

SA A N D SD

23. The star of the swim team at Big Time U was 21 and had just completed a great collegiate career by winning both of her events at the NCAA Championships. Her parents traveled over 200 miles to support her and cheer her on to victory. After the finals, they take her out to dinner to celebrate. She decides to have a glass of white wine with her fish filet entree.

SA A N D SD

24. During a youth sport football game, an ineligible pass receiver catches a long touchdown pass and scores. The officials fail to determine that the player was ineligible. Because it is the referee's job to detect the ineligible receiver, the player or the coach does not have to declare an ineligible receiver.

SA A N D SD

25. Ice hockey is often a violent game. Even though players are often hurt, hitting hard and smashing players into the boards is normal. Player A and B are opponents playing in a championship game. While trying to control the puck, player A smashed player B into the boards. Even though the puck is on the opposite side of the arena, player B, a few minutes later, retaliated by smashing player A into the boards. Because "hitting hard" and "smashing players into the boards" are an inherent part of the game, player B's action was acceptable.

SA A N D SD

APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT



## **Informed Consent Document**

You are being asked to participate in a research study. This form is designed to provide you with information about this study and to answer any questions you may have.

### **1. TITLE OF RESEARCH STUDY**

Decision Making Processes in College Students

### **2. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR**

Sherlean King, Graduate Student, Austin Peay State University, Psychology Department, Clarksville, TN.

### **3. THE PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH**

This study will seek to determine how college students make decisions and answer questions based on common dilemmas which occur in sports. There are no right or wrong answers. You should answer each question according to your own beliefs and feelings.

### **4. PROCEDURES FOR THIS RESEARCH**

You will be asked to complete a questionnaire that asks how you feel about certain situations that commonly occur in competitive sports. You will be given a range of answers to choose from and will be asked to pick which answer best describes how you feel. We expect the session to last 15-30 minutes. After completing the questionnaire you are free to leave or to ask any questions you may have.

### **5. POTENTIAL RISKS TO YOU**

There are no known risks from participation in this study.

### **6. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO YOU OR OTHERS**

As a participant in the study, you will be contributing to science and helping researchers gain insight into the decision-making patterns of college students. You may also receive extra credit for participation if you are enrolled in a psychology course.



Please read the statements below. They describe your rights and responsibilities as a participant in this research project.

1. I agree to participate in the present study being conducted by Sherlean King, a graduate student in the Department of Psychology at Austin Peay State University, and supervised by Dr. Rick Grieve, a faculty member in the Department of Psychology at Austin Peay State University. I agree to complete one questionnaire.
2. I have been informed in writing of the procedures to be followed and about any risks that may be involved. I have also been told of any benefits that may result from my participation. Ms. King and Dr. Grieve have offered to answer any questions I may have regarding the procedures. Ms. King can be contacted at (931) 232-6008 between 8 A.M. and 5 P.M. M-F, or anytime on the weekends. Dr. Grieve can be contacted at (931) 221-7235 between 9 A.M. and 4 P.M. M-F.
3. I am aware that I am free to terminate my participation at any time during the experiment without penalty or prejudice. I am also aware that I may have all information obtained from me withdrawn from the study and destroyed at any time before the study is submitted for publication.
4. I realize that by signing this form, I willingly consent to participate in the current study. I also acknowledge that I have been given a copy of this form to keep for my records.

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NAME (please print)

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SIGNATURE

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DATE

## APPENDIX D

### DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

## APPENDIX D

### Debriefing

As previously stated, there are no right or wrong answers regarding the dilemmas you just responded to. We were interested in your beliefs and feelings about each situation. However, we were not entirely honest in the disclosure of the purpose of this research. We stated that the study was designed to determine how college students make decisions and answer questions based on common dilemmas that occur in sports. This is true. But, we are specifically interested in determining patterns of moral reasoning regarding these dilemmas. The questionnaire you completed measures moral reasoning in the sport environment. As previously stated, your answers are entirely confidential and your name will not be attached to or recorded with any of the data. Furthermore, the informed consent documents will be stored separately from the data collected. Thank you again for your participation. If you have any questions please feel free to ask now or call at a later time. Once again, I can be reached at (931) 232-6008 between 8 A.M. and 5 P.M. M-F, or anytime on weekends. You can also contact Dr. Grieve at (931) 221-7235 on M.T.Th.or F. from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M.

## VITA

Sherlean D. King was born in Venezuela, South America on October, 18, 1959. She graduated from Southside High School in Fort Smith, Arkansas in May, 1978. In May of 1993 she received the degree of Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Middle Tennessee State University. She entered the Clinical Psychology graduate program at Austin Peay State University in August, 1997 and in December 1999 received a Master of Arts degree in Clinical Psychology, graduating with honors.

She is presently finishing her internship at Harriet Cohn Mental Health Center in Clarksville, Tennessee.