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Football and Femininity

*A phenomenological study of gender, football and motivation
seen from a female perspective in a sociocultural context*

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Abstract

Football is in Norway today the most popular sport across genders. Football is also a very male dominated arena because of its masculine features and because the masculine has for a long period been seen as a male trait. The females have since the day they entered this environment been exposed to the men's embodiment of football and have therefore been working as the other. This again is shown through many aspects, and the recognition of female football is missing especially among media and in popularity of audiences. The female football players are also struggling with being compared to the male players when it comes to their abilities and body as a football player. In light of this I could not understand how the females are attracted to football and why so many of them are motivated to continue playing.

Through my field work and the development of my thesis I have tried to look at the females' motivation in this male dominated environment through a phenomenological perspective. This allowed me to look deeper in the embodiment of the female players in football and how their experience with the game might motivate them to continue. We look at this from a sociocultural perspective where the gender is cultivated into their habitus through the social experience. Through the phenomenological perspective I have tried to deconstruct the discourse of gender in the environment to understand the positive experience of playing and to understand football on its own premises in a female society.

I entered my fieldwork with a video camera and have been filming and following the female team in the football club Fløya in Tromsø for five months. I have been myself a part of this environment since I was 5 years old and it caused a lot of possibilities at the same time as it caused some struggle. The time in the field became a time of gaining new knowledge of a well-known environment. This again developed into my ethnographic documentary about the female team in this club and finally ending in this thesis. In the film I focused on their season and coping with being in a football environment, but in the thesis I am discussing how a concept called *flow* might affect how the girls perceive themselves in a game and how it might be of an importance of why they are attracted to and continue to play the game.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Interest

I have been playing football myself since I was five years old. I remember the day I got in contact with this sport. I had never heard about football and never seen anything like it. It was an autumn day my sister, that were two years older, stated to my parents that she wanted to play football at a team named Fløya. She had just started at school, had played football there and been invited by a girl in her class to come to practice. My parents had played themselves when they were younger, but had never imagined that one of their girls would want to play football. They talked to the coach and the next practice my parents brought my sister there and I had to tag along. The team's name was *Fløya*, and I had no idea what to expect. It was at an old gym at a school nearby our home in Tromsø. I remember we entered through a heavy wooden door, the gym had something that looked like wooden floors with lines in all sorts of colors and in one end I could see a stage with big red curtains on either side. I ran to the stage and played. Suddenly the coach blew in a whistle and around 10 girls gathered on the middle of the floor with the lines. I sat down on the stage with my parents. I was there just to watch and I remember I was fascinated. The coach looked at me and asked if I wanted to join in and play together with them. I felt a bit insecure, but I accepted. My parents have told me that at this practice, I just stood and watched the game on the field. This is also how I recollect my first meeting with football. I just watched the girls run around, kicking the ball and tried to understand what you were supposed to do.

The next practice I had understood the game, and when I first got the ball at my feet it was almost stuck. I clearly had a talent and was already at this second practice able to do things with the ball and lead it past the others and score goals. Many goals. I remember it was something special with the feeling when I played the game for the first time. It was the funniest thing I had ever done and I disappeared into this place inside me where I was in the moment and nothing else around me mattered. From that day forward, no other activities were able to steal the footballs place in my heart and today at the age of 24 and newly operated after a knee injury, I still play this game. The meaning of this game have of course changed as I grew older. I realized that there were many talented players in the sport and competition grew. I have therefore had some discussions with myself through the years if it is worth the effort. Nevertheless, the five-year-old me still exists inside of me and remember the meeting

with this sport and this have made such an impression that I would not be able to quit or totally leave the football environment.

Since then I have been playing football myself and experienced both ups and downs being a female football player in a masculine environment. The social field of football is actually a measurement of physical strength of the bodies of the players across the teams playing. Football was in the beginning a sport only men played and it seems on a global level that all females in this environment experience being looked upon with the men's gaze, because in this sport they are often compared with men when there are discussions of the entertainment value of the games. For instance, is this not an issue in Norway considering skiing and handball. Here the females are not compared with the men, but is experiencing being valued in their own respective fields. They are even shown public through media and advertisements, because of their international success. In football however there is a difference. Even though the females have had more international success than the men, they have not reached any popularity among the spectators. (Hjelseth & Hovden, 2014) This in itself is highly peculiar, but still numbers show that girls tend to be attracted to start and to keep on playing this sport. The question here again is why do women choose to expose themselves to this environment? What motivates them to continue even though they are not treated equally with everyone in the existing environment? In spite of being looked upon as weaker and not as good football players as men, they still choose to play this game. There have to be something more about this game that attracts.

Because of my long experience inside this field, I therefore wanted to try to explain, figure out and try to express what it is about the game that makes girls continue playing. When I was in my worst periods where I was injured I could not see any reason for continuing, but somehow I could not manage to quit either. I had to ask myself, what is it with this game that is so special that I can't find myself to give it up? Therefore, it was also a personal reason behind this fieldwork, and at the same time, I thought it would be interesting to try to distance myself from this well-known environment and maybe be able to see new meaning and gain new knowledge about this game I love. At the same time, I wanted *to contribute to a better understanding of girls' motivations and pleasure of playing football.*

1.2. Football and gender

Football is in Norway today, and maybe in the world, one of the most popular sports across both genders. If we look at Statistisk Sentralbyrå's (Statistics Norway) newest publications on recreational activities among kids and youths in 2013, football and handball were the most popular activities for both genders where in the age of 6-15 there were 69 % that plays football and 70 % plays handball.¹ (Vaage, 2015) Even though both genders is highly represented in football there exists big differences concerning salaries, acknowledgement in media, ability to attract audiences and the possibilities to make a living of the sport. Along all these measures the females become underrepresented compared to men, where the male part of the sport on the other hand have reached an extreme material professionalization of the field while the females are not near their salaries and acknowledgement in media and among audiences. These are the existing facts in the reality for female football players on a professional level in Norway today, and also in the world. On a bigger scale you have all these systems that affects the football environment, for instance media and what they choose to cover in the sports pages or in the news. You have the financial market that have made football players a product that you can sell and buy in order to make the club win games and make more money. At the same time football shoes, clothes, balls etc. are also commodities in a million dollar market and famous football players are often used to promote this. (Hovden & Hjelseth, 2014) In all these big scale happenings, there must be something more on the smaller scale inside each environment that attracts players that never have the possibility to gain all of this, and that's what we're investigating through Fløya's female team.

1.3. Fløya – from a boy's club to a girl's club

The football club Fløya were established 24th of July 1922 by some boys that were too young and too unexperienced to play for the already established teams in the city of Tromsø. These boys played only football on the streets, but now they also wanted to join in a club. 16 to 18 boys met on this summer day and established the club first named Frigg. From that day, Frigg was a boy's club consisting of 20 to 22 boys that loved to play football during the summertime. At this time, football was still a young sport and it was only 30 years since they first had started playing football in Tromsø. In 1925, in order to get to be a part of the

¹. Among boys there were 74 % that played football and among girls 63 %. In handball, we can see that the number turns and there were 59 % boys playing and 78 % girls playing. (Vaage, 2015)

Norwegian Football Association, they had to change their name, because there was already a professional club in Oslo called Frigg. Because of this, the boys had to find a new name and they agreed to name the club after the mountain Fløya on the other side of the Tromsø-sund. This was because the boys had had many hiking trips together at the mountain and Fløya was a symbol for their unity. From that day, Idrettsforeningen Fløya was official considered a sports club. (Hansen, 2012)

Still, there were only boys and men that took part in football at this time, but six years later, in 1928, the females entered the club. The women decided that they wanted to do football and gymnastics. In order to raise money for their activities and for making a club-banner, the females decided to divide the 50 female participants in the club into two teams and announced a football game. They thought that it would provide cash, because people would be curious to watch a female football game. They applied to the football association to get the permission to play the game. Luckily, the answer did not arrive in time for the football match. Therefore, the first female football match was played in Tromsø. It was a success with a lot of audience and girls enjoying themselves. When they finally gained an answer from the Norwegian football association(NFF); they did not get the permission to establish a female football team! NFF's argument was that it was obscene, and the girls was in danger of injuring themselves so badly that they would not be able to have kids. Because of this, NFF forbid Fløya to allow women to play football. Therefore, the women's plans on playing football had to stop. In spite of this, they continued to play football for many years - off record.

Thus, it took 50 years before the club established a female team for real. The 23th of May 1981 they played the first official game against a local team and the same year they surprisingly won the city championship. In 1982, they had won the region championship, which meant that the next year they were going to play in the league A in the region. This year they ended up at 4th place, but the year after in 1984 they managed to win the North Norwegian championship. After this they got to play a final against the best team from south in Norway. Here they lost 7 – 0 and realized there existed a big difference between the north and the south in the level as football players.

In 1986 there was established a national 1st division for female football in Norway. Fløya did not manage this year to be a part of this league. They played therefore in the second league and here they were unstoppable. They won every game and was ready to play qualification games in order to get to the highest level. Still, not until 1989 Fløya succeeded after 3 years of

struggle and loss in the qualification games. They were always the best team in the north, but the teams from the south had until now had the skills on their side. Finally, they reached their goal and could celebrate their success in becoming one of the top clubs in the female league in Norway. *From being a boy's club in the 1920s Fløya became in the 1990s top club in Norway with girls in the lead.*

2. Analytical perspectives

Football is a game with two teams who tries to score goals in order to win games. People that have never played or seen football themselves have asked me many times; “Why bother? What’s the point in running around kicking a ball?” Others that I know have decided to quit football when it became “too serious” according to them, which again means that the competition is stronger and the risk of disappointment is higher. These people often agree that the game is not fun anymore when there is more competition. You can therefore ask why some people continue and what it is in this sport that so many people love. It might be because it is a social happening for the people watching the game. Still, the people interacting and playing in this environment are individual subjects that feels, thinks and believes. They interpret their environment through their own experience. As we understand there are many things going on in many ways and through this thesis we are digging deeper into these things. We are here taking the female experience when we try to understand how they interpret and see themselves in a somewhat harsh environment filled with joy, performances and sometimes disappointment. Why do they choose to expose themselves to sports that pushes your body and mind to its limits? To understand my project and how we as humans interpret the social world around us, we need therefore to look deeper into the social and individual construction of a human being.

2.1. Gender and football

“You are not born a woman you become one.” (Simone De Bouvoir, 1997)

From the time the females in Norway entered the field of football they have had more success than the males at a national level.² However, females had to struggle to get accepted into the field and even the ruling organization for football, NFF, banned females from participating, by arguing that the female body was more fragile than the male body, and that football may harm the abilities of sexual reproduction. Besides, female football was obscene. These arguments again are reflexing the early debates concerning gender; whether gender is social or biological founded. At 1970 feminist and queer theorizing tried to set a distinction between sex and gender, which they meant liberated both theory and practice. Gender was connected to culture and the social, while the sex was connected to the biological foundations of the body, where gender is social distinctions that have early on been connected to the bodily functions of the sex. (Young, 2005)

Further, the French author, philosophe and feminist Simone De Beauvoir points out that pre-adolescent boys and girls are not too different in behavior. They have the same pleasures in life and same interests. It is in the later years when they discover the world and society around them that they start negotiating their identity. Therefore, she argues that it is not based on the biological, but in the socio-cultural that females negotiate and finds their role as a woman whether positive or negative. The biological experiences of a woman such as menstruation, pregnancy, menopause or the development of female sex organs cannot create a meaning in themselves; gender is socially constructed, where women are subordinated men. The woman is always *the other* because the male is the seer and she becomes the object of his gaze upon her. Therefore, the meaning of what it is to be a woman is given by men, according to De Beauvoir. (De Beauvoir, 2000)

Othering is based on an understanding that enable men as *transcendence*, which means that he is expanding his limits and skills, while the females have a more passive role as an *immanence*. She seldom does anything that is a risk for her and therefore she is not expanding her own body's limits. (Ibid. 2000) However, in a modern society women are given space to expand their limits. Women do not choose to think of their bodies negatively unless they are embedded in a society which facilitates or encourage this. Our way of thinking is culturally informed, as the way our western societies are constructed, a female will not reach the same

² For further information, look at page 1 Hjelseth, A. & Hovden, J. (2015) *Negotiating the status of women's football in Norway. An analysis of online supporters discourses*. European Journal for Sport and Society 2014, 11 (3), 253-277. [Internet] Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/273057213_Negotiating_the_status_of_women%27s_football_in_Norway_An_analysis_of_online_supporter_discourses

position as a male even though she chooses to look upon herself as a subject instead of an object, according to de Beauvoir. This is because she will still have problems orienting in a world that is still affected and therefore dominated by men and masculinity. (1997) Still, even though times are changing for the females' rights to expand themselves, we see that inside the football environment there are much work that is needed to done for the women's football reaches the same status as men's football. Today there are not any openly discussions about the biological gender and that it is obscene, but the power relations that Simon de Beauvoir is describing can be seen today as both an organizational and symbolic matter. Even though this is highly interesting and there exist many studies that focus on female footballs relation to the bigger organizations such as for instance Bente Skogvangs's studies of Top football in Norway, I want to focus more on the bodily experience the girls in my study have through football. I want to investigate further if the feeling of mastering football can give us an experience of *transcendence* of the biological body.

2.2. *The lived body*

According to Toril Moi recent feminist and queer theorizing have brought us to the end of a constructivist gender rope and that the sex/gender distinctions are abstracted from embodiment and in that way difficult to use in theorizing subjectivity and identity. (Young, 2005) Gender is a social categorization in order to describe women and males, but this way of perceiving gender gives little room for the individual experience. Instead Moi purposes to go more in a direction of *phenomenology* to try to exceed the othering and the belief that the male is always the *transcendence* and the female always the *immanence* after de Beauvoir's concepts. She purposes that you can use a concept called *the lived body*. This category allows description of the habits and interactions between people of different sexes, without reducing it to the heterosexual frames of masculinity and femininity and other categories. Each individual is seen as a distinctive body, with specific features, desires and capacities that are both different but also the similar to other people in the society. Each individual person lives out their own body in a sociohistorical context, which means that they are conditioned by sociocultural facts and the behavior that is expected by others, but at the same time each person can take up and act upon these codes in their own way. (Ibid, 2005) Based on this I wonder if this might help me to understand female football players as more focused on their lived body than their gender when they play?

In the concept of *the lived body* Moi proposes to throw over the gender/sex concepts, but Chisholm argues that we need to include it together with *the lived body*, because of the history of the bodily sex of man and woman that have been given abilities through society. We can neither forget that in a sports environment there will be differences if you compare the bodily sexes. Therefore, De Beauvoir's concept of *othering* is highly essential in the female experience in this environment, and at the same time as the concept of *the lived body* can work as a tool to understand the females own perception of their embodiment. Chisholm's understanding of phenomenology opens an opportunity for the experience of achieving something that is not connected to your gender. (Chisholm, 2008) The thought of a lived body can therefore be used in a feminist phenomenological analysis of the football girls' experience of their own embodiment in an environment that is dominated by men's gaze. These perspectives help me to operationalize both the experiential and the sociocultural dynamics of female football, and make me able to gain a deeper insight in what is motivating them to continue even though they exist within an environment that worships more powerful abilities than the body of a female sex. There have to be something more about the game that makes the girls play, and therefore we need to see them as a subject with their own gaze upon their body and life, but also existing as an object exposed to a hegemonic praxis.

2.3. Praxis and habitus

Further, to understand how gender is socialized into the embodiment of the subjects we need to look at the social construction of the society. Bourdieu's theories are therefore a useful tool in investigating further how the gender displays are incorporated to the human beings through the sociocultural environment.

According to the French sociologist and anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu, the social environment is constructed and based upon historical events. Still, if the social world is not to be reduced to a discontinuous series of instantaneous mechanical happenings between people that is treated as easy replaceable beings, you must include the forms of capital to understand how we make sense of our own role in a society. (1979) He argues that our society is divided in different social *fields*. Inside these fields people are classifying themselves and always trying to be the best. This is a setting where *agents*, or people, and their social positions are located, which again will say that in this field the position of each person is a result of interaction between the person's *habitus*, *capital* and the specific rules of the field. The

different fields that exist in the society are often interacting with each other and these are again hierarchical according to Bourdieu. (Ibid. 1979) Football may thus be understood as a social field with a specific hierarchy and dynamics within an environment, both locally and geographically more distant, based on specific statuses and rankings, for instance the different divisions the team play in. But also within one team there exists a hierarchy and a particular social dynamics based on social interactions.

Further, our *habitus* again is something that decides whether we are able or not to gain these capitals. For Bourdieu this concept of habitus was the solution to the discussion of *objectivism* and *subjectivism* in the human sciences. Human experience is objective in the way that it connects to the social through representations through visual symbolism or verbal thoughts and language. Each experience is subjective and knowledge is merely subjective and there will therefore be no external or objective truth. Habitus is a system of dispositions that again will say longer lasting acquired schemes of practical knowledge. The point here is that the individual person (or agent) develops these dispositions in the environment it perceives through praxis or lived experience. In that way the objective social structures are encountered a part of the mental experience of the agents too. He uses the term *Doxa* that is the public opinion that is considered the valid understanding of the social cooperation. *Opinion* is what is negotiable in the culture. *Doxa* and *opinion* is the objectified part of the reality and can be used to analyze the dynamics that is taken for granted inside a social field and which symbolic capital the field is structured by. Further the habitus is the bodily incorporated and taken for granted knowledge. In this way our habitus makes us who we are through our knowledge and experience, but at the same time we are somewhat blind to our own habitus and we do not know when we have expanded it even though it continues to change as we move into different environments and fields. At the same time, habitus is also the thing that makes us astounded when the things we take for granted do not match the surroundings. Habitus is a tool that is used in both culture sociology and general in social sciences, which inhabits that culture and society is sedimented into each human being. According to Bourdieu knowledge and experience and ways to perceive, think, talk and move embodied in all humans. Therefore, habitus differs from the more classical concepts because it also includes embodiment. It does not only function at the level of the exact and discursive consciousness, but the internal structures are also embodied in a way that is deeper, practical and often pre-reflexive. Habitus may be understood as the tactile, as *muscle memory*, in the field of physical education, such as football. (Bourdieu, 1986) Skills and enskillment are at the core of sports and football.

Bourdieu claims that our relationship with the world is shown through our behavior that again is shown in a bodily and anchored understanding. In this way we can understand the bodily and the verbal that the players express through my fieldwork as habitus. This because our body is affected by the surrounding society. (Bourdieu, 2000) In this concept of habitus it can again work as an understanding of gender in the way de Beauvoir argues for that it is learned through living in a society. She argues that gender is learned through the socialization process and therefore it can be valid to incorporate gender into the concept of habitus. To act and be like a girl is learned in the socialization with your surroundings and in that way your gender is incorporated into your habitus. In that way you learn the codes of gender and this again becomes a part of your habitus.

2.4. *Flow in sports*

Bourdieu is using habitus to understand the bodily experience relevance for the social life. Through this thesis I also want to try to understand how the bodily experience through the training of football skills can give a sense of achievement, where you have the feeling of a present where everything, also the social, becomes immaterial. The feeling I experienced as a five-year-old where I was absorbed into the football environment is a good example of a phenomenological experience. The Hungarian psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi writes about the concept of *flow* in sports and can be an explanation for what I experienced. He argues that this is a place of high, focused concentration that makes you forget the surroundings and it can work as a somewhat escape from reality. The first word used for flow was autotelic experience and comes from two Greek words that describe doing something for its own sake (auto = self; telos = goal). One runner he interviewed described it like this:

“I felt really in control, just felt terrific the whole way, and didn’t feel the pain that I would normally feel in that run... [I] just really enjoyed the experience of running and really had probably the most successful race ever of my life... It wasn’t as painful as the others. I felt in very control, I felt very strong. I was able to run as I had planned... I felt really focused. I just felt like, you know, like athletes say, “It clicked”; it felt great the whole way.” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999:4)

This moment is quite similar to my own experience with football. According to Csikszentmihalyi this is among the most intense, most memorable experiences you can have in your life and is what he calls flow or *optimal experience*. When you have gained this

experience it will stay in your memory forever and might provide a wish to return to this state of mind. Still, he writes that it is not easy to get into this flow zone. This is a state of consciousness where you become totally absorbed in what you are doing, in such a way that you exclude other thoughts, yourself and emotions. This means that flow is about focus, but still about more than just focus. It is a harmonious experience where mind and body are working together without any effort which again makes a feeling for the person that something special have happened. Thus, one may say this is about enjoyment too. Many connects this to winning, but it is not necessary connected to this. Flow offers more than just a successful outcome, because it lifts an experience from the ordinary to the optimal and in this moment we are truly alive and connected to what we are doing. (Ibid, 1999) Sometimes you may be so connected and focused on what you are doing that you forget time and place. For instance, writing a paper, playing a board game or drawing.

This concept of flow works therefore as a state of mind that have a universal quality that can be experienced by people in a wide range of context. For instance, elderly Germans describe the feeling of intense involvement they experience when tending their gardens the similar way as Japanese teenagers do when they describe how it feels to ride their motorbikes. (Ibid, 1999) But even though sport and football is a setting that is structured to enhance flow, many athletes have trouble achieving it. The mindset accompanying flow tends to push a person to his or her limits, and this is one reason why this zone is important to athletes seeking to do their best. Flow therefore requires that there is a positive balance between the challenges you think you face and the skills you think you have. If you look at attachment 2, picture 1, you see a description of which state of mind the flow zone acquires.

(Csikszentmihalyi, 2015) If the level of skills compares perfectly with the challenge, you will gain flow. Still, in order to do something, you need to be motivated to start the activity. The social field may encourage you to start an activity, but my hypothesis is that the flow experience encourages you to continue despite heavy challenges or social pressure which otherwise may have discouraged you.

2.4. Codes and signs

If we go back to Bourdieu again, he argues that it is the social environment that values the different activities, and therefore it is the social environment around you that have influences what you choose to value as important to continue doing. At the same time in these social processes there are existing sign and codes that both are conscious and unconscious for the

participant. Goffman argues that it is in the social situations that the divisions and hierarchy of social structures are depicted micro ecologically through small scale metaphors. This can be used as a tool to understand what is not verbally said in an environment, such as what motivates people to do things. (Goffman, 1976) This is relevant to use as a tool in understanding the surroundings, how the football girls interact with them in a symbolic way and in what way these interactions might affect their motivation.

In culture there exist many “institutionalized codes”, or keys as Goffman calls it. A key consists of conventions, and is a transcription of meaning. They refer to something that is different which again establishes an indexical sign relationship. Goffman is presenting five basic keys which is typical for the American society, which again can be useful to compare to a modern society such as Norway. (Ibid, 1998) We will only look into some of these keys that I will use in this paper. One of the keys he describes is *contests*. This key is aggression that is ethological founded. In this aggression is channeled and ritualized, such as in football. In the framework of contest, signs are used to indicate flight and fight as playful or serious. Goffman have not written much about this, but we will still investigate it further in this thesis. (Ibid, 1998) Football is a typical contest where people are acting out bodily aggression in an environment of frame and rules.

Another key that is necessary to investigate the scripts of culture is the *ceremonial key*. Many social events cannot be understood on its own premises if one does not look at the ceremonial characters as keys to their understanding. Cultural happenings can easier be understood with semiotic reading of the signs handled in these rituals. The semiotic reading reveals the codes of the ceremony and enlightens the hidden sign relationship that exists in the happening. (Ibid, 1998) Goffman argues that the function of this reaches in two directions: “...the affirmation of basic social arrangements and the presentation of ultimate doctrines about man and the world.” (Goffman, 1976:1) He argues that these signs are social and needs to play out in a social environment to be enlightened. In this situated social happenings, the individual is given an opportunity to face directly a representation or iconic expression of what they are supposed to hold dear. (Ibid, 1976) In football a game can be seen as a ceremonial event that have several smaller rituals going on every time they are preparing for a game.

Further, these behaviors that find place in a ritual and ceremony are according to Goffman *displays*, which is the alignment an actor or subject enter in a gathering and which position she seem prepared to take in the social happening that is about to happen. There are some

structures of a ritual-like display that Goffman writes about. First, displays have a dialogic character, with symmetrical and asymmetrical pairs. A symmetrical display between two subjects can involve asymmetries according to how they start the display. At the same time one must not forget that there is not only how two treat and are treated by each other, but also how they separately treat and are treated by a common third. Further, if an individual is to give and receive what is considered the ritual in social situations, she must, intentionally or not, dress such as others know at once the social identity and likewise she must be able to read the information from the ones she informs. (Ibid, 1976) Thirdly, displays can be multivocal or polysemic, in a way that more than just one piece of social information can be encoded in them. For instance, in a football game where the sex plays a part of what people think of the game. At the same time, not only can different statuses be encoded in the same display, but a sequentially hierarchy of considerations can also be found. For instance, if a man meets his daughter after some years. First he lifts his hat and then bend to kiss her. The lifting of the hat can be seen as the relation between the sexes and the kiss is the relationship between kin. (Ibid, 1976) The gender display on the other hand seems to be optional. For example, the courtesies do not need to be initiated, but at the moment it does it do not have to be accepted. Humans again can be pretty conscious of the displays they use and are able to orient in different environments and use them in context of their own choosing. (Ibid, 1976) These codes and displays is something we will use as a tool to investigate further the motivation for playing football among females through trying to decode what is not said, but acted in the fieldwork. It will also work as a tool to investigate the displays that exist in the field and how this might affect how the girls perceive their embodiment in a masculine environment.

As mentioned in the beginning, a person at a team must be seen as an individual being that interprets in its own way at the same time as they are a part of a social environment with many interactions going on. The concept of flow is a theory that focuses on the individual as a part of the social environment and that they are driven by an inner experience. On the other hand, Bourdieu's theories are including the social environment and helps us understand how the individual actor make their choices as a part and affected by their surrounding environment. The habitus gathers experiences that makes us who we are including our gender displays, but in order to become who we are we need the social environment around us to facilitate for us before we can enter a field and gain new information and experience the inner such as flow. In a society again we are using different codes and signs to orient ourselves, and the use of these we can argue that might be something that is learned into our habitus. These

codes are something that we can decode to understand the subjects' interaction with the surroundings and the culture. Further in this paper we are going to use these theories to look upon my findings in my research and to dig deeper into the motivations for playing football. Firstly, we need to look upon the context of the field I have been a part of to understand and start discussing my findings.

3. Methodology, access and position

3.1. Access

First of all, the football environment is a culture that I am totally incorporated into, and therefore it was not a problem for me to get in touch with the people in the environment. For me the main problem was to gain access as a researcher, because everyone in the environment knew me from before and therefore expected me to act in the same way. I needed to negotiate my roles and status in the group from an injured player to a researcher. Because I was doing fieldwork at home I always had to try to balance two roles in the environment, and try to gain access as a researcher and not only a football player.

To get main access I actually firstly spoke to my coach, who had at this time been my coach for about six months. Because of my injury, I did not know him the same way as the others that saw and talked to him every day at practice. Still, he had a positive attitude and the rest of the leaders around the team seemed to find my project interesting. I remember that I stood in front of my coach, Roger, after practice one winter day in December in Fløyahallen. I tried to explain the chaos that formed my ideas for my fieldwork. Of what I remember I said to him that I am studying for a master in Visual Cultural Studies and that I had an idea to make my master about female football players and that I wished to do this in Fløya. I told him that I wanted to make a documentary and that my goal would be to show how it actually is to be a female football player. I also said that since I was going to operate my knee in January this project might help me get through the period of injury because I could take part in many things an injured football player normally misses out on. His response was simply to smile and say; "That's interesting. Go ahead!"

3.2. Position; researcher, football girl and friend

To understand my fieldwork, I feel that it is important to look upon my own role inside the environment. During the period of my fieldwork, I felt that I had to master and orient myself into different social expectations as a researcher. At some times I felt it was difficult to find my place in the field, because of my own connection to the environment from before. I knew already many of the social codes that exists inside the environment, and at the same time, I questioned things my teammates found peculiar, things they expected me to know from as a part of the team. With reference to Bourdieu, one may say I questioned their and our *doxic* knowledge, the taken for given, and this felt strange both for them and for me. I remember in one of the group interviews I made with the eldest girls on the team I asked how it is to compete with their friends. As in how it is to be friends with someone, but at the same time trying to get a spot at the team which will mean that someone else that you have a connection to will fail. I felt that several of the girls got a bit angry. The captain, Ida, said: “You always base this in what the coach says. It should not make any difference for your friendship.” One of the others stated; “When we are at the field, we are at the field and I feel that everyone should respect that you can’t be angry at your friend because she manages to start a game.” The captain again said; “I think it is pretty accepted that this is the way it is and that it should not cause any bitterness.” I felt I had crossed a line and had to explain that I knew this, but I asked the question because the audience would probably not know this. The girls laughed and said that they understood.

In addition, I had to face the role as a part of the team where I had to contribute to the happenings instead of filming everything that was going on. One time it was at a fellow “dugnad” or voluntary work to get income to the team. We had to clean the cafeteria in Fløyahallen, and I wanted to film this, but at the same time, I felt that I had to contribute for the good of the team. I tried to film some, and clean some. At one point when I was filming, the team coordinator laughed and yelled at me; “Nathalie, you are not doing anything, you are just filming!” I was actually doing something, I was filming, but they expected me to be in my role as a player. A similar situation took place in the autumn when the team had to travel to Alta for a game. The team had signed up for voluntarily work at the beer festival in Tromsø. They expected the players that were injured and not able to play to take part of this work. I wanted to travel and film the game, but I felt I had to be true to my role as a football girl and stay behind in Tromsø to help, because there were very few girls left to do the voluntarily

work. I ended up having a nice time together with the girls that was at the beer festival to clean and serve drinks. Still, I was also a bit sad that I did not get to film the trip to Alta, because it is a social event to travel for five hours in a bus and I think I would have gained good material there.

At the same time, this role as a football girl also stopped me from gaining interviews with the coach. I really wanted to get an interview with him, but because of the knowledge of the environment, I felt that I had to cross a social line from the relationship as a coach and a player. At the same time, I knew that he has a history as a successful football player in Premier League in England and is somewhat famous inside the football environment in Tromsø. This in addition to the feeling that he is my coach that makes the decision whether I get to play or not, made me forget my role as a researcher and not ask him to join in on any interviews. Looking at it now I do not understand why I did not ask him for an interview, because now I feel that it would not have been any problem, but at that time I remember that I might felt a bit shy and embarrassed to bother him. Still, I know that he would not have had any problems with it, but something inside me felt that it would be uncomfortable, most likely it was my habitus that played a role here.

Even though I entered a well-known field where I have spent many years of my life, I still felt that I now had to enter with a new role, as a researcher, and this made me insecure about how to act in the environment. There were times I felt I was a stranger, especially when I had the camera and I felt that some of the girls did not want to be filmed. For instance, when I was filming inside the players' bus from a game. The girls had won the game, the bus driver put on the song "We are the Champions" and the girls started singing. I took up the camera to film, and I noticed that many of the girls took their hoods over their head and tried to hide. I filmed around and ended up where Marte, my main protagonist sat, and she took her hand in front of the camera and said; "Not now!". In retrospect the situation may tell two things; first, about a girl's culture where I expect that many of the girls were hiding because they had recently played a game and had not had the time to put on make-up and such, and did not want to be seen at camera like that. This I can state, because I only had these experiences with the girls after games, and not before. Secondly, the situation tells me about my own insecurity as a researcher. In the situation, I got insecure when I saw this response from the girls, because I did not manage to take a role as a researcher and thought it had something to do with me as a person and not the camera.

Still, there were times it was easy for me to get them to talk because they knew me from before, for instance in the interviews and at practices and before games. I felt that many of the girls were relaxed in front of the camera, and I noticed easily if they changed their natural behavior in front of the camera. In this fieldwork I always had to negotiate my own position with the others and they might have some expectations of me how I should act because I was a part of the environment from before. As Abu-Lughod writes: “I was worried by the idea of what anthropologists were supposed to do. I thought I should be going door to door, meeting everyone in the vicinity, and conducting survey”. (1999:17) I was always worried if I did the right things and if I did what was expected of me as a researcher. At the same time, she also describes herself as a *halfie*, because she was a part of the community, because of her father’s roots to them, but in another way she was a researcher and a female. I feel that my role was quite the same, but in a different way. I totally belonged to the community from before, but in this moment I entered with a new role. I needed to negotiate my own role in a new way and make them accept that I was still the same person, although differently equipped. I was at the same time not the same as before. In the end I know that I had somehow managed to negotiate a new role into the environment, and this became quite visible in the end of the season. At the end of the season we had a party celebrating the team’s promotion to the next league. All the players got a diploma each with positive things written from all of the girls at the team. At mine it was written that I had worked hard to get back from my knee injury, that I was a nice person, a good football player and such, but together with all these comments I also “a movie star”, “It is nice that you have been filming us” and “I am looking forward to see the movie”. This tells me that during my period of fieldwork I have somehow managed to be respected as a documentary movie maker at the same time as I have been one of the players.

3.3. Fieldwork with camera

In negotiating my role in the environment, one of the biggest differences from my role as a football player was my equipment. I brought in a camera at practices and games. Therefore, I think it is important to look at how the camera might affect your fieldwork and how it affected my fieldwork as well.

Doing research with a film camera there are no possibilities to be “a fly on the wall”. You are not just present in person, but also your machine is very present and recognizable. My protagonists are used to see films and they are very aware of what a film camera does.

Therefore, they will always be aware of the camera, and might put on a performance to fit what they think you want them to do or say, or show how they want to be portrayed on tape. (MacDougall, 1998) This I noticed well, as I wrote earlier, that when some of the girls felt that they did not look their best, they tried to hide from the camera. The camera was a tool that brought forward the feeling of the gaze of the audience and they were aware of how they are seen and how they want to be portrayed. It can be seen as De Beauvoir writes about that females have been used to be seen as an object through men's gaze and through the popular culture they have been exposed to they have a maybe an idea of what is proper to be shown on camera. In that way they want to be seen when they feel they look their best. Of course I noticed that some of the girls did not care at all, and seemed happy to be on camera no matter what the situation was. (De Beauvoir, 2000) Even though the camera can make performances it helps us to see without fatigue, because you can see the same situation over and over again and in that way gain a deeper knowledge of the situation you have been present at. As a researcher with a camera there are a third person present in what you do, the audience. There are the people being filmed, the researcher and the audience that is present, and if the protagonists are aware of the audience this is actually the thing that can affect their presentation of themselves. (Goffman, 1959)

During my fieldwork, I have used many different methods and tried to be aware of how the camera affected the girls. In the beginning, I was more in an observational face, where I tried to get them to be comfortable with the camera. I kept a distance with the camera and tried not to go too close and ask questions. I noticed especially in the beginning that many of the girls were eager to be filmed and some "accidentally" passed by in front of the camera. Others again, if something embarrassing happened or they did something good, laughed and yelled at me: "Did you get it on camera?" For instance, once during a practice they were playing square. This is a game where one or two is in the middle and four or five stands around passing the ball to each other and tries to prevent the one in the middle to get the ball. One of the girls around the square managed to kick the ball between the legs of one of the girls in the middle. This is called a tunnel and is considered a total humiliation of the player who experience this. Here the girls around laughed and said; "She got it on tape, she got it on tape!"

After some time, the girls seemed to get used to the camera. I then started to communicate with the girls while carrying the camera. Here I used more a participating observational method. Still, I felt that it was difficult to get the girls to give long and serious answers when I

walked around on practice and asked questions. Some were giggling or got a strange look if I filmed them, others again seemed not to care. In the beginning I got a lot of football material, but I felt the conversations were lacking. Therefore, I decided to divide the girls into groups and have semi-structured interviews with them. I divided them according to whom they were spending most time with and after age, because I felt it would be easier to get them to talk in front of the camera. If they had friends around, maybe they would forget the camera and talk together with each other as they usually do without any camera present. I asked about topics that they discussed. I asked about friendship, competition, the football environment, football in general etc. Here I gained more knowledge about why they started playing and their thoughts about being a female football player. From before I had decided not to bring up the topic of gender, in order not to push the gender focus on their perceptions of their doing. However, gender came up during the conversations and this I found interesting. Mostly the interviews worked very well, but nevertheless it was clear when some of the girls were not comfortable in front of the camera. Especially in one group interview with some of the younger girls that had recently moved to town to play football and go to school were not too comfortable. There were a lot of silence between the answers where they looked at each other and were giggling. I know from experience that they are normally quite different and more talkative. I have actually a clip with two of these girls where they play with the camera, where one of the girls is making a funny typically football interview, the kind you see at television.

During my time in the field I also used field notes to write down things that I had experienced and to remember things that I thought I needed to change until next time. I admit that in the beginning I was better at taking notes, and after some time I did not feel that it was necessary to write too much, since I had filmed the most of the things that happened. Still, as we will see there were some happenings that I did not manage to film that I refer to in the thesis. In these cases, the field notes were helpful in order to remember happenings and situations.

3.4. Ethical consideration

The ethics in using film as a tool is something that I need to considerate. In my project I have used the camera as a tool to gain knowledge and to produce an ethnographic documentary. In research anonymization and confidentiality is emphasized. You should not publicize material

that can possibly disclose the informants' identity.³ Since there will be a film connected to my thesis it might be difficult to keep all the people in the field totally anonymous. Still, I got verbal allowance from everyone in the team to film and use them in the project. I even posted a text on Facebook in a closed group for all the members at the team where I explained the project. I wrote that if people wished to be total anonymous and did not want to be screened in the film for any reason they could contact me and I would be sure to make them anonym in any possible way. No one of the girls contacted me and everyone seemed positive to be a part of the project. The girls that is most visible in the project liked the post too. On the other hand, being a part of the environment myself, I believe that nothing that is shown or written will harm any of the girls and I do not think that anyone of them will feel violated by this project. I have not included any last names in my thesis and tried in that way to make them more anonym. Still, people that know the environment will probably know who they are and since this is an environment that usually is exposed to media and public publications I do not think that it will cause any problem.

4. Fieldwork context, understanding female football in Norway

To understand where I have been doing my research, I think it is necessary to look at the recently history of the team and club at the same time as we look at some context around the female football environment in Norway. In this project we are looking at the girls' motivation for playing football and try to see how the game can be understood on its own premises. We therefore need to look at how the bigger scale of the environment are affecting the girls and understand what the frames and rules are in the field that I have been doing my research in.

4.1. Female football in Norway

“Everyone that want to play football is welcome and should get an offer in their club. No one is supposed to be banned, regardless of their social or cultural background, gender, level, disability, sexual orientation or other reasons.” (Norway's football Association, 2009)

³ For further information: De nasjonale forskningsetiske komiteene (2009) Forskningsetisk sjekkliste. [Internet] De nasjonale forskningsetiske komiteene. Available from: <https://www.etikkom.no/forskningsetiske-retningslinjer/Forskningsetisk-sjekkliste/>

In Norway you have *Norway's football association* that is the guardian of the sport and is regulating and makes sure all the international rules are followed. This is the bigger scale that affects the smaller scale and how you do things in a club. On a smaller scale you have the systems within a club and a team that again affects the individual that participate in the culture. What I have looked upon through my project is the female environment in all of this. This because of the gender differences that clearly exists inside this environment. A recent survey done by one of the biggest papers in Norway, VG, shows that out of 128 female professional players there are 63, 3 % that makes 0 – 49.999 NOK a year of playing football and no one makes over 400.000 NOK. There are only 3, 1 % that makes between 300.000 – 399.999 NOK. (Askeland, Wikborg og Bones, 2015) On the other hand, the males in the top league got paid in 2008 1 million a year on an average level, where the one with the most income had 5 million NOK and the one with the lowest income had 121 000 NOK a year. This varies because of performance on the field, age, club finances and if they are fetched from abroad. (Skaare, 2012) Anyhow, the females were also asked how they considered the female football environments reputation in Norway where 5 were very good and 1 very bad. Of 124 that answered there were no one that answered 5 and over 50 % answered bad and down. One of the questions for the female participants were also if they were happy about Norway Football Associations effort in developing the female football environment. Again 5 is very happy and 1 is very bad. Here most of the girls answered 3 and down. 86, 2 % of the professional female football players answered middle and down. Another question were if they were happy about the Medias focus on female football players, and here no one answered very happy. Again, 97, 8 % answered 3 and down. (Askeland, Wikborg og Bones, 2015) This tells something about what the girls that plays themselves thinks about what happens at the macro level in the football society. You can understand that there are many female football players that are unhappy about how they are treated and perceived by the football environment, and therefore you can wonder why there still are so many girls that choose to play football. Today football is the most popular sport among females in Norway, and therefore we can understand that there must be something happening at the smaller level inside the teams or in the game itself that makes many girls wanting to continue playing football and this is what this project is largely about.

Further, we need to look at the system in Norway for female football players to gain knowledge of the fields we are coping with here. In Norway you have at most 6 different divisions for female football players. Where the best league is called *Toppserien*, the second

best league is called *1. Division*, the third best league *2. Division* and so on. There are only the two top leagues that is national leagues where teams from all over Norway travels to play against each other. This year Fløya was in 2. division which is divided into 9 different departments. They were in department 09 which contains teams from the North of Norway, more specific the counties Troms and Finnmark

4.2. Frames and rules in the field

If we now look at the frames around Fløya, the club have its base in Tromsø at top of the island, maybe 10 minutes' drive from city centrum. In the startup phase the club had their first official meeting with the "staff" in their teacher's laundry room. (Hansen, 2010) Today it is quite different. The club is well equipped with a field, a football hall, a cafeteria and plenty of staff rooms. The club consists of a big outdoors field of artificial grass, with a tribune and a club building. At the same time, they have a football hall with a training center inside, a small field, some staff rooms, a cafeteria, meeting rooms and four dressing rooms. The rooms have different meanings and is therefore inviting to different social situations.

At the Fløya's games there are often audiences and in general there are maybe 50 to 100 people watching the games. More special games as qualification games manages to attract maybe at most 200 people. No one has to pay in order to go to the games and the income Fløya gets at games are mostly sales of waffles and coffee from the kiosk that is driven voluntarily by the girls that are not playing or family and friends. When they were in 1. Division they could take around 50 kroner for audience to watch, but this year they cannot take any money since they are not professional. The girls that are injured or not a part of the trop that is playing have to take photos for the teams Facebook page, be speakers and sell food to the audience. Therefore, you can understand that this is not a million-dollar business where everyone gets paid. The only people that are paid in the club is the main coach and the two administrators in Fløya. These again are males, which tells something about the hierarchy in general in the football environment. There are few females in the top positions and it is

males that have the most income in this sport on both sides.⁴ ⁵ To get income to play games and travel the girls have to do voluntarily work at many occasions through the year. Only during the time of my fieldwork there were 4 times they had to work for “free”. At the same time, you have to pay around 4000 Norwegian kroners to participate in the club and get insurance to play games.

Further, if we look on the frames around the sport, Fløya’s season started in August and ended in October. During this period of time they played 14 games against teams in the league called 2. Division 09. In football the team that win the game get three points and the losing team 0. If a game ends with a draw, each team gains 1 point. After the 2015 season ended Fløya had won 12 games, played one draw and lost one game. This means that they easily got the 1th place on the table with 37 points where the next best team had 28 points.⁶ This again meant that they automatically would play qualification games in order to get back to the league they played last year in. When you play qualification games all the winners of 2. Division for females across Norway are divided into two groups with 3 teams. Here the best team in each group get to move up. Usually there are, before this, one qualification game just for the two teams in the north that wins the two different 2. Divisions that exists here. This year this game was canceled, because in one of the divisions in the south there were many second teams to the teams in Toppserien and 1. Division that played in one league. These teams are not allowed to move up one level because of their first teams, and they were the teams that won this 2. Division. Therefore, the next best team in the league are usually the one that gets to play the qualification game. The reality here was that the next best team in this league that was allowed to play qualification were also going down one level. Therefore, Norway’s football association decided that the first qualification for the teams in the north was cancelled and Fløya got to go directly into one of the qualification group. This again meant that the road back to 1. Division was one step closer for Fløya. In the group they did their job well and won

⁴ For further information, look at article from the Norwegian newspaper VG. **Anda, R. (2015)** *Slår alarm om likestillingen i norsk idrett*. Verdens Gang. [Internet] Available from: <http://www.vg.no/sport/likestilling/slaar-alarm-om-likestillingen-i-norsk-idrett/a/23498053/>

⁵ Further reading: **Haugenes, M. (2013)** *Kvinnelige trenere i toppfotball – en studie av hvordan det er å være kvinne innenfor en mannsdominert kultur*. Høgskolen i Telemark. [Internet] Available from: <https://teora.hit.no/bitstream/handle/2282/1434/Haugenes.pdf?sequence=1>

⁶ Table can be found at: Norges Fotball Forbund (2015) 2. Div Kvinner avd 09. [Internet] Finnmark Fotballkrets. Available From: <https://www.fotball.no/fotballdata/turnering/tabell/?fiksId=143857>

both games. First 1-0 and the next 6-0. In that way they managed their goal that was to get back to the national level in Norway.

The last game was at home at Fløyabanen. Before the game at the meeting no one of the girls smiled, their feet were tripping and their eyes fixed at Roger, the coach, as he spoke. You could clearly see the importance of the game at their face. As they went out on the field all this seemed to have disappeared and they played together, talked and had several good goal attempts. When the break came the score were 3 – 0 to Fløya. The next half of the game they continued playing fantastic as a team and scored 3 more goals. When the judge blew the whistle it was cheers ShowTime. The girls jumped each other while crying, laughing and hugging. Fireworks were dancing over the sky while journalists where photographing and interviewing the girls. Family members had run to the field to congratulate and take part of the celebration. Everyone had a smile on their face as they were going inside to celebrate more with cake, and I thought to myself: “This is football!”

4.3. Structure at the team and people in field

As I said, I thought to myself in that moment that this is what football is all about. It is about making good performances together with friends, it is about letting feelings release itself, it is about sharing moments and memories with your teammates and supporters, it is about winning and in that also someone have to lose, it is about success and failure, it is about motivation, it is so many things and in that moment I felt that it contained so many things that I try to develop and explain in this thesis. Football is many things and before we dig deeper into how football affects the individual person, we need to look at the bigger picture at my field work. We need to understand how the social aspect is structured inside the team and try to see how connections are made.

4.3.1. Structure

At what I have taped on camera, you cannot see a clear structure inside the team concerning groups. Still, from experience I feel that inside the team there are some sub groups concerning age and some other factors. To look at this, I have made a Sociogram of the girls and the team leaders that was present during my fieldwork. If you look at my material, you can see that the girls seem very similar in their appearance through hair styles and clothes. What this can symbolize I have discussed later in the analysis. Anyhow, if you look at the Sociogram (attachment 1) I have attached you can see that some of the girls have similarities in their

social fields such as background, schools and of course the football team. This can therefore be an important factor for friendships and the way these girls are appearing. At the same time, you can see that age and school is also a factor that might mean something for friendships inside the team. This might have something to do with the girl's school days and interests. The girls that goes to school together is also the ones that talks and is most around each other on the team, which I can also see at some of the clips I have filmed. At the same time, you can see that many of the girls who have suffered from injury at the same time is often friends, age is also a different factor and if they play at national teams or not seems to play a role for relations outside the field. Here again you can see that according to Bourdieu's theories it seems that how many different fields they have in common affects the relationship you have in this field. At the same time, it seems like many of these girls have the same amount of capital gained, which again affects how their habitus is, and this might affect who they connect with.

4.3.3. People in field

During my time in the field there have been many people that have been participating in the environment and many interactions going on. Still, there have been some people that have been more important for my research and especially my film than others. As we will see in the analysis part, I have been doing some group interviews and some of the people in these groups have discussed many interesting things. Still, there have been some main persons that I have been following during my fieldwork, and I think therefor that it is important to present them so you will get an idea of how the people I have been dealing with are as persons.

One of the girls that I have been following is one of the eldest girls on the team, M, are 22 years old and is a student at the University. There she studies medicine and uses most of her time studying next to football and work. She has a boyfriend and they moved both to Tromsø 3 years ago to study. She has never been serious about football and is focusing mostly on her studies. Therefore, she has told me that it was funny that she actually got to play kind of professional when she has never had a goal to reach this. Still, she is very precise in everything she does. In one interview she said something that I think describes her well: "I think that if you work hard for things you will eventually manage it". She is always realistic, but have still a positive attitude to others and life in general. At the team se is a leader, but still quietly. She does not speak much when she is in the group, but everyone respects her and

think she is a nice person. I have never heard anyone say something bad about her, rather the opposite. M is the most positive person at the team and if you say something negative, she always replies: "Yes, but it is not that bad." Maybe you think she seems like she is a good girl that is trying to be perfect at every aspect of her life, and it is possibly true too. Still, she manages all this perfectly and there are very few times I have experienced her angry or sad. Only two times during my fieldwork I have experienced negative emotions from her. Once was after practice when her team had lost, she came to me and said: "I am so angry now, you have no idea!" I asked her why, and she said: "Because we lost! I know it is just a practice, but I am still angry." Even though she said she was angry, she had a calm performance and a steady, low voice with even a smile at her face. (Field notes) The second time was at the last game she was playing this season, because she was leaving for Stockholm for 3 months to continue studying. I asked her if I could interview her, and she said: "No, not now, maybe if you asked me earlier", and suddenly she started crying, not sobbing, but I could see tears in her eyes. I didn't ask her why, because I didn't want to make her more upset.

The other girl, T, is 18 years old and was at her last year at high school. She went to a school for top athletes in Tromsø. She is one of the girls that takes football most seriously on our team, and have planned her days after football practices and games. She loves football and have played it since she was 5 years old. During the time of fieldwork, she was one of the players that was sitting the most on the bench, but still in the interviews with her she gave no negative expressions concerning this. Still, I noticed that she backed more and more out from my project. I tried to make appointments with her, and she agreed that she was giving me a time it fitted, but she never contacted me again. Here we see that there was something in her social life that affected her. I do not know if it was her situation that made this or if it was something else happening in her life that did this. In the interviews I made she is always positive in her attitude about football, and she is one of the persons at the team that is always present when there is something that is needed to be done for the good of the team.

The two coaches are also important people for my thesis, because through them you get to understand a lot about the structure around a team. They talk a lot before games and training and therefore it is easy to gain knowledge about football through what I have filmed of them. The main coach, R, is from Tromsø and have been a professional football player in England. He therefore has many years of experience on the professional side of football. He has a lot of

knowledge from football, especially on the male side. He is maybe between 40 and 50 years old. He is never in a bad mood and is often making jokes or tricking with the ball before practice. Still, he has a lot of engagement that you can especially see and hear during games.

The second one is also from Tromsø and have been playing herself with Fløya in the top league some years back. She has also played at the female national team for several years. She is more of a calm, but still funny person. She has always something wise to say and you feel like you can talk to her about everything. Everything she says has a positive attitude and she tries to understand the girl's situations on the field and outside. She is not too present in the film, because she functions more as a second coach. She has another job next to this, and is therefore not always participating at practice and games. She is not gaining any money for her work, and the main coach is the only one that is getting money out of this.

4.4. Recruitment and situation today

If we now look upon the situation in the club on the female side today, it has no teams in the higher divisions and is not recruiting younger players too well. There are two teams at the woman side and two teams at the men's side that exists today. There are no girls' teams at the younger department, but there are 8 different year classes divided on several boys' teams.⁷ This have more to do with what happens around in the football environment in Tromsø. Earlier Fløya recruited younger girls from different locations in Tromsø and had a good recruiting for the woman's team because of all the young girls that played in the club. Now the situation is different. There have been established several new clubs for local kids around in Tromsø, and the young girls tend to play in the clubs that exists in their neighborhood. Earlier when these clubs did not exist, Fløya was the nearest football club for these locations and it was natural for the girls and boys to play in this club. (Hansen, 2012) On the other hand, several young boys still play in Fløya. I do not know if these boys are living nearby and is therefore choosing to play for Fløya or if it has something to do with their parent's connections to Fløya.

Further, a few years ago, Fløya were on the female side, recruiting players from other clubs around in Tromsø and of course, this was not too popular since these clubs were losing many of their talents to Fløya. After Fløya went down one league, there were a discussion in the local media and in the female football environment where they wished to gather all the best

⁷ Norges Fotball Forbund (2015) Fløya, IF [Internet] Troms Fotballkrets. Available from: <https://www.fotball.no/fotballdata/klubb/lag/?fiksId=1499>

players in Tromsø at one team. The end of this story were that no one of the coaches at the different female teams in Tromsø managed to agree which club they wanted to become the top one and who would be the people around the team. Therefore, this did not become a reality. Today, it is different and the coach wishes to change the reputation for the club. He wishes for the good players to come to Fløya because they hear that it is a professional club that is facilitating the training to fit their everyday life. This is more or less the reality now, and Fløya is recruiting many girls from the far north of Norway, in Finnmark, because they have a co-operation with NTG, a school for top athletes in Norway. At NTG there tend to start many football talents from Finnmark that wants to become professional, and because of Fløya's co-operation with this school most of these girls play for Fløya. A part of this is also that the coach, Roger, is a football teacher at this school and for many years now, the coaches in Fløya have been a football teacher for the girls at NTG. At the same time, clubs in Tromsø also tends not to manage to keep the talents in the town. Because there are no clubs in Toppserien in Tromsø there are often a pressure on the young talents that play on age limited national teams to get better matching from higher levels. The national team want these girls to continue developing their talents and if not they might not get to play at the national team anymore. Therefore, many talents choose to move further south in order to play at a higher level. This was the reality during my fieldwork and if you look at the sociogram I have attached there are several girls that quit the team this autumn. (Attachment 1) Two of them were playing for the national team for girls under 19 and the rest moved in order to study. The interesting aspect here is that these girls move even though they are not promised anything. They take a risk by moving to a new club and they do not know if they will be among the eleven that starts and they are often not payed. In spite of this many girls choose to move from family and friends to a new environment just to play football. This might have something to do with Bourdieu's thoughts of power and that the girls want to get recognition within the social field of football and gain more capital. As Bourdieu claims there are always a competition going on inside the different social fields and in such an environment all the subjects try to be best. (Bourdieu, 1997) At the same time you have these institutions and the ones with more power that put a pressure on the ones with less power, and if they want to still continue staying part of an environment they are forced to move to a new environment where you get more competition in order to improve yourself.

Even though there are some girls that have moved, Fløya have two girls left that plays at the national team, but they are younger girls and plays for the team for girls under 17 and for girls

under 15. Here you can at the same time understand that the age group at Fløya is not too big, where the eldest girls is 24 and the youngest 15, but in a few years there is a lot happening and it seems that if you are going to play at a higher level in female football it is in this age group it happens. When you are around 18 to 20 you have to choose whether to stay at your team or move and take a risk to play at a higher level in football. Here we can understand that there are several dynamics from the outside and the inside of the team that affects the individual person in this environment. What we have been discussing here is more the bigger picture of the football environment, and we can start to see some dynamics from the bigger picture that affects this team and the individual girls on Fløya. Now we will go on the smaller scale to see what structures and dynamics in the game and in the team that affects the motivation of the individual girl. We will look into the subjects own interpretation of the game and how codes in the game and team affects their own view upon themselves and in that way gain knowledge of what is motivating them to continue playing.

5. Analysis

Now that I have mapped out the systems, people, methods and some happenings in my fieldwork I want to dig deeper into my findings in the research I have been doing. In the analysis I am investigating how being in a football environment affects the female players own perspective upon their embodiment. Chisholm writes that: “in a society of masculine domination, every situation a woman negotiates is framed by gender so that she is seen as ‘other’ even if she does not see herself as such”. (Chisholm, 2008:12) Because of the lived experience and situation of women through history it is accepted to argue that the embodiment of females in football have been objectified as De Beauvoir argues, but at the same time they continue to do sports today and live out their embodiment through a *lived body*. (Ibid, 2008) We have seen many examples that the females in football have been suffering from being objectified and seen as the other, but still it is not the sport itself that is making this gendered suggestion. Therefore, we need to look upon football on its own premises and see what it can be for itself as a game. Of course it is the people that have made the rules for the games and made the premises, but does that mean that a practice needs to be colored by gender? Here I am not after suggesting that the females are victimized and put a negative perspective upon the females in the football environment to make them once again the other. We are more after seeing what football is for them and how they see their own

embodiment inside this sport that have been for a long time appreciated and played by men, before the women entered the field. First we will look into the team itself and how it is build up and what kind of hierarchical structures that exists there that might affect the girls' motivation.

5.1. The formal hierarchy of the team

We have seen that at the football team I have been doing my research in consist of only girls playing, but of the 5 leaders and administrators at the team all are male except one. If you look around at all the women's teams in Tromsø I know from experience that there are only one team that have a female coach. This again can tell us that the football environment seems to be male dominated in the way that it seems like the male participants in both female and the male football environment is actually the ones that have most power and higher positions. Of course we can speculate on reasons why it is like this, but there is so many factors going on inside the environment that we will never quite know why it is like this. One reason can be the obvious that females often concerns about family instead of gaining power and knowledge inside a sports environment. (Hjelseth & Hovden, 2014) Again, can one reason be that the professional males tend to stay longer in the environment because they have an income that they can live off, and when they finally decide to put the football booths on the shelf it is naturally to become a coach instead and get income from this. Naturally, these persons often get the jobs as coaches because of their cultural capital and social capital.

Further, even though these girls are friends inside the field, they are existing within a field where the competition aspect is high. As Bourdieu claims, inside every field everyone is competing to be the best and this is very relevant for the football environment. At this level you are adults and is also some of the best football players in Norway, and therefore the competition level is very high. It seems like the better you become as a football player the higher the competition is, because everyone is training in order to be the best. In general, there are only 11 players that can start a game, because it is a game with 11 against 11 players. During a game there can only be 3 players removed and replaced with the girls on the bench. On the bench there can at most be 7 players that the coach can choose to replace the players out on the field with. Often the coach is replacing these girls with the players that maybe is not performing their best in that game, the ones that looks most tired or if he wants a player to be fully recovered to an upcoming game he might replace her early in a game. At a higher

level in football there are always the 11 that the coach thinks have made the best performance on practice that starts the games, and at the same time he often picks out players that know each other well on the field and can play good together. Therefore, you can imagine that there are many emotions around this that can be played out and that each individual player has to cope with. Everyone wants to play games, because that is what you are practicing for, and therefore you can often get disappointed when you do not start. Still, there are always some girls that are left out of the squad that gets to take part in the game, because there are only 18 spots free at the team and the bench for each game. When you have a team with over 20 girls you can imagine that someone is left out of the game and have to watch the game with the rest of the audience. Before one game I talked to some of the girls on the bench, and I asked how it was to sit there and one answered: "It is boring, but you have to hope that you get to play during the game." While another girl said ironic: "Yeah, the bench for life". Here you can understand that they are disappointed to be the next best, and it seems that they don't think of how the other girls that is not even at the bench feels. This again gives a point that they are experiencing themselves as subjects in their own embodiment and in this they cope with their own experience of their embodiment without dealing with other subject's experiences.

In this you have the coach that have the most power, because it is him that decides who are good enough to play, who is almost good enough and who is not good enough to sit on the bench yet. The coach again is the person who looks upon the players or subjects in an objective way, where he picks them out because of their embodiment merely instead of who they are outside the field. The ones that performs the best is the ones that is rewarded with a spot on the team, and therefore the football players are looked upon with the coach's gaze that again have an opinion on what a good football performance are. The coach has therefore much power over the individuals participating at a team. How he gained this power is of course because of his competence within this environment. The coach in Fløya, have a long experience inside the environment and is well known in the global football community as well as in Tromsø. Therefore, he has a lot of what Bourdieu calls social capital and also cultural capital, since he has had success as a player himself and have therefore gained a lot of knowledge within the field. It is because of this he was requested and wanted for the job as a coach for this team. Because of this the players and people that watch trust him to make good choices. The girls therefore give him the right to look upon them as objects, because as Bourdieu argues because of his amount of capital he has gained this power in the field. Of course the team leader and the co-coach have things to say about who gets to start and

together they make the choices, but often if the choices fails it is the coach that have to answer to the media and audience what happened. When you are chosen to start games it is often because you have performed well for a longer period at practice and have been at almost every practice. Here it can seem like the ones that have managed for the longest to stay in the flow zone is the ones that gets to play, because they are able to perform well because the challenge level matches the skill level at this team. On the other hand, the girls that is not performing too well might have some imbalance between these two and is therefore not able to perform that well.

5.2. Gender in football; masculinity vs. femininity

“I wish I played handball” – girl at Fløya (20 years)

We have seen that; football is a social field where the individual's identities are expressed bodily. Through practical's like movement, gestures, contact and verbal communication does relations create between the participants, players and audience. These bodily practices are again interpreted by the participants inside bigger discourses such as masculinity, ethnicity, religion and classes. In that way bodies becomes objects for interpretation and in this way a football match can be seen as a room where personal and social identities are created and organized. (Morberg, 2008) Even though there exist differences across countries football have been regarded as a men's world because of the masculinity of the sport. Hovden points out that supporting a football team can be connected to and be seen as a way of socializing into a masculine environment with rituals and practices. These rituals can be materialized in several ways by physical or verbal confrontation with rival supporters, socializing with other men and drinking during a game, singing club songs etc. The game itself have also been seen as a masculine practice, because footballers always have been associated with a kind of bodily toughness, especially in countries affected by the British view upon the sport, such as Norway. (2014) This kind of masculinity is considered hegemonic and is originating from the British working class culture, which became hegemonic for this class in the late 19th century. It was influenced by the codes and behavior of this field, which according to Bourdieu is counted as a perceiver of low cultural capital that again will say that you are controlled by the senses and your body. He called this barbaric taste, which only means that your senses are controlling you. (Bourdieu, 1979) Football have therefore been working as a ritual for

masculine solidarity for both male footballers and male supporters. This can therefore be seen as one reason for the resistance the females met when they tried to participate in the environment.

At the same time, Bourdieu points out that a submissive body attitude is required by women through the ages, and that the movement of the body have social meaning. Every human that exist are in form of unconscious schemas for perception and evaluation incorporated into the masculine worlds historical structures. In that way when we are trying to look at the male dominance, according to Bourdieu, we need to use mindsets that are products of this dominative form. (2000) In that way he argues that the feminine have in history been dominated by the masculine mindset and in that way there might be reactions when the feminine enters a male dominated environment. What will be considered feminine or masculine and what is acceptable behavior for each gender varies therefore through history. The bodily movement and style confirms that gender is also identity, and a product of time, that is shown through repetitions of actions. (Cox 1998) At the football field men and women have developed gendered expressions and habitus and will therefore also act differently. On the other hand, females have feminine features that in tradition have belonged to the females and that again have distanced them from the male behavior. Therefore, some argues that to keep a female habitus while entering the sports field with its masculine values can be seen as difficult for football girls. (Sandnes, 2003)

Still, during the last decades the values of the working class have been challenged by the increasing commercialization and kind of glamorization of football. Researchers' claims that because of this the later years we can see that football is become more and more androgynous. Men care more today about clothes, style and hair, while girls football is more intense in effort and language such as boys football always have been. Because football always have been connected to the masculine the result is that now when male football players are commercialized with hair products, branded clothes, perfumes etc. it seems that these feminine attitudes have become accepted in a masculine society because the football players with power and fame, the ones with much social capital, is accepting it. Still, even though these are feminine facts, my point is that because of the strong masculinity this environment always has been connected with this might now be looked upon by males themselves as a masculine and natural behavior for male football players. Therefore, despite the commercialization, football is still linked to the early codes of masculinity and this might

make it hard for women again to gain recognition. (Hjelseth & Hovden, 2014) Even though you see in the society today a more feminine attitude among the men and the females are also improving at the field, the female football players in Norway struggles with being compared with men.

In according to this, during my time at fieldwork I interviewed one judge that is 73 years old and have been for many years in the football environment, and he mentioned that he had seen a change in especially how the girls play football:

“It is a different speed and pace, it is quite different from before, it is no doubt about that. Especially in female football. I think they have come very nicely now and there is more speed in female football now than before. Before there were fewer teams and now I think it have recovered very well and I think that it is great that it has become like this. I think it is good. [...] Of course there is some differences judging females and males, it is the pace that does that. But, I think it is fun judging girls, and now I am so old that I think it is enough pace. [...] I think that girls are nicer. In men’s football there is more protests and in females it is like if you have made a decision they accept that. I think that girls could clearly yell and protest more, because I think they are a little too nice sometimes. It is ok to say your opinion.”

Here you see that he recognizes that females have closed in on the males and that females are better football players than before. Even so, he still compares the males with the females that where the men clearly will have an advantage because of biological reasons. In other sports this is not an issue and performance and success in international competitions are more important for popularity, but in football women are still compared to men.

During my fieldwork I realized that the women playing football also compares themselves to the males, and we can here see that the masculine mindset are interpreted into the females if we look at Bourdieu’s theories. (2000) Before entering the field I had, even though I was aware of the gender debates concerning football, decided to not ask any questions concerning it. This because of my own history in the field. I was so aware of this and did not want to color the interviews through asking questions concerning being female in the environment. Still, I could see different aspects and different attitudes towards their own gender. When interviewing them they brought up the topic themselves and I could see and reflect upon things that was gendered. How the girls act on the field is quite different from how they act during brakes, before- and after games, and during the interviews I had with them many of

them clearly had an attitude that they were treated differently because of their gender. I did not bring up the topic of gender, but they did themselves when I asked why they played football. I then continued asking about it after they brought it up. One girl stated during one of the group interviews I had: “I wish that I played handball. [...] You often hear that it is a boys’ sports. When it comes to football, I wish that I was a boy, you cannot hide that”.

Another girl replied: “There are many big advantages in being a boy comparing with girls.”

The first girl added again to this:

“Yes, boys are faster and that is a fact. When it comes to audience and people that support teams, there is differences from a team at the second division for men compared to... No, I cannot say that. If you compare a Toppserie (highest league for women) team to a Tippeliga (highest league for men) team there are big differences concerning audiences, but now it has actually recovered in the Europa League for women and that is fun to see.”

Here we can see that through what they say, they feel that there is a difference between boys and girls playing football, but also between football for females compared to other popular sports for females. Still, they have a positive attitude that applies that they have indirectly a small hope that it will improve for women. Through what they are saying themselves you get an idea that they feel themselves as *the other* in the environment. It might seem that the girls have been interpreted into the society through the men’s gaze as the other and it seems that they have accepted that they are different compared to men. Still it seems that they have not fully accepted their fate in the environment, because they have a positive attitude and sees that it has improved for the women. Further, we can see that it seems that the girls that I interviewed are used to be looked upon as the other and compared with the boys, and therefore they see themselves as somewhat submissive to the boys because of their biological body through what they are saying.

We can therefore argue that the female football players are affected by the way gender is treated in the football world and community. But, if we look further upon the game itself and its signs and codes on its own premises, we can see what they tell us about the gender debate in the sport. We might see that there are some things about the sport and environment that is not necessary gendered and some that are universal that have more to do with the lived body. What in the sport might make the girls *the other* and what works on its own premises?

5.3. *Discourses in football*

Football is as we saw according to Goffman an institutionalized code or key called *contest*.

(Goffman, 1976) The ethological foundation of this key is aggression that is ritualized.

Football is ritualized through two things *practices* and *games* that have the same construction every time it happens, but still it is different after what you want to achieve with the practice and who your opponents in a game are. In a practice you try to get the body to learn and interpret technical skills that the coach chooses and learn how know and work together with your teammates and their interpreted skills. This again is something the coach wish the players to use in the game and if they succeed they are in the flow zone.

Further, football is a popular culture because its range have reached the whole world. The rules and framing of the field can be seen as a universal key that every adult that participate in the game have to follow. What I mean by this is that the rules are the same across the world, and is not changed because of social categorizations such as gender, ethnicity and class and the rules are the same in every country in the world. In that way countries can meet and measure strength in a friendly way. The rules of football are followed across the world, and is therefore existing as a cross-cultural contest that is including all people across cultures. The organization of the different Leagues across the world is pretty much the same, where you have one top league and from that it goes down in divisions after the level of the teams. The best ones move often up one level or have to play qualification games in order to get up one level, such as we have seen that the women's team in Fløya had to. There are different rules for kids playing than adults and how kids play are often regulated nationally. (Norges Fotball Forbund, 2015) Still, the biggest difference in football lies within the gender discourse and through looking at some of the signs in the field we can understand what is gendered in the culture of football and what should be seen from its own premises and where it should not exist any differences across genders. Girls are facing some premises in the environment that shows them that the sport is based on a male standard and they have to adjust themselves to fit into the male interpreted environment.

For instance, the clothes you wear as a football player is an interesting sign in the field. As we know from before, clothes can tell according to Goffman something about the discourse in an environment. (Vester, 1989) At Fløya and several other teams, you wear the same clothes as everyone else in the club. Both boys and girls wear the same clothes in the same colors. The men's team and the woman's team have the same training and match outfit and that is quite

interesting. Because this can show two things, either that, since the male environment existed first, the women are trying to assimilate themselves into the male environment. On the other hand, it can be an indexical sign which show a unity in the club and bind together the people in the club. We are wearing the same clothes, therefore we belong to the same environment and is a unity. At the same time the discourses of the clothes that creates a unity in the club creates a distance to other football clubs that have other clothes and logos. It creates an idea of them versus us. As Goffman writes about rituals we can have an example from football that when people from the same club meets in a social event such as football tournaments, they feel more connected to each other than the other clubs there, but still inside one club there exists hierarchies again that can concern gender. For instance, can it seem that because of the codes of selves that acts in binary codes the girls feel more connected to the other girl's teams and the boy's teams to other boy's teams inside the club even though they exist in the same environment. (Ibid, 1998)

At the same time, you can see some gendered discourses in the visual signs in the ritual of a football game or practice. The clothes are often marked with Unisex, but are often too big for most of the girls. During my fieldwork, most of the girls at Fløya had to order children clothes, in order to get football clothes that fits. In the fieldwork it did not seem to bother the girls that had to order children's clothes. Before ordering the clothes the team coordinator had brought some samples of clothes for the girls to try on. Since I was a part of the team I was there to try on clothes together with many of them. I tried on a t-shirt in size small, and many were laughing and said that it looked like a dress. Some of the girls' fits the men's clothes, but most of the girls decided to go for the clothes in age 12 – 14. No one ever seemed to reflect upon this, but it was more made fun of when they tried on pants for instance. The football pants were too long in the unisex size, but too tight in children sizes. One girl laughed and said: "It looks like tights. It is not made for women with hips and the crotch is too long. Well, maybe it is how it is supposed to be these days." Here we can interpret that the ones that produces the football clothes are adjusting most of the clothes to fit men even though there are many women playing. I remember at one point when I played in Fløya there have been some clothes made for women, but the shirts there were not made similar to men's jerseys they were made tighter and with a V-neckline. The kid's jerseys have always been like the men's only smaller, and the girls at Fløya seemed to prefer them. This can be seen as an attempt for them to assimilate to the men's way of dressing in the sport. On the other hand, this can also point out a direction in football that inside the environment and out on the field you are not

your gender, you are a football player. It might seem that the women see themselves as a *lived body*, and therefore they wear the same as men and do not demand their own clothes.

(Chisholm, 2008)

The females and males are all acting quite similar while playing a game. Everyone wears the same clothes and play the same game with same rules across gender, still we see that through the clothes there exist a difference that is reminding the girls upon their gender, and maybe gives the girls a feeling of being the other, because they are the ones that needs to settle for children's clothes and not the men.

5.3.1. Gendered discourses, codes and signs in football

At the same time, at a team during a match, you wear exactly the same clothes, what differs is the number on your back and the shoes. I imagine that the clothes can be a symbol for the unity in the team and the shoes can work as a symbol that you also are individual beings at the field. The shoes often differ because people need to have shoes that fits their feet perfectly and they need to feel comfortable playing with them. Therefore, out on the field you are maybe considered a unity and everyone watching can understand that these girls belong to the same club and there exist on the field a separation between the two teams because of the clothes they are wearing. Still you see the individual person on their shoes. I could see that many of the girls in the field had different shoes, and it is here you see the individual in a team. At the same time, you can see a gender discourse here too, because of the biological reason that many women have smaller shoes than men and a different foot. Most of football shoes are made for men and is not existing lower than 38 after EU size, and many of the girls have smaller feet than this. Therefore, many girls have to by children shoes, which is often in a cheaper quality than the men's shoes. Adidas are one of the few that produce women shoes, but it is fewer choices than the men have in shoes and they are also different in colors and design, but in the same material as men's shoes. Here we can see a gendered discourse where females are left with less choices than the men, and it points out again that the females are the other in the environment even though there are some that try to produce football shoes for females too. Many of the girls had women shoes that was the same during my fieldwork, and on girl in my fieldwork commented upon this when we sat in the locker room before one practice. She said to me: "Do you see that so many of the girls have the same shoes? It's a bit funny that everyone wants the same shoes." One of the others girls overhear this and answered: "It's because there are so few choices for girls, and these are better than the kids

shoes.” Therefore, it is a sign of identity at the same time as women in a football environment have fewer options to express their own identity through objects than the males have. It

As I have discussed until now girls and boys are using the same clothes and the tools in football. You play by the same rules, and you are playing with a ball with the same size. As we have seen all people have their habitus, and the individual in a community is often interpreting the normal gender roles in the community based on their sex. (De Beauvoir, 2000) In this environment the women are always negotiating their gender roles through being in a masculine environment with a female habitus. These signs that we have looked at shows and confirms that the girls are actually *the other* in the environment except concerning the game itself. Therefore, I want to look further at two different things, because in my field work I noted that the girls behaved differently in different social rooms. When they are in the social room on the field playing football they have one behavior and outside the field they behave and acts differently.

5.3.2. *A game; rituals and surroundings as a part of a ceremonial key*

In the same way as how the body perform, the society looks upon gender, how the girls perceive themselves and the individual performance affect the individuals at a team, the surroundings and the tools used in a football club, game and at the field also affects how the girls are motivated and how they behave as football players.

As I mentioned before, the club Fløya consists of a big outdoors field of artificial grass, with a tribune and a club building. At the same time, they have one football hall with a training center inside, a cafeteria, a small field, some staff rooms, meeting rooms and four dressing rooms. These different rooms inside the club invites to different social situations or *rituals* because of their feature. These rooms are therefore inviting the girls to use them differently and to act upon the rituals that is supposed to go on in these rooms. Here I will use Goffman’s concept *ceremonial key* to understand a game and its rituals. A game is a happening that is reproducing itself through the same frames. At the same time, it is slightly different because of the opponents they meet. The rituals in a game can tell something about the gendered distinctions in football and how the subject might be motivated to play a game.

For instance, it is well known in the football environment that inside the social room the *dressing room* there exists a *locker culture*, and it is important for the team to have a good locker culture. This is the first room the girls enter when they are going to have a practice or

play a game. This is a place where we bond and talk about private stuff, make jokes and get to know each other. The idea here is that when the players know each other this way it will show out on the field too. A good team often consists of good friends too. At the same time, it is in this room the habitus plays out itself and the gender might take place. Through experience and during my fieldwork, before a game the girls are listening to music, talking about everyday stuff, while some do their own things preparing for the game. Some girls are getting into their football clothes, some are removing their make-up and others are fixing their hair into braids or ponytails. You can clearly see that the social gender-role is present, but still it goes through a change here, where the girls are removing some of the feminine signs such as their normal clothes, their loose, long hair and their make-up. They are fixing their hair, yes, but in a way that it will not be falling in their face and ruin their focus on the things that is happening on the field. It seems that in the dressing room there is existing a somewhat transformation from a girl to a football player. If it is a practice the mood is light and people talk, but when it is an important game you can feel that it is a more tension in this room.

For instance, inside the dressing room the 31th of October 2015 before the girls' final qualification game, many of the girls' were not joking around, talking or laughing. You could hear the music roar through the music player, but the girls where silent. It was a special atmosphere, kind of nervous. The feet of many of the girls were tripping, especially on the ones that was going to play among the eleven that starts. Many of them stared blankly into the air and it seemed that they were not present. They were somewhere else. They had disappeared into their mind and maybe into focus.

Further, after spending some time in the dressing room, the girls move on to a different ritual in the *meeting room* where the coach is holding a motivational speech, giving them the team that starts and what plans they have before the match. Here the coach is the one that speaks and few of the girls are talking. Here the coach is trying to prepare the girls mentally for the task that waits them in the next social room; *the field*.

If we again look at the last qualification game. Many of the girls entered the meeting and they had no smiles on their faces. Some were talking and trying to lighten the mood, but their body language showed that they were nervous. Their feet were tripping, their hands shaking and most of the girls had an express less face that stared straight at Roger while talking. He started the meeting with trying to calm them down:

“Girls, I do not know why you are nervous. I have played at Anfield (in Premier League) ... [] ...I have played national games against England... [] ...The point in bringing this up is that the main difference in playing games at that level and any other level is the preparations. What happens before the judge blows the whistle is the only difference. When the judge blows the whistle it is exactly the same... [] ...We just need to do what we usually do.”

What the coach does here is to remind the girls of football on its own premises. Outside the field, before practices and games there is a difference, where we can see the girls as the other. But during a game on the field the premises is the same. The game itself is the same if you play professional or if you play at a women's team in 2. Division in North of Norway. In the meeting room the coach tries to bring forward a motivation and belief in the players' minds. He does not call on their gender to perform, but rather their lived body to perform. He wants the girl to trust what Chisholm calls *the natural intelligence of the body*. It's a place where the body moves without thinking and the body knows what to do in the right moment. (Chisholm, 2008) It can be compared to the sensation of *flow*. He says that “we need to do what we usually do”, he wants the girls to trust their own abilities as a football player and use their embodiment as they usually do when they win games. Here it seems that he tries to calm down the girls and in that way help them into the feeling of flow on the field.

From the social room the girls then enter the dressing room for final preparations before the game itself, and then they enter a new social field of artificial grass; the *football field*. In the field the bodily is performing and the coach have less control of what is happening. This is a ritualization through the framing, where you have 11 players against 11 other players, they play against each other for 45 minutes then they have a break and a talk for 15 minutes before they play second half that last 45 minutes and there is always a referee present that makes sure that all the rules are followed. This is as we have seen the same all over the world. Inside this ritualization there is many things happening at once, but we are going to focus the most on the girls at the field and the embodiment that is going on there and in which way it might be a part of their motivation for playing. On the field there are many interactions going on at the same time. When you are playing the goal is to score goals. At the same time, you are trying to perform your best in order to win the game. One of the girls, G, I interviewed at one of the group interviews during the field work explains the interaction on the field very well. I asked them how it feels after a game. She explains the interactions on the field and how it affects her. She is 17 years old and one of the up and coming talents at the team, and she tells it well:

“You can go home and have won a game, but still be unhappy about your own performance. You can also have lost a game, but you feel happy about your own performance. It can be a good performance together with the team. The team can also perform badly, but you feel that your performance out on the field was well. That is what makes the game fun. It is all up to yourself.”

What you are after is the good performance on the field, and she explains that it is both connected to what you do yourself at the same time as it is connected to how the team performs together. It seems like it is in the game itself that there is something that makes the game worth playing.

In this interview I talked to three of the younger talents at the team, and I knew from experience that they were friends outside the field too and would have no problem interacting together. I asked G and the two others, V and C, what motivates them to play and V answered: “You need to get a *sense of achievement*.” G continues: “One thing is that you get a sense of achievement. One thing is that it is fun, it is with your friends. One thing is that you get to use energy.” V replies: “It is good exercise.” G takes the word again: “It is so many things... It is actually a very good question.” You could clearly see that they were starting to reflect and V asked: “Why are we using every day to play football? What makes us go to the field?” The third girl, C, had listened to the others and replied:

“In contrast to that on the female side you do not make millions if you are the best. We are playing because it is fun. We are playing because... [] ... It is difficult to answer.”

Here the girls are interacting and reflecting themselves upon their own environment. They have some trouble to answer why and what motivates them to play, and they bring in the differences in the gender display in their reflection as something that should discourage them. This *sense of achievement* that V brings up is something that I noticed that several were mentioning during my field work, but they used other words to explain it. Many were mentioning the social and exercise as an aspect of why they were playing, but the sense of achievement seems to play a big role for these girls playing.

5.4. *The sense of achievement*

The sense of achievement is of course a feeling of succeeding and achieving what you wanted. It tells you if you have performed well on the field. This was mentioned several times

by different people, and this is what the coaches are after. As Roger said in the break after the girls had made a bad performance against a team at the lower part on the table:

“I know that you are not happy, girls. Then we have to step it up a notch. It is the performance we are after, right? I see that you have an effort and is trying. I can see that, but it is the execution of what we are trying to do that is failing.”

Here the collective sense of achievement was lacking and he wanted to bring out the good performance among the girls. The coaches want good performances and the good performances makes the individual feel a sense of achievement after the good performance. In this again the concept of flow is necessarily to understand what causes the sense of achievement.

Further, this sense of achievement was also brought up when the team met for a ‘crisis meeting’ after three games played in the season. This is because the coaches were not happy about the performance the team had made after these three matches. They almost lost one game against an opponent that are supposed to be an easy match for a team like Fløya, and therefore the leaders felt that it was needed to have a meeting to figure out why the performances had been this bad. Here they talk about motivation behind playing, describes what is going on out on the field, describes how a good performance out on the field are supposed to be and many other things concerning my thesis. The coach, Roger, mentions when you are out on the field there is something that should happen in your head that makes you forget everything else and perform in the moment. The female coach, Nina, talks about being a young football player that have to face the expectations from others and yourself. She knows that the pressure sometimes can feel overwhelming and negative comments from the coach can make you nervous, and make you do a bad performance. Therefore, football is both physical at the same time as a mental happening, and both have to be in balance to make a good performance, that again makes a *sense of achievement*

If we dwell on this sense of achievement, another situation that I find important is the time I walked around with one of my main protagonists, T, while she is doing some volunteer work for the team. She mentions that you have this feeling of mastering something out on the field, and this makes a good performance. I understood here that she was trying to explain that even though football have all these things around that she appreciates like friends, socialization and travelling there were something more that motivates her to play. She described it: “It is just a *feeling* you have when on the field when you are doing well”. She tries to explain that it is a

special feeling on the field when you are doing well, and it seems like the feeling she cannot quite explain is the experience of *flow*.

This sense of achievement is something that is mentioned by several of the girls, and I understand it as a bodily feeling that exists in the moment you are out on the field. It gives you a sense if you are on the track of success and if this feeling ceases to exist, you know you have failed. It seems like in the game this is something you chase and tries to achieve, and it might help you win or lose the game. As Nina talked about it have also something to do with the fear of failing and is therefore something that exists inside your head and at the same time, it is something that exists inside your embodiment.

5.4.1. Sense of achievement, gender, motivation and flow

The sense of empowerment again is something many of the girls and coaches focus on in the verbal conversations. You might understand that it seems like in football this feeling is important for the motivation for players. They want to achieve this feeling that makes them feel successful as football players. When you manage to get this feeling after a practice or a game, it helps you feel relaxed and prepared for the next time you are playing and might help you perform well the next time. This makes me have an idea that football is not just social and bodily, but also a mental praxis that effects the individual player's feelings and emotions of how they look upon themselves. As we have seen earlier in the methodology football is therefore something that is both socially constructed at the same time as it might be an individual performance that eases your mind and let your body take over your performance.

Going back to the codes we saw were present and the flow experience in the football environment, I get an understanding that it seems that the females are not the other in all aspects of the game. Through looking at the football codes in coherence with the females in Fløya's own statement on the gender in football, it is possible to argue that it is only because of the biological gender they are treated differently in the environment. The game itself is not a precondition for the gendered discourses in the football environment it is rather the biological gender that makes the difference. Looking at the signs the gendered difference is in the bodily difference such as clothes that do not fit, the shoes are too big and make-up and hair. Of course how they act outside the field is at the same time gendered, and it is a

tendency that the girls in the environment see themselves as the other and is therefore a part of reproducing the related binary codes of self and behavior; the feminine versus masculine views in the football environment. (Vester, 1998)

Further, the girls that stated that boys are faster, in the beginning of the analysis can be seen as an incorporation of how they are used to be perceived in the environment, because it is not only the society that compares them to the men they are comparing themselves to the men too. Looking at the girls' statement and the elder judge's statement of the girls' development, we see that what they mention as a difference in the game itself comparing boys and girls is the things that demands bodily power such as speed and pace. Thinking of the game itself it is valid to argue that where it should and it is possible for every football player to be equal is in the skills and techniques, because it does not demand any physical and muscular strength in the same way as jumping, body contact and running. The skills and techniques in the game is when you are doing something precisely, have control over the ball, gives a precise pass with the ball to your teammate, is able to dribble the ball past your opponents and are able to succeed in the things you try to do with the ball. This seems like the global aspect of the game and is something everyone that takes part of the game can enjoy. A man might run faster, jump higher or kick harder than a woman, but the skills can everyone learn. In the interview with the talents I asked V, G and C who were their idol when they were younger. The conversation went as followed:

G: "I still have idols. Louisa Nécib at France." V: "Zlatan here." G: "And Lene Mykjåland at Lillestrøm." C: "I have only Messi." Me: "Why? Why these players?" C: "Messi, because he plays a striker as I do, and he is the world's best. When you look at them you wonder if it is possible to be as good as them and you want to be able to do the things they do." G: "Louisa Nécib is also playing a midfielder and also Lene Mykjåland. It is someone you can compare yourself with. Her (V) is like Zlatan. She is fetching the ball up here as him (Shows feet in the air). She is doing it like him. And her (C), she is the same type of player as Messi." V: "It might not be that you have the same style when you play, but you are playing at the same spot on the field." G: "You need an answer on what you need to learn. I need to be that good. You need to manage that." C: "It is weird if you are a striker to have a back as an idol. If it is the dribbles he is able to do that you want to learn, you have to look at that and not where he plays at the field."

Here the girls are comparing themselves across gender not thinking of it as an issue for being as good as their idols and they are mentioning that they want to learn to do the same things as they are able to do. They mention dribbles and deposition of the ball, which is all connected to technical skills and not the power of the body. Therefore, when looking at the game on its own premises it is valid to argue that it is in this technical skills that the enjoyment across genders might lie. To be able to perform these skills, you need to be fully concentrated and rely on the *natural intelligence of the body* as Chisholm writes about or come into the sensation of *flow* as Csikszentmihalyi calls it. Chisholm writes in her article about female climbers:

“Hill attributes her climbing ability to the body’s motility and spatiality, to the body in general. At the same time, she clarifies that the body she relies on for climbing is not that of “any man” but a sexed body. Hers is the body of “any woman” that must approach every climbing situation against a background of masculine domination where the feminine is thrown into (often hostile) relief. She attests to calling on the natural intelligence of the body to see her way through not only the problems that a difficult route presents but also the obfuscation of those problems by an atmosphere of hyper-masculinity.” (Chisholm, 2008)

Of course climbing is a bit different from football, because it does not require speed and pace in the same way as football, but it still needs muscle strength. Still, it seems that the experience of the embodiment is the same and the girls at Fløya know themselves that they are a sexed body playing football, but at the same point it seems that on the field doing their task they rely on the natural intelligence of the body to perform and make good solutions and choices for them on the field. During a match everything happens too fast, so you cannot think before acting, because if you allow yourself to think it might be too late and you have lost the ball to your opponents. When the body acts on its own by its natural intelligence it is very similar to how Csikszentmihalyi explains the state of mind called flow.

After being in the flow zone you achieve a sensation of accomplishment. It seems that to be in the *flow zone* is a pre-condition for gaining the sense of accomplishment that the girls mention is their motivation for playing. Flow can work collectively and is when your team have good performances over a longer time. At the same time, it can also work individually. This zone is something all football players work in order to gain. It is an experience when you are out on the field. Using my meeting with football as an example, I think this was an experience of

flow. In my meeting with football nothing outside the field was important anymore. You have a feeling that your body is trained perfectly, your mind is clear and your body is working on impulses. You succeed in passes, dribbles and several things you try on at the field. It is an experience of managing to play well for yourself or for the team. You do not think, your body just acts on the things that feels naturally to do in that moment, because your body remembers the things you have been practicing on. In this zone you are in a condition where you forget yourself, anxiety and worries are gone. You're just feeling this exceptional joy of performing and being there in the moment.

As we have seen, the psychologist Csikszentmihalyi's calls this for flow and most athletes experience this in one or another way somewhere in their carrier. According to him this is a mental condition that is acting out if five factors are present. *First*, there exist a balance between what is expected of you and the performance you are able to do. It should not be too easy, nor too difficult. *Secondly*, you have to forget yourself. *Third*, you forget your opponents. *Fourthly*, you have full acceptance of the environment around you and does not let this affect you in your performance. *Fifthly*, you have full focus on your task. You are able to see what your teammates does, where the ball is and you have a solution to the challenges you meet. (Pensgaard & Høgmø, 2004)

At one game, one of the girls at Fløya made an individual performance so good that even the local media noticed the clip. I gave the clip of the goal to the team coordinator and he published it at Fløya's Facebook page and called it "Vilde show". Here the local media noticed the goal and published it at their own websites.⁸ In the clip, you can see her get a pass from another player, and she dribbles past one player. Then she uses the speed of her body to run past another player while leading the ball with control. Then she prepares herself and kicks the ball so it finally lands in one of the corners of the goal. The goal is considered a perfect individual performance, where she uses technique, speed and a good foot to score. Goals are actually the way of winning games and therefore the people on the field that scores often gets a lot of attention. Here you can see that she does not stop to think, she just acts and knows what to do in the situation and succeeds. She cannot do something like this without being in total focus and letting her natural intelligence of her body perform in the flow zone.

⁸ To see video and article; **Edissen, L. (2015)** *Se Fløya-talentets vanvittige scoring*. ITromso.no. [Internet] Tromsø. Available at: <http://www.itromso.no/sport/article10923783.ece>

This will of course make a sense of empowerment for the player performing the actions. The local newspaper published it with the title “See the Fløya-talents crazy goal”, and in the article underneath the video she states herself: “It was awesome to see it hit the goal”. This I can argue is a peak performance on an individual level, where all five points seem to be present. Doing something like that demands total focus and firmness from her body. Here no one sees her gender, only her performance.

If we look upon the third point of what needs to be present to achieve a flow experience like this, Csikszentmihalyi writes that this is a kind of condition where you are free of yourself and it can be understood that in this state of mind you are actually not colored by your own self. Here we therefore have to look upon how this actually is possible. If we look upon Bourdieu's theories, we see that he uses the concept *habitus* to explain the self and this is actually who we are. He explains that habitus is the structured structures, the generative principles of distinctive and distinct practices, how we classify in schemes and classification principles, different tastes and different principles of vision and division. Habitus is what makes us different and help us distinguish between what we like and don't. We do not know how our habitus is because it is who we are. It implements distinctions between what is good and what is bad, what is right and what is wrong, what is vulgar and every person distinguish these things differently because we have all different experiences through life. Habitus can be the codes and language our body inhabit and it helps us orient in these codes. (Bourdieu, 1996) We have seen that habitus is according to Bourdieu a social distinction that is constructed because of our experiences with different fields within the society and our gender is incorporated into our habitus because of the gendered distinctions that exist in the society around us. Here we can understand that the flow zone again can be seen as a way of escaping our own habitus and this will again work as a paradox because Bourdieu argues that habitus is always a part of us. In that way we might wonder if we are forgetting our gender at the same time. If we look upon Csikszentmihalyi's way of defining flow, it is a condition where you are forgetting yourself and is in a moment where the thing you do is immersive. Still, you can argue that flow also is a part of your habitus and your habitus is making your mind enter this state of mind. Still, flow seems to be a universal thing that all humans can experience when they are focused on the activity they are doing and habitus and gender on the other hand is an individual distinction that each of one of us have gained through life. How on the other hand can all person describe a similar state of mind if the habitus is personal? Therefore, this seems

to be something that lies within all humans, and is not reconstructed of the social environment you are a part of. Still, maybe it is this flow that all the people that plays football are chasing and maybe it is exactly because it is a state of mind that helps you forget yourself it is something that all humans long to experience. Csikzentmihalyis writes that this is a state of mind where you are in an extreme concentration where the challenges and skills you have are put together and co-operates so your body can easily work without any effort. Your body takes over and you are put in a state of mind that makes you feel that something special have happened, it makes a peak performance. (1999) It seems like all these girls in my research that tries and fails in explaining the feeling they have during a game they have played well it is actually this sensation of flow they are after and the sense of achievement is a result of this flow. It seems like this flow is something that makes you want to continue playing football, and is something they are chasing to experience on a personal level.

Because in this state of mind you are acting spontaneously, creatively, morally in the rules of the sport, solving problems in the moment and you are forgetting yourself and in that moment too you have no prejudice. Still, this state is something that you can go out of and you cannot stay in this state of mind all the time.

You are always wearing your social gender, because it is a part of your habitus, but it is allowed to speculate if flow really can be seen as a place where you forget your habitus, maybe when you are in this flow you also “forget” your gender? We see that the girls are clearly colored by the social gender, especially outside the football field in the social interactions, but on the field playing the game it seems that they are acting through a lived body in a state of mind where they are free from the othering of others and their own subjectivity. Through my field work I were trying to see the females on their own premises and not color my finding through my own interpretations of the football environment. I was after looking at female football from a new angle and try to understand why women play this game even though they are looked through men’s gaze, compared to men and made the other in the environment. On the empirical level on the other hand we have seen that the girls see themselves as the other, but through the game itself they are experiencing their embodiment as free of the conditions set by and for the men. The flow zone can be seen as a universal state of mind that the body can enter and in this free the subject from the social codes of themselves that is learned in the environment around them. It seems that the othering that is happening in the environment is forgot while playing and it motivates the girls to continue

playing. In the end it is the game on its own premises that motivates and makes it worth the effort.

6. Final reflections

This thesis has summed up what I have been experiencing through my time in fieldwork and helped me gain deeper knowledge about the female football's values and interpretation of their own role and embodiment in the society of football. I have been enlightening in this thesis that football is a social structured environment made of men and therefore colored by the men's embodiment and views upon the sport. When the women entered the field they were treated as *the other* and in that way interpreted it themselves into their own habitus. In spite of this women tend to be attracted to and continuing to play football. This we have investigated further through looking into the females' motivation through a phenomenological perspective.

Further, through staying at Fløya's woman's team I was able to understand and look deeper into their own interpretation of their embodiment and what it was with the game that made them continue playing. Through conversing with the girls I understood that they were affected by the social environments gender discourses when it came to their interpretation of their embodiment and the social categorization of gender was embodied in their habitual doxical field.

Further, at the football field playing the game it seemed that their embodiment was transcended into the universal state of mind called *flow*, which might allow them to exist in a genderless and habitual-less space. This because it is a place of absolute focus where they are totally concentrated on the activity they are doing. Through studies it seems that this state of mind is experienced the same way across cultures and countries. Gender and habitus on the other side are sociocultural and in that way embodied through the social interactions both verbally and bodily. Therefore, since flow are described and experienced in a similar way all over the world, I am arguing that *flow* is a phenomenon that might allow the girls playing football to enter a space where their embodiment is existing on its own premises without the gendered disposition of being *the other*. They are trusting the natural intelligence of the body and allows their body to work at its own premises with its own natural abilities without interference from their cultural and gendered embodiment. On the other hand, I'll argue that the experience of flow can be seen as a state of mind that exists in the social knowledge of the human interpretation and is experienced through taking part in a sociocultural activity. At the

same time, it seems like the social happenings around the subject is interfering with the ability to reach this sensation and is therefore a part of the experience. The feeling of being in the state of mind *flow*, is also something that makes you succeed in the things you do and in that way it is a precondition for gaining the *feeling of accomplishment* that was mentioned by the girls as something that was motivating for their wish to continue to play football.

Through this fieldwork I have filmed a lot of material that again I have developed into a film named *The purpose of a Goal*, which shows how they cope in the environment and how they work hard to manage to get back to First Division again. Through this ethnographic documentary I have tried to show how the gender discourses are present in the girls' own reflections upon the football environment at the same time as the competition aspects are always present. Flow is present through the game itself, through seeing the girls focus and natural intelligence of the body play out itself in the heat of the games.

Women might have accepted to be looked at as the other in the environment, but still they seem to find a free space in the game that affects their motivation and love for the game.

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7. Attachments

7.1. Sociogram

Color and box explanation

This sociogram contains an overview of the players and the people that was present during my time of fieldwork and is appearing in my material that I am using during my masterproject. Here you can see the dynamics inside the team, who is friends and who have moved. You can understand that this environment is dynamic and therefore there are many changes at some few months.

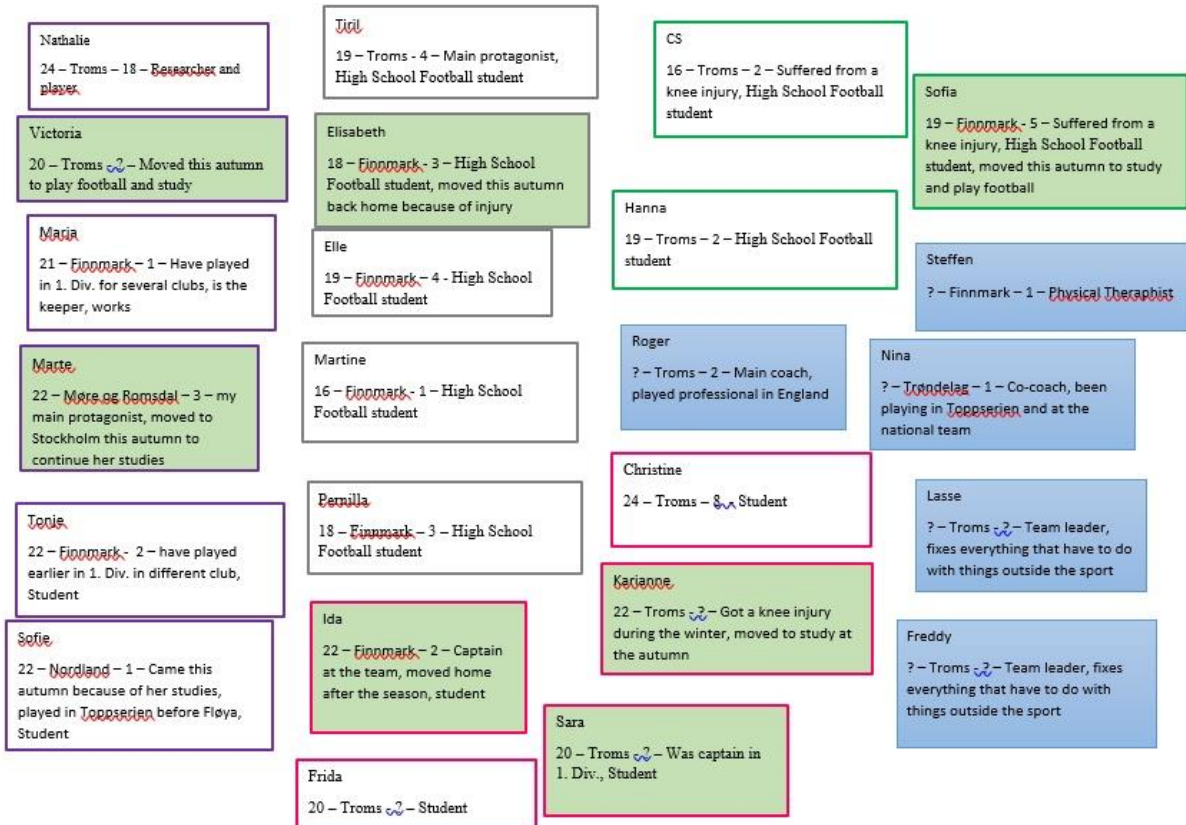
Same color at the frame= spend most time together at practice and outside practice

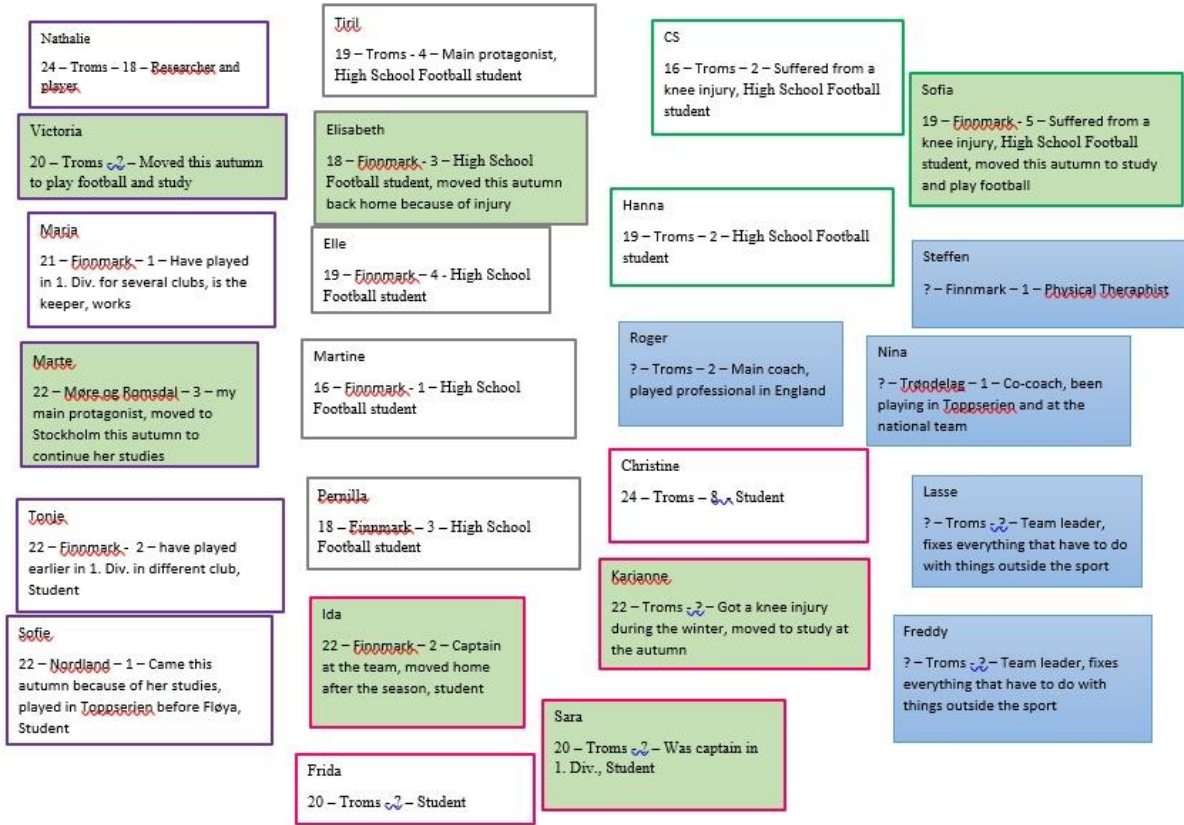
Same color inside frame = Moved or quit during the season

 = coach/team leader/physical therapist

Box explanation:

| |
|---|
| Name |
| Age - County - Years in Floya - Other information |





7.2. Flow in sports

Table 1:

