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Black & White Running Bodies: Masculinity, Muscularity & Femininity

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**BLACK & WHITE RUNNING BODIES:
MASCULINITY, MUSCULARITY & FEMININITY**

by

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THESIS

Submitted to the Graduate School

of Wayne State University,

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BLACK & WHITE RUNNING BODIES:
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INTRODUCTION

Women are relatively new to the sport of marathon running, a 26.2 mile race. In 1972 women were granted entrance into the internationally recognized Boston Marathon. Women runners, such as Kathrin Switzer, who attempted to run in such events before this time were physically removed and thrown out of races. More than twelve years later, the Olympics finally recognized women in the sport, and welcomed them into the marathon event. Today, there are over 500,000 marathon finishers in the United States; 41% of them are women. The number is expected to continue to rise. In fact, between 2009 and 2010, the number of women marathon finishers in the United States grew by ten percent (Annual Marathon Report 2010).

Despite the steady growth of women entering the sport, the general demographics of the women have not changed. Women marathoners are typically over thirty years old, with an average age of 36. Seventy-eight percent of all marathoners have completed a college education (Porter, 1985). The Annual Marathon Report (2010) provides a simple yet vivid racial breakdown. Within the United States, 95% of all marathon runners are White and just 1.6% are Black. In fact, many studies on runners talk in terms of the White runner. For example, in Hanold's (2010) research on female distance runners, all but one, an Asian-American (Vietnamese), were White. Similarly, Jones and Greer (2011) and Krane, et al. (2004) predominantly interviewed White runners. The perspective and lens of the research is, in turn, White. *Running World* (2011) magazine fairly recently printed an article entitled "Why is

Running So White?" The article is in an attempt to inquire about the Whiteness of the sport and seeks explanations for the stark lack of diversity. The absence of Black women in the literature perpetuates existing inequalities both in and out of the sport.

When I talk with others about my research interest in marathoning women, many are unaware of the lack of diversity within the sport. There is a tendency by many, when they think of women who marathon, to think of Black runners. And yet throughout the literature, Black women who marathon are rarely, if at all, among the studied populations. So, although the number of Black women marathoners in the United States is less than ten percent, there are, nevertheless, Black women marathoning. And yet, there seems to be a disconnect between the visibility of Black women who distance run in sports and their absence in the current literature. It is important to, first, acknowledge that Black women do participate in marathon running and, second, to explore and examine their motivations for marathon running.

The purpose of this research is to explore women's motivations and experiences as marathoners. Specifically, I investigate the following aspects. First, I explore the motivations and limitations of women who participate in marathon training and racing. I am particularly interested in comparing Black and White women's motivations. And, second, I examine how women define the normative running body by race. Because Black women runners are noticeably absent from the research, it is my intention that this study will fill the gap in the literature by better understanding the motivations and limitations, experiences and perceptions of the women participating in the sport. It is the aim of my research to examine and challenge the binary structures of men and women, of muscularity and femininity, and Black and White (runners).

LITERATURE REVIEW

I love to run. But, when I tell people that I run marathons, I usually hear a response like “*Are you crazy?*” or “*I only run when someone is chasing me!*” Sometimes I am simply asked “*Why?*”, as in why I would subject myself to such trivial and tiring running. After all, unlike in football and baseball, there is no ball to be caught, only a finish line to be reached. Their responses suggest that my passion is not shared by others, and is instead misunderstood and questioned. But, I am far from the only thirty-something woman spending my weekends running twenty-mile training runs. I am hardly alone on the many pre-dawn Sunday race days, adorned in my sweat-resistant running gear, having eaten a carb-rich breakfast and coffee, impatiently waiting in the starting corrals that sort me by pace, along with several thousand other runners, eager for the blast of the gun that signals the race’s start.

How and why do women in particular become involved in the sport? Much of the running literature focuses on motivations, particularly on an individual’s initial motivations that propel him/her into distance running (Deaner and Masters, 2011; Ogles and Masters, 2000, 2003; Ogles, Masters and Richardson, 1995; Masters, Ogles and Jolton, 1993; Ziegler, 1991; Summers, Machin and Sargent, 1983). But, these motivations vary significantly between men and women. Women, for instance, are more likely than men to get involved in running for health and weight concerns, whereas men are more likely to focus on goal-achievement and competition (Deaner 2011). And although men and women are equally likely to run to cope with anxiety, depression and critical thinking skills (Ogles Masters and Richardson 1995), many women additionally spend their run-time coping with personal, family and career-related stresses (Porter 1985). Women are less likely to run alone, on average run fewer miles and have slower PRs/PBs (Personal Records or Personal Bests) than men. Women average fewer miles per week (21.9 miles) over fewer days (four per week) than their male counterparts (27.2 miles over 4.3 days).

Although there are some distinct gender differences in motivations, most of the literature neglects the social reasons for these differences. For example, the mileage disparity may have less to do with desire to run and more to do with restricted opportunities that stem from gender constraints such as family and child care obligations. Why, then, are women running fewer miles in fewer days than men? What is the extent by which these familial obligations and thus time constraints affect womens' opportunities to run?

Gender limitations aside, more and more women are participating in sports and running marathons. Messner (1988, p. 198) explores how the expanding involvement of women in sports challenges the general 20th century ideology of male superiority. He argues that sports, from its inception to the current day, continue to uphold male superiority. However, the increasing involvement of women in sports represents a quest for equality and control over their own bodies, while their presence alone contests this male domination. Through a discussion of the importance of the impact of what he calls two crises of masculinity, Messner argues that "organized sport has been a crucial arena of struggle over basic social conceptions of masculinity and femininity, and as such has become a fundamental arena of ideological contest in terms of power relations between men and women" (1988, p. 198). "Significantly, media continues to propagate the inequalities among male and female athletes, whereby performances of female athletes are often trivialized, marginalized and sexualized" (Walton, 2010). Because sports in general are considered masculine, women in sports negotiate socially acceptable femininities against the hegemonic masculine expectation of the sport.

This concept of "hegemonic masculinity" shapes what has become the ideal feminine body. This body, as it is differentiated as masculine and/or feminine, follows societal guidelines, complete with the defined rubrics and patterns of such ideology (Lorber and Yancey Martin,

1994). A narrowly accepted definition and conception of femininity is expected, encouraged and praised. Performative theory suggests women seek to imitate such socially acceptable images of femininity, yet such performances may shift and change depending on the situation and context (Butler 1998). While adherence to the socially preferred norm of femininity appears to be an individual “choice,” nonconformity may uncomfortably lead to non-acceptance. Many women in sport have to consider this choice and must negotiate between their femininity and muscularity, creating a series of socially constructed incongruities (Krane et al, 2004; Brace-Govan, 2004). For example, a marathoning woman is expected to be tough but feminine upon finishing a race, in her sleeveless tech-gear, emphasizing her salty biceps and contracted quadriceps. However, at a non-sporting event, she may feel uncomfortable and awkward in the same, gruff attire and appearance. Krane et al. (2004) explore how women in sport negotiate and reconcile the social expectations surrounding the meshing and clashing of femininity with athleticism. The assumed masculinity of sports continues to marginalize women (Acker, 1990).

Recent studies have suggested that female athletes, successful in their sport by achieving muscularity and subsequent strength, struggle with these physical assets in non-sport events and social arenas. They, in turn, have two body images: one of the sporting body and the other of the social body. The female weightlifters, who Brace-Govan (2004, p. 511) interviewed, perceived themselves as “much different than other women.” And, even women who express satisfaction with their sporting body admit dissatisfaction with their social body, feeling uncomfortable and not “normal.” Steinfeldt et al. (2011) found that among college-aged athletes, while *all* of the men wanted and sought muscularity, only 16% of the women wanted to be muscular. Why are men in sport seeking out and more comfortable with muscularity? How does the struggle that

often accompanies the balancing of muscularity and femininity affect the acceptance of muscularity of women in sports?

Beyond the paradox of muscularity and femininity, how is the running body defined? It is generally expected to be thin, fast and lean; “feminine”, not too muscular. However, there are some runners who challenge the very premise of what we have come to accept as the normative running body. These runners are ultrarunners, or runners who run lengthy distances, beyond the typical marathon and upwards of 50-mile and 100-mile races. Beyond the body dissimilarities, gender restrictions still abound. Until the mid-1980s, women were not permitted to compete in such races or ultramarathons (Hanold 2010, p. 162). Nevertheless, since the fairly recent admission into the sport of ultraracing, the number of women entering and participating has tripled. Unlike the preconceived body image in traditional marathons, in ultras there seems to be no ideal body type. Hanold suggests that, within the sport setting, the ultra-body becomes the desired body (2010, p. 170). *Any* body type that can finish an ultra-race is considered a successful body type, which is in direct opposition to the traditional marathoning body in which the fastest body, commonly one that is lean and muscular, is the desired and successful body type. All of the runners Hanold interviewed felt good about their running bodies and did not feel compelled or pressured to change to fit the concept, or shifting notion, of the normative running body.

By way of comparison, Clydesdale runners betray body expectations. Clydesdale is a classification of men who marathon (there is a similar classification for women). But these runners are not the “typical” runner; Clydesdale runners are larger, heavier runners and are generally over 200 pounds. Although this classification of runners is not standardized and not a part of every marathon, the classification exists to allow heavier runners to become more

competitive in the race. Many running clubs have grown out of the widespread awareness of this body type. But, much like ultrarunners, Clydesdale runners resist the normative ideas of body type in the sport by their presence alone (Chase, 2008). Although this is contested (by the runner's presence), Clydesdale runners remain largely unaccepted by the overall running community. Nevertheless, both ultrarunning and Clydesdale bodies have become sites of resistance and control. Their participation in organized racing events simultaneously reinforces and rejects the fat running body.

A good portion of the literature on gender, gender constraints, the body, and motivations of distance runners focuses on a familiar and homogeneous group. It is assumed (and in much of the research assumed correctly) that the runners are White, middle-class and heterosexual. This is the case with the majority of the literature analyzing runners' motivations; 90% of the samples are White. Non-White runners and specifically non-White women who run are visibly absent from much of the research on marathoners, despite their reputation and presence in international races such as the Boston Marathon. The literature suggests that White women distance run largely for reasons of body image and weight control, but why do Black women run?

Beyond the body, the racial divide is distinct. Clearly, as many groups of women have been invisible in the research, my intention is to first remedy and second to understand the absence of non-White women on the road and in the literature. My project is situated within the sport of marathoning, but by considering the implications of the absence of these women, I am calling attention to this exclusion. It is fair to comment on and interject the fact that, yes, more White women than Black women run and marathon. However, by excluding women of color from studies, it is as if they do not run at all.

As I am heavily invested in the sport of marathoning, I have participated in the St. Louis and The Trail marathons in April 2012 and the Ann Arbor marathon in June 2012. In October, I ran the Detroit Free Press marathon, an internationally established race that begins and ends in the heart of the city. The race crosses the Ambassador Bridge into Canada, running along the Detroit River and returning to the United States through a closed-off underground tunnel. Although these runs vary in length, terrain and location, the running expos, the pre-race registrations and the races themselves have provided ample ground for my explorations into running women. Because, overall, I am interested in understanding and uncovering the perceptions and experiences of women who participate in the sport.

Using a social constructionist feminist framework, I am looking at how race and gender are mutually situated and constituted. My ethnographic study helps to explain why women are running and the limits they are faced with. Judging by the trend, women pounding the pavement may soon outnumber men. Why are these women flocking to the starting line? How do women find balance within the sport? How do women discuss the running body?

METHODOLOGY

This paper is an exploratory study that seeks to understand why Black and White women run marathons and to determine the role, if at all, race places in any differences between the groups of women. Over the course of the past year, I have been writing an autoethnographic account of my experiences as a marathoner. I have emic knowledge of the sport because I am a distance runner. For example, while I have seen the Whiteness of the sport and the variety of body types at many races, I have also had many conversations about motivations before, during and after races. Insider status is a useful position in qualitative research and, as such, my experiences have helped me define my research questions and develop my interview instrument.

Insiders share a common (running) culture, gender and, perhaps, ethnicity and as such, have an immediate privilege and are granted access to others in similar social locations (Carty, 1996). Although I have only been running for six years, I strongly identify as a runner and have fully immersed myself into the sport, the culture, and running community. My personal experiences have enhanced and supplemented my interviews with and observations about runners. By sharing my experiences along with those of the marathoning women I have interviewed, I am giving a depth and a life to the existing literature on feminist theory and sport in a way that may not be attainable otherwise (Laslett, 1999). There is a reflective importance and significance of the vernacular of the women's stories, as told by them, as they look back retrospectively upon their experiences. However, as a marathoner, although I have an insider's perspective and awareness of the world of marathoning, my autoethnography is significantly limited. And as a White woman who runs I can only provide one – my White, middle-class - perspective and cannot, without further inquiry, fully anticipate or understand the motivations or limitations of a Black woman who marathons.

Consequently, to supplement my autoethnography, I have conducted semi-structured, in-depth interviews among women – both White and Black - who participate in marathons in the Midwest region. Although I may be able to make some predictions regarding the outcomes of my research, I know little regarding Black women who run. It is for this reason I have opted to design my interviews in a semi-structured fashion, providing a more relaxed setting for either unplanned or unexpected responses. My interview guide has two distinct groups of questions which I will discuss in this thesis. The first group of questions probes into women's initial and ongoing motivations to run. Why did these women choose to run? Why do they continue to run? And why have they chosen to run marathons specifically? Have their motivations evolved

throughout their running experiences? What are the limitations women face? The second group of questions focuses on the body: perceptions of masculinity, femininity, and the normative body. How do the women who run perceive the running body? Have these perceptions changed during their marathoning experiences? How do pregnancies and children affect the perceptions of the running body?

I used convenience sampling to interview 20 women – 10 Black and 10 White. Although I have run with and personally know several White marathoning women in the community, I do not know any Black women runners. It was necessary to implement snowball sampling techniques to contact Black women runners.

In addition to my constructed questions, I have incorporated the Motivations of Marathoners Scale (MOMS) questionnaire developed by Masters and Ogles to further explore the motivations using a 56-item measurement, nine scales within four areas (of motivation). Appendix A includes both my interview guide and the MOMS questionnaire.¹ Because of the small sample size, I will not be able to generalize based on the results of the MOMS. However, because in prior studies the MOMS instrument has been distributed to predominantly White runners, it will be interesting to compare the outcomes of both Black and White women. Do Black women run for similar reasons as White women? What, if any, differences exist between these groups of women? Will the results follow the established trend of MOMS results? Using focused coding I extract themes as they emerged through the interviews and in conjunction with my interview guide. Initially, I hand-coded the first transcription to assist me and from there, as Esterberg suggests (2002, p.162), I open coded on a line by line basis to start.

¹ Appendix B provides a brief breakdown of the categories of motivations as defined by Masters and Ogles (1993). Appendix B also provides an explanation of the scoring of the questionnaire.

I uploaded all transcribed interviews into NVivo. I began working with the pre-established themes, then into additional categories and themes as they, too, emerged.

THE SAMPLE

My sample includes 20 women who participate in marathons; ten Black and ten White women. Because I am examining and comparing Black and White women, I have restricted my interviews from other racial and ethnic groups for my study. As an active marathoner, I had immediate access to women who run marathons. Utilizing social media resources such as Facebook and established running groups through other websites, I had access to many women, including those outside of my immediate personal running circle. I began my convenience sampling by asking colleagues and friends who may know women who have run marathons. Although I had access to women, my intention was to locate women outside of my immediate running groups for more variation, to limit selection bias, and to include a less homogenous sample.

The mean age of the women in my sample is 41; the median age is 39. Women I met with ranged in age from 30-70: the mean age of the White women is 36; the mean of Black women, 40. I specifically targeted women in this age group as it falls within the average age group of marathoning women within the United States. Of the women, seven began running in high school; four Black women and 3 White women. The ages of when the other women started running varied from their 20s – 40s, averaging between 30-34. The age the women began marathoning did not vary by race or by number of children. However, women with children delayed the age when they started marathoning.

Table 1. Marital Status by Race

White Women	Marital Status	# of Women
	Single	1
	Married	7
	Divorced	2
Black Women *	Marital Status	#of Women
	Single	5
	Married	4
	Divorced	0

* 1 missing

Slightly more than half of the total number of women interviewed have children, and of the women who have children, eight have 1-2 children; four have 3-4 children. About half of the Black women do not have children and only two of the White women do not have children. Of the Black women who have children, three have 1-2 children and one has three children. Of the White women who have children, five have between 1-2 children and three have between 3-4 children. Below is a brief descriptive table by race.²

Table 2. Number of Children by Race

	1-2 Child/Children	3-4 Children	None
Black Women *	3	1	5
White Women	5	3	2

* 1 missing

Of the respondents, three-quarters have a four-year degree or higher; 35% have a graduate degree. One of the respondents has a double-major Masters degree in Communications and Mathematics. Another has two Masters Degrees, one in Mathematics and the other in

² All women I interviewed identified as heterosexual; however, two respondents did not return the survey with this information and it remains unknown. Of the women in my sample, ten are married, seven are single and two are divorced. I am missing marital status from one respondent who failed to return the self-administered survey.

Education Administration. And yet another has her JD. All of the women who are actively employed have professional occupations. I met with teachers, an attorney, a principal and a journalist, just to name a few. The two stay-at-home parents both had professional occupations prior to full-time parenthood.

Table 3. Highest Level of Education by Race

Race	Level of Education	Number of Women
White	Some College (> 4 yrs)	2
	4 Yr College	5
	Graduate Degree	3
Black *	Some College (> 4 yrs)	2
	4 Yr College	3
	Graduate Degree	4

* 1 missing

In my recruitment process, I did not specifically seek out women who had been running a particular length of time, but rather women who actively participated in marathons. I did differentiate between women who ran casually and those women who marathon. Initially I was strictly seeking out women who participated in full marathons. However, throughout my interviewing process and as I neared the end of the number of women I had sought out to interview, it became more challenging to track down and interview women who fit this description. At that point, I made the decision to modify and expand the description of women I would interview and include women who ran half marathons and two women who had not officially run any marathons but were training for their first. No significant bias was introduced: first, the women were in the target age group; second, the women were located through the snowball sampling process and associated with other women who run marathons; third, the women were either a part of a larger organized running group (through a local running company) or had been part of a marathon relay team; and last, the women had participated in other races, albeit shorter distances, but organized road races. Of the women who had only run a half or were

training for their first full marathon, each identified as a runner, which is important in terms of how the women identify. These women responded similarly to those women who had been running longer.³

Overall, my sample is relatively representative and, with the exception of the gender and race components, analogous to other studies on marathoners.

At the time that I completed ten of my interviews with White women, I had only interviewed two Black women. I asked all of the White women I met if they would refer me to Black runners for my study.⁴ However, six of the White women knew no Black runners, one knew of one or “maybe” one and three knew a “couple” of runners but did not personally run with them. All of the Black women know other Black runners. Three of the runners knew of many because they run together, or at one point ran together, in a running group that is predominantly Black runners, both men and women.

Because of my initial lack of access to Black women marathoners, a professional contact who, herself is a Black marathoner, agreed to interview with me. She, in turn, referred three other women who were a part of her Detroit-based running group. I posted multiple requests through social media sites in an attempt to locate women who would participate in my study. I sent personal emails to friends and fellow athletes and runners for any contacts, but the majority

³ Because of regional restrictions and complicated work and familial schedules of some of the respondents, I was unable to meet with all women in person. I spoke with four women over the phone and the others I met with in person. Seventeen of the twenty respondents live in Michigan, in the metro-Detroit area. The remaining three live out of state, two in the Midwest and one in the South.

⁴ I interviewed all of the White women quickly and easily. Two groups of four of the White women were from the same running circle of friends and provided snowball access to one another. The two women I have personally run and interviewed both referred other runners. Essentially through four contacts, I was able to interview all ten White women.

fell flat and did not know of any women who fit the criteria. Some posted notices on their social media pages, but the return was dismal and nearly nonexistent. I searched online for organizations specific to Black women who distance run. I did not receive comments or responses from any of the organizations I emailed.⁵ Ultimately, I did meet the number of interviews I had planned to and completed all 20 interviews over a period of two months.

The White marathoners ran between 1-26 marathons, the mean number of marathons a woman ran was 8.44. They are running between 8-40 miles per week, averaging 22.7 miles per week, running between 1-5 days per week, averaging 3.31 days per week. The group of White runners cumulatively ran over 75 marathons. The Black women ran a total of 24 marathons, running between 1-6 races; the mean number ran was 3.43.

They are running between 2-60 miles per week, averaging 26.2 miles per week, running 2-7 days per week and averaging 3.94 days per week. The group of Black runners totaled 24 marathons and handfuls of half marathons. I cannot make a reasonable comparison in the data regarding number of marathons because I included half marathoners in the Black sample for purposes of symmetry. That being said, Black women in my sample are averaging more miles per week and more days per week than White women in my sample.

Table 4. Miles & Days per Week by Race

	Range of Miles Run per Week	Avg. # of Miles Run per Week	Range of Days Run per Week	Avg. # of Days Run per Week
Black Women	2-60	26.2	2-7	3.94
White Women	8-40	22.7	1-5	3.31

⁵ I recruited one Black woman through a friend/colleague, one through a classmate and one through a social media running contact. Two large, national running organizations did not respond to my inquiries.

While the range of miles being run per week and the average number of miles run per week did not vary significantly between White and Black runners, women with children run less often than women without children. Women with children run between 1-5 days per week, averaging 3.25 days per week, while women without children run between 2-7 days per week and average 3.86 days per week.

Table 5. Women & Children and Days Run per Week

	Range of Days Run per Week	Avg. # of Days Run per Week
Women with Children	1-5	3.25
Women without Children	2-7	3.86

THE INTERVIEWS

The average length of my interviews was 40.9 minutes. The range of interviews was between 30 min to 57 min. The interviews totaled more than 800 minutes of audio data.

Of the 16 women I met in person, 14 interviews were held at coffee shops and restaurants throughout the metro Detroit area. I met with one runner at her home because we met while her husband was at work and her 11-month old baby was asleep in the next room. A baby monitor sat on the table close to the respondent during our near hour-long meeting that took place in the dining room of their townhouse. I met another woman at a Jungle Java in one of the suburbs. Jungle Java is an indoor play center that allows the children to play safely while the parents visit with other parents over coffee. I met with her during a morning while her older child was at school. She shoed her 3-year old child off to play while we spoke. A couple of times during the interview, her son came up to her, grabbing at her leg for attention and comfort, repeating, “Mommy, mommy, mommy”. Despite the few minor interruptions, we were able to have a fairly fluid discussion over coffee.

I typically scheduled the interviews around the schedules of the women, as all but two women hold full-time jobs and more than half have families. I met with women in the mornings, evenings and on the weekends to accommodate their demanding schedules.

To ensure accuracy and thus reliability, I audio recorded my interviews using a digital recorder. Although equipped with transcription software, because of imperfections and irregularities, I manually transcribed all interviews. Included in each transcription, I noted reactions, hesitations and non-verbal cues as part of the transcriptions. I immediately began looking for patterns in the respondents responses. Upon completion of the transcription process, I printed all interviews and manually reviewed for errors, questions and discrepancies.

At the conclusion of each interview, I requested that the respondent complete the MOMS (Motivations of Marathoners Survey) survey which included a brief self-administered socio-demographic data sheet (Appendix A, Part II). With the exception of one woman, all in-person interviews completed the MOMS survey at the time of the interview. Of those who completed the survey, missing data comprises less than .2% of the motivations responses. I have missing survey data from the two respondents who did not return the survey.

MOTIVATIONS

Discussing motivations with women became an interesting and lively area of conversation. Just as I have asked myself the question “Why do I run?” many times since I have made marathoning a central part of my life - as a sport, as a deep passion and as a point of research interest – I wanted to know *why* these women participated in the sport. But the topic became more complicated as I began to investigate in more depth. Many of the women had confessed that they had not given much thought to their motivations prior to our meeting. But, as I began to uncover early on, nearly all of the women participate in the sport for not just one,

simple reason, but instead many simultaneous fused and convoluted reasons. For example, one 34-year old mother of three tells me this when I ask why she runs:

Just because I know that it makes everything better. Everything. It makes me feel better, it makes me sleep better, it makes me have less stress and deal with the kids better. And, the more I run the more I practice, the faster I'm gonna get, I perform better. Which makes me happy too, shows me I'm working toward a goal and I'm accomplishing that goal.

Another woman expressively runs for reasons of health and fitness, stress release, increases in her performance and goal achievement and, still, mental health clarity. She was not unlike many of the other women, women who run to clear their minds, to “feel better” (physically and otherwise), to enhance their performance, and to reach their many personal goals. Trying to pin down a lone motivating factor for the women’s participation in the sport soon became a futile endeavor. All of the women had multiple layers of varying motivations for running.

Many of the women initially began running for reasons that have evolved throughout their running careers. It was not uncommon to find women who began to run for weight control and fitness and then morph into other reasons. In fact, many, if not most of the women initially began to run to lose or maintain weight. One 46-year old Black woman who had only begun running a year ago and is training for her first marathon tells me she began running to maintain a recent successful weight loss. But she says this when I ask about why she *now* runs: “Now, I, um, I just love running.” And, I believe her because she says this with unmistakable joy in her eyes. Then, she goes on to offer more about her reasons,

I think [sic] just gives me confidence, it’s a great stress reliever, especially the days you can get out there and run by yourself, um, that’s just a good time that you can spend by yourself, it’s just a good time to work out issues, you know, family issues, work issues. You know, just anything that may be going on in your life because there’s nobody there but you and the road so it gives you a good, opportunity just to work things out in your mind and um and...I don’t know. I guess I just like the feeling of running. I really like when I’m finished running, you know that feeling of accomplishment, I love the feeling of accomplishment. I love to challenge myself.

It is interesting to hear about how she began running for weight loss and control, but now she runs for many other, different reasons that now include personal issues, solitude and clarity, as well as achieving a sense of accomplishment in the completion of her daily activities. To say these women run solely or even primarily for reasons of weight maintenance and loss would be inadequate. And, as shown, many of the women run for a variety of reasons. It is important to understand the complexity and development of the motivations. To simplify, however, I will talk briefly and individually about each of the primary motivations that emerged during the interviewing process.

HEALTH & FITNESS

Not surprisingly, all of the women, both Black and White, talk about running for health, fitness and weight control. For about 60 % of the women, this was a significant early motivator. And, although many women currently run for a barrage of reasons and reasons that have evolved from their initial motivations, many of the women, still talk about health and fitness being an important motivator for their continued participation in the sport. A 34-year old Black woman in education tells it like this:

...after I had my first son (I have two sons), I was like, I'm gonna do a marathon to get this baby weight off.

Another Black woman, 70-year old retiree says, "It's a good way to delay the aging process and I feel stronger and I feel like I could conquer the world when I run." She goes on to further say:

I don't tell people my age because it's not relevant at this point but this man came up to me [recently at the gym] and said "You know, you have the nicest body I have seen!" and I said "Oh, thank you."

Several of the women talked about loving food and finding pleasure in food. It is distance running that helps provide them with an outlet for both their love of food and concern of the maintenance of a particular level of health and fitness. I had many conversations with the

women about food, body (much to be expounded on in a later section) and weight. And, during my personal runs, a common theme is nearly always that of weight control and health. My running partners and I often discuss, analyze and laugh about the topic. Overeating can sometimes prompt “punishment runs”, diets are carefully considered and running becomes a staple in our lives as a means to control our weight. Running allows many women to enjoy a more abundant diet; after all, the more calories expended, the more required by the body. I suppose it becomes an additional bonus that there are many other benefits to running.

MENTAL HEALTH

I have discussed how many women are drawn to running as a way to control their weight. But, as exercise trends come and go, these women continue to not only run, but participate in marathons. And training for a marathon requires a lot of mileage, anywhere from 30-50 miles per week. Countless miles are run alone, leaving a runner with a surplus of time to be pensive. Many of the women I met with have talked about this time - the welcome isolation, the solitude, the time “in her own head” - as a key reason for their continued involvement and faithful attachment to the sport. A 35-year old White mother of two says:

I run because it manages my anxiety, it gives me time to think, gives me my own space. That's probably why I choose distance because when I choose distance I'm gone for a period of time that isn't just 20 minutes or half an hour, I can go out there 2, 3 hours, I can run. I'm doing something for myself, I am, um, clearing my head and it's the ONLY time in my life...like I always say, I run to RELAX which makes no sense to everyone else but it's me-time and it's the only time I get to go out and think by myself, it's me-time.

This busy full-time mom uses running and marathoning as an anxiety reliever (among other reasons). She, along with a few of the others, attempted to explain the significance of this relaxation factor of running which, funnily, may appear to be quite the conundrum for non-runners.

A 39-year old Black woman had running suggested to her by her therapist as a means to compensate for some recent depression she was experiencing and, reflectively, now says it was just what she needed. She has been running ever since. She is now training for her first marathon which, incidentally, will be in Paris this spring. Another, 34-year old White woman says she initially began running for stress relief, at least when she started running a few miles “here and there”. The common thread is how central the importance of the outcome of time spent running is for these women.

PROBLEM SOLVING

As prevalent as the discussion of having the actual time on the road became in our interviews, beyond the time itself, how the time was spent became important. Certainly, there are days that, during a run, the mind lends itself to a peaceful and serene place of zen. However, more likely, the women find their minds racing off to attend to the various components of the areas of concern and worry in their lives. The lacing up of the shoes has proven to become a reliable source of stress relief for many of the women I interviewed. A 41-year old Black woman puts it like this:

It just takes me in my zone and whatever’s bothering me is like “Oh what was that that was botherin’ me?” [talking about not having any issues or problems after a run]. You know afterwards, I’m not even thinking about the day.

One 40-year old White woman tells it like this:

...it's interesting because when I have a hard situation or something going on, I immediately want to slip on my running shoes and think it through.

She talks about recently experiencing a medical issue with one of her children and, immediately and instinctually, she called up one of her running partners to work it out and talk it through during a run. She said it took the duration of eight miles, but the two women together, were able to talk through it, find some agreeable and viable ways to approach the issue with her

child. These women told me of runs filled not only with sweat but with tears and emotions, as they address the critical problems in their lives. It is in this arena that the elements of health and fitness become secondary.

Many of the women think (while alone) and talk (while with running partners) about work, family, sex and other relationships matters while on the road. One 43-year old White woman says she does considerable amounts of both reflecting and planning on the road. A 47-year old stay-at-home parent says it quite well.

We even get birthday party ideas. It's the same thing any women, we just happen to be on our feet, in our tennis shoes when we're doing it. We're talking about the same thing as women around the world, it's just in a different venue.

A 46-year old Black compliance officer says:

You know, just anything that may be going on in your life because there's nobody there but you and the road so it gives you a good, opportunity just to work things out in your mind.

Another Black runner said:

...I don't know why that is, um, personally, but I notice that I can be really, really upset about something then after my run, I feel better. I mean I have the dialog in my mind but at least I'm at a point where I can, you know, think more, I feel more stable and I can come to a better conclusion.

Most of the women talked heavily about using their time on the road as a way to multi-task many of their personal issues and problems. Sometimes, simply allowing the mind to wander grants a sense of peace upon concluding a run. None of the women expressed feeling worse after a run, but rather better, and in many ways.

THE SOCIAL COMPONENT

Also early on in my interviews, the importance of the social component became clear. A 37-year old White mother of two talks about how she never planned on running a marathon, but her friends cajoled her into it and now, although she continues to run for reasons of health and weight maintenance, she primarily runs for the social component. “It’s definitely a social thing for me. I miss my friends if I don’t go on a run with them for a week or so.” She talks highly of the other women, all mothers, she runs with. She tells me she would never run a marathon alone; that’s how substantial of a social piece it is for this runner. Many of the women talk about using their run-time as an opportunity to catch up with girlfriends. They consider the time valuable and call it precious, missing it gravely when they’re unable to run.

A 42-year old Black mother of two talks about running and training in this way:

If I’m running with someone, I don’t run with music. We just run and talk. So, I’ve had some like really great conversations; been able to comfort people, people have been able to comfort me, all on a run. And...that’s what really got me into it and has kept me in it for so long.

Another runner says of the importance of the social aspect, “...if you were to ask me about my top five friends I would say they’re all runners.”

Many (non-runners) may think of running as an individual sport, which, essentially it is. On the road. Running. For hours. But, of the women I interviewed, more than half talked about the social component as being an incredibly significant factor in their continued decision to run. Personally, some of my closest friends are runners and the experiences we have whilst running form an important bond and are a constant testament to our friendships. We are able to incorporate our lessons and experiences as runners into our non-running lives.

GOAL ACHIEVEMENT (INITIAL AND ONGOING)

Although less conspicuous in our discussions, some of the women began marathoning for the challenge: to see if they could, to try to “pull it off” and to push themselves with the challenge of the marathon. Some of the women were already running but had running a marathon on their bucket list and then decided to run to attempt to complete the coveted 26.2 distance. Running is a progressive sport, as many of the women acknowledged. One White 34-year old business owner said, “After I did one, it felt so good and it was hard and it was such a struggle, I wanted to do it again. I wanted to go through the whole process again.” Another runner, a 47-year old White stay-at-home parent:

I run marathons, well the first one I did as sort of the pie in the sky, somebody suggested I run one and I thought, “*Oh, I could never do that*” and then the longer I ran, the longer distances, I thought maybe I could do it. So the first one was more of just a challenge to see “*Could I do this, do I have it in me*”? Um, and then, the subsequent ones are...I guess there’s a little bit of that every time you do it, just to see, well “*Can I do this again?*”, it’s such a powerful feeling when you finish.

One 46-year old mother of one says this:

I really like when I’m finished running, you know that feeling of accomplishment, I love the feeling of accomplishment, I love to challenge myself. That’s another thing as far as the races, I love challenging myself. And, I know, you know, I think that’s why I started with the 5k and worked myself up it’s like a challenge for myself, okay like “*I did the 5k, now can I do the 10k, now can I do the 10-mile, can I do a half marathon*”? So those are just ways for me to challenge myself and then once I’ve done that, once I’ve accomplished my goals, okay, you get this real sense of accomplishment which, you know, makes me feel good.

Another, a 30-year old Black attorney tells me like this:

...and then the medals too, I like the achievement you feel like after running a race and how you feel like “*I just did this*” and everybody’s like “*You just ran how far*”?

Another woman, 40-year old White woman tells me this:

I’m a medal whore, for lack of a better word, I’m a medal whore! I love my medals. Like my office right now [our interview is held over the phone] has my bibs all over.

And, the 70-year old Black woman I met with proudly brought her medals along to our afternoon meeting off campus. She reminisced about each of them, talking for a moment about each race, including the most recent from fall of 2012. While the act of seeking and achieving the goal is a significant motivator for some of the women, it did not strike me as the most significant factor. It was mostly an intermittent discussion among the women and, for some women, this became an afterthought. It was not the single-most important factor for any one woman in my meetings.

COMPETITION

In previous research, competition has been a key reason for men who marathon. In agreement, throughout my interviews, only minor snippets of the conversations lent its way to the topic and further to competition as a motivator. Many women spoke about the continuing desire and challenge of becoming faster and stronger. Competition as a motivator surfaced sporadically and infrequently during of my interviews. And, even so, one of the times was *after* the interview (and I did not capture the audio), during the self-administered survey, when she read one of the questions on motivations (one of the questions about running faster than her friends), that she mentioned the strong but private appeal of running faster than her running partner. The discussion and inclusion of competition into my conversations with these women was trivial. When women talked about running faster, it was in the context of running faster than her last race or pushing herself to run a PR. It is important to many of the women to improve their performance, to run faster, to run further, to be stronger, to have better running form.

Occasionally during an interview, a minor competitive piece would fall into the discussion. One 40-year old White woman says this:

And, I am competitive. I pick people off in a race. Toward the end. Everybody has reasons.

She sounded almost apologetic when I replayed the audio after our interview. Another woman talked about competition only when she spoke of running alongside men, talking about how running together became competitive.⁶ She told me that she found that she would become more competitive when running with men because men were vocal about being competitive running against women, against her.

Contrarily, another 37-year old White woman talks about running for social, fitness and mental health reasons but not for reasons of competition. Lastly, a 42-year old Black woman talked about competition this way when I asked why she runs marathons specifically:

... that's a good question. I've never tried to define why I do it, it was just something I learned and I don't normally admit to because I have two children that are 8 and 10, two girls. And I try to raise them to be compassionate and sensitive to others feelings but what I've learned about myself through the years is that, and I think this is brought out in running and it's that I think I am a very competitive person and it is something that I didn't want to admit to 'cause sometimes you know being competitive can drive some other characteristics that are not um the best characteristics, they can bring out some other things in yourself that aren't so positive.

This runner talks about the competitive factor, again, in an apologetic way. This is a common trend with the women I met with. If competition is mentioned, it is mentioned arbitrarily or apologetically. It is far from the strongest motivating factor for these women I met with. Even in my circle of friends, the mention of competition is rare.

FREEDOM & EMPOWERMENT

Although it may be somewhat tied to mental health and problem solving motivations, I am choosing to discuss freedom and empowerment separately, largely because of the manner in which the women spoke of it. To understand this, it should be stated that, to run, the runner is forced to propel herself forward by the sheer strength and momentum of her own body. It may

⁶ All of the women I interviewed run mostly if not solely with other women. A couple of the women run with their partners, but prefer to run with their women running friends.

be this physical action that naturally inspires feelings of empowerment. One Black woman says this, “It makes me feel in charge of my destiny. It empowers me.” Another runner, a 34-year old business owner, when I ask about what specific words come to mind when she thinks of [running] a marathon responds introspectively like this:

Mmm, I feel empowerment. I think about strength. Um, those are the biggest ones for doing an actual marathon. Because the happiness...sometimes is a lot more...

One 47-year old White mom of three tells it like this:

If I couldn't run, just shoot me. I hear a lot of people say they'd just lie down and die. I just get such a high from running and I don't even know if it's an endorphin high per se, it's not, every run is not a good run as you run.

And, one 33-year old teacher who began running for reasons of health and weight loss, tells me why she runs now.

'Cause I love it. How strong I feel. It gets me up. On the days I don't run in the morning, I feel significantly different so even if I hated that day, I'm up and I put on my shoes and I do it because it feels that much better after I've done it.

Several of the women talk about how their participation in the sport has given them confidence and has increased their self-esteem. Although the number of women running marathons in the United States is dramatically increasing, marathoning women remain a minority among the overall population of women. I heard comments from the women about how this knowledge provoked many enhanced feelings of self-worth and an “I can do anything” attitude. All of the women I met with exuded a strong sense of self and confidence with fierce personalities and a variety of self-assigned goals (both running and non-running in nature). In my running experience, although the feelings of empowerment are robust and constant, it is not generally a top-of-mind motivator. Perhaps for these women, too, it is one of the, but not the

most, compelling motivator. The runners I met with have a control and a sense of freedom over their lives, and their bodies alike, through their participation in the sport.

THE RUNNING BODY: MASCULINITY, MUSCULARITY & FEMININITY

One of the more powerful pieces of the interviews, and of course, one of my main interests that drove my research questions, is runner's perception of the normative body. If one of the central motivators for womens' participation in the sport is tightly connected to the body, what is it that constructs, limits and defines the female running body? As these notions materialized throughout the interviews, it became clear that these women had a very narrow definition of the femininity of the running body. Their definitions

One 30-something White woman talked about the femininity of the runner's body of a colleague like this in response to my probing about femininity of the body of the woman who marathons:

...and I would probably say that about her, she does not look feminine, she looks strong, she looks skinny, muscles, not good. She is working on the store in her jeans and her casual clothes on, she looks good. I would definitely say "Yeah, that's a woman," she looks very feminine.

One Black mother, when asked what she thought about the muscularity of a runner, said: "I love it. Um, as long as it still allows for a woman to look feminine."

Most of the women endorsed this sentiment, by talking about femininity as opposed to muscularity. Notice how she says her coworker does not look good, does not look feminine (when her muscularity is exposed and seen). Another runner mentioned a body-builder friend of hers who also "did not look feminine" because of her muscularity. One Black runner told me she thought a runner's body is a feminine body; although, her friends warned her about getting "the neck" which she goes on to further explain is what is sometimes associated with a body-builder, at which point her body might morph into that of a man, a more muscular build. Another Black

woman told me that she did not think muscularity was at all considered a feminine attribute. One woman expressively talked about seeing her running friends outside of the sport and of having a “running side” and their more “girly sides”.

...and then we see them in their jeans, their heels and their hair up...“Oh, you clean up really nicely”!

And, most of the women talked about being “slightly muscular” with “some tone” as an acceptable amount of muscular build. Anything beyond that was deemed too much, too manly, too masculine, anti-feminine. Some said having a slight musculature was better than being fat and saggy. I heard many comments about having muscular legs, but when it came to arms, the women preferred not to have significant or visible bulk. The women said muscles were sexy, but only when there were toned.

Women talked about femininity in many different ways. One woman told me, femininity to her, meant being in control, in control of her body and having yourself covered [being in control]. A White mother of three talked about masculinity being less about body type and more about the competitive nature and accomplishments of “getting things done” [e.g. finishing a race or a task].

Another White runner spoke of “strength” and “power” in a woman’s running body. I especially like this description of the feminine body, as given by one 50-year old runner:

Oh. Powerful. Someone that has a 'can-do' attitude. Independent. Um, self-sacrificing as well but also has priorities, knows how to prioritize, you know what I mean. But, powerful comes to mind. It's the first thing like for me...

BODY (DIS)SATISFACTION

Many of the women spoke about not exactly being satisfied with their current running body but they were not necessarily striving for another. Many of the women said they tried to do

so when they were younger, in their twenties, but now, realized they were “stuck with the body they had” and “couldn’t change anything.” One woman said, “I got what I have to work with and I’m not, I’m never going to try to be what I think is an ideal running body because it’s not me.”

I was unsure how to approach the discussion of body because it tends to be an intimate and personal issue, particularly for woman. One of the first women I met with was very thin, petite and visibly very fit. She was sporting a race t-shirt and working on her laptop splattered with running stickers. When asked if she was satisfied with her current body, she answered a weak “yeah” and talked about accepting her body “as is” in a way that’s “not going to get any better than this.”

Initially, it seemed to make a difference in terms of how women responded to the questions regarding personal satisfaction with body type. Throughout the interviewing process, however, the major trend regarding body satisfaction was that most women were *not* satisfied with their body. A small percentage of the women, however, admitted satisfaction with their bodies.

The 70-year old Black woman I met with said this, in response to my question, “Are you satisfied with your current body type?”: “Absolutely. I have no qualms.” She portrayed a woman proud of her body and talked about how hard she worked for it, appreciative of the positive reinforcement she received from others regarding her firm shape [at her age]. The 50 year old White woman said this too:

...I’ve been freed from all of that, you know what I mean and I think being injured helped me get beyond that and also my age. If I was 20 years old and you were asking me this you’d be getting a whole different ballgame here but now, no. I love running because it allows me to eat like a horse (laughing).

How does age contribute to body satisfaction? Are older women more likely to express such satisfaction?

There were several women who indicated they were satisfied with their body, but wanted to change just one thing. One Black manager said she feels more feminine because of her body type, and “likes what she sees when she looks in the mirror.”

When we talked about the ideal running body, one of the common themes became the discussion around what the women “thought” this running body was prior to and upon early exposure to the sport and what they now believe the ideal running body to be. It was common for the women to talk about the ideal running body as being something other than the body they had. Many women had the tendency to contradict what they said in terms of body, their body and body satisfaction. Their words and actions often did not add up.

MOTHERHOOD & FEMININITY

One area of discussion that developed during my interviews with a couple of women was pregnancy - and the pregnant running body. Although I did not consider it during the development of my interview guide, I ought to have included a section on pregnancy – running while pregnancy, perceptions of pregnant running and responses of others, including family, and both runners and non-runners. Particularly when talking with women in their 30s, motherhood is a prevalent discussion.

One of the White women I met with, in her 30s with three children talked about running when pregnant. Although she does not mention any comments she received from others regarding her running through her pregnancies, she does talk about how she felt it made her pregnancies easier [on her body and the deliveries]. She tells me her story of running through her first pregnancy until she was about seven and a half months, and only stopped because she went into premature labor and developed an unrelated medical issue. She gained nine pounds

during this pregnancy and told me her doctor, also a runner, never showed any concern about her running through her pregnancy. During her second pregnancy, she ran 10-15 miles per week and, as with her first, believed running made both her labor and delivery faster, easier. She went into labor two weeks early and gained just 13 pounds with this pregnancy. She started running ten weeks after her delivery, four weeks longer than with her first child, but this was because she was now a mother of two children under 18-months and was breast-feeding. She said during this pregnancy she felt good enough to run the very week after having her child. During her third pregnancy, she did not run at all, she says this: “I did not run at all...I was “too busy” and gave up running altogether and figured all I had time for now was being a mom.” It wasn’t until her third child was five months old that she began running again, but things change. It then became necessary for her to run at 5am in the mornings and then napping with the babies during the day to compensate for the sacrifice of sleep for the sport. She has not stopped running since this time.

Another young White mother discloses the unwelcome disapproval she received while running during her pregnancy with her first and only child. I asked her about it.

People would give me some funny looks sometimes. 'Cause sometimes I run like main roads and would see people looking at me kind of funny but it was more like coworkers like “You're still running”? And then they'd make me, it was mostly older women, actually, that would do that to me, people typically people that don't know. I know my aunt, she really said some offensive things to me [such as] “Aren't you worried your baby is gonna choke? You're gonna choke your baby on your umbilical cord”? No, I'm not worried about that [her response to her aunt's comments]. “Thank you for being concerned”. [Another response.] My mom was really upset about it...about my running. She thought I ran too much.

She went on to talk about how even her doctors and the information she was researching regarding the weighing of benefits against the adverse effects of running while pregnant seemed to be outdated, both medically and socially. She and her husband are currently planning for their

next child. I asked if she would run through her subsequent pregnancies because she had received this negative commentary.

I: Based on those comments would you run through another pregnancy?

R: Oh yeah, I would totally run through another pregnancy. I was really disappointed when I had to stop ...

Another runner, 34-year old Black mother of two young boys, stopped running during her pregnancies. She looked at it as a “time off” [from running]. She did, however, begin running soon after her son was born and ran while breast-feeding. Although her mother-in-law did not directly confront her with her concerns, she felt certain she had “some things to say” about her running as a mother.

... ‘cause I think she’s probably old-school in terms of you know the phrase you surrender your life to have kids but that doesn’t mean you give up your life when you have kids, so you also have to consider yourself in that equation, so you can be a better mother and be healthier.

Although her mother-in-law is a primary care-provider for her family and had a negative opinion of her running, her husband was supportive. She said she felt that was the most important factor in her decision to continue running. She lives in an urban area and drives about 20-25 minutes to the park she runs with her friends and God-mother. By the time she arrives at the park, runs the 8-mile loop and makes the drive home, her body is in milk-production mode and she needs to feed her baby as soon as possible or pump if she might not make it back in time.

GENDER CONSTRAINTS

Because I have included only women in my study, I am focusing on the constraints and the effects of the constraints as experienced by women. While men may also experience limitations, I will not, for the sake of clarity and time, discuss it in this paper. Men are often the subject of many discussions in the literature on sports; men and men’s bodies are often the

standard by which women and their bodies are compared. For purposes of this paper, I solely discuss the limitations as experienced by the women I have interviewed.

During the interviews, I ask the runners how many miles per week they are running, how running makes them feel and how they feel when they cannot run. These questions lead to the inevitable question of time, asking the women if they are currently running as often as they would like. The women were overwhelmingly in agreement that they were not running as often as they would like. Nevertheless, six of the women agreed that they were currently running as often as they would like. Of this group of six women, one is retired, one has no children and one has an older child, a 16-year old daughter. The remaining three who tell me they're running enough are women with children. However, these women are managing their time in such a way that they are running in the early morning, "off-duty" hours. Many of the mothers are running in the dark and early morning hours before their families are awake and in need of their attention. I talk more about mothers who run in the mornings in the below section on guilt.

The remaining fourteen of the women quite adamantly explained that they are not running nearly as frequently as they would like and would undeniably like to be running more often. Three of the women explain they are not running as often because of a combination of both family and work obligations. One White mother of two children responds like this when I ask the question "Why not?"

My kids and my work. I have full custody of two kids and they're 6 and 8 so I can't get up and run in the morning and when I get home from work or put the kids to bed, which would be ideal times to run in my schedule, because I don't have anyone to watch my kids. We have homework, bed and all these things to do...

Another mom of three explained why her running took a backseat.

Because of the full-time job. And the kids. And the kids' extracurricular. It's just, you know, too much.

One Black mother of two says this in response to my question asking if she plans her running schedule around child care.

Oh, absolutely. I um, I am a morning [person] so I typically run about 5:00 a.m., 530 a.m. in the morning so that I am not interrupting anything, any of the relationships in the house. My husband, my children. And then on Saturdays, because they do have Saturday activities, I run early on Saturdays so I can be home and cook breakfast on Saturdays and do whatever I need to do with them.

GENDERED GUILT

Guilt is a theme that began to emerge during the interviewing process. It was not one of the questions in my interview guide; nor was it an expected theme. However, it began to develop from the women early on in our interviews. Some of the runners talked about guilt in a couple of different ways. For example, one 34-year old White ultramarathoner, mother of three children under age 12 spoke about guilt this way:

I work full-time and I have more of a guilt feeling and the whole time I'm out [running] I think about my kids and I want, I should be with them, you know I should be doing something. I'm gonna do this [with the kids] when I get back because I feel bad because I left.

She also spoke about feelings of guilt when not being able to run and participate in the sport. She appeared contradicted between her love for her children and her love for the sport.

Another White runner of a young baby also talked about contradictory feelings of guilt, both *for running* and *for not running*. She says this about when leaving him to go run:

'alls I could think about at the gym was the baby and hurrying and getting home.

A 34-year Black principal disagrees about these feelings of guilt. She says:

... my fulfillment comes from self-gratification and like this is my time for myself which I know everyone deserves and I know in the long run this is gonna help me live longer and be with my children and enjoy them.

She discloses that she thinks her mother-in-law thinks poorly about her [running], but reflects that this is her time to run alone and it is important. Although she spoke forcefully of the importance of running, an undertone of guilt persisted. Many of the other women, although they did not speak explicitly of feelings of guilt associated with familial constraints, talked about running in the mornings before their children were either awake or before they (and their partners) leave for school (work). Their schedules were clearly defined around their families.

Several of the women who have children, both Black and White, run in the mornings on the weekends so that they don't take time away from their families. Of the women with children, all but the retiree with grown children, have full-time jobs. One mother of two who averages 50-60 hours per week, working about ten hours per day, ran 10.5 miles before work the very morning of our phone interview. She, like many of the other running mothers, runs mornings to avoid taking time away from her family. She tells me about her husband, who is a stay-at-home parent, and admits to feeling cheated of time (when she "chooses" running over him). A 70-year old Black woman expressed to me that while she enjoys the training process, her husband dislikes it.

Well my husband is...he would want all the attention. So this attention that I have to spend on my pavement is being diverted from and um that's not something that he uh...he doesn't mind now because he's 75.

Another woman, a Black women who does not have children, talked about a boyfriend complaining when she would wake early to run, implying that she was taking time away from him or picking her sport over him. However, overall, the White women were more vocal about feelings of guilt experienced when running and leaving their children. Although, only four Black runners of the sample have children and one of the woman's children are grown; this comparable level of guilt may not apply.

THE EFFECTS OF GENDER CONSTRAINTS

The women that I met with have many obligations, oftentimes conflicting obligations, battling for time and attention. I wanted to understand how women felt when they were unable to run. One woman, when asked how she felt when she could not run, responded: “Real shitty.” Other responses: “I’m not a nice person that day [on a non-running day].”; “I feel um really kind of disappointed, disappointed in myself.” Yet another runner, 50-year old women, said she feels “antsy” when she cannot get a run in. I also heard words like “miserable” and “jealous” (when seeing others running along the roadside). Another conversation went dramatically as such:

I: And, when you can’t run, how do you feel?

R: Awful. Just awful, oh my God, I’m crying, I gotta get out of here, I gotta do something. I can’t take.

One woman told me her body would not allow her not to run. She put it like this:

Well, it's not a good feeling because the body is so used to doing the running that um you just have to do it, there's just no if's, and's or but's. The body demands for it to be out there running. It's just, I don't think it's up to me, the body says, “Okay, get your butt out there.”

One business owner told me she felt like something didn’t get done on a day that she wanted to run but was unable to run, she felt as though something didn’t get checked off her list.

Another runner tells me like this:

Sometimes if I, if I plan it and then it changes, sometimes I can get a little cooky about it, you know, my schedule has to be adjusted and I kind of have to rethink it and be like it's okay, you can run a different time or it's okay you can miss a day or you know.

One mother of two young children told me:

I feel restricted. I feel like...sometimes I give up, because I can't do what I know is gonna make me feel better. And, when I say give up, I mean like I just don't do anything. Like I'm gonna sit on the couch and watch Chelsea Lately [talk-show].

I had a conversation with one Black runner training for her first marathon. The conversation went like this:

I: You said that right now you are running as often as you would like, but if there's a day that you can't run, how does that make you feel?

R: Like if it's a day that I was scheduled to run and I can't run?

I: (Nodding.)

R: I think, uh, that would really bother me. And I would definitely find a make-up day because I can't, I can't just let those miles go by un-run. I mean, that would really bother me.

RACE WITHIN THE SPORT: "BLACK WOMEN DON'T RUN"

When I talk about my sample, I talk about race in terms of the women I am interviewing and also in terms of the numbers of both Black and White women marathoners the respondents know and/or run with. I began my interviews early on as a novice interviewer and stayed strict and rigid to my interviews guide, veering off only when and where my interviewees led me. As I began to become more comfortable and confident in the interviewing process, I expanded my probing. I began to ask questions like "Why do you think Black women don't run?". I asked these questions of the Black runners. Most of the White women divulged that they had not so much as considered race and did not know why they knew no Black runners nor ran with any. Some White women were beginning to question the Whiteness of their running circles and thought it odd not knowing or running with any Black women.

I was surprised that most Black runners knew (or none) Black women who ran. One Black woman said, "Like we'll go to a race and we'll be the only Black people there." I had a conversation with one Black runner who runs with a disproportionately White running group. Our conversation went like this:

I: Let me ask you this, as an African American women, why do you think there are 3 [Black runners] out of 50 of these runners?

R: (Laughing).

I: No, seriously.

R: Well...you know, I, maybe it's just the thought of running long distances 'cause I can't say that African American women don't participate in sports because that's not true. Um, but as far as the running aspect, I guess that's...well I guess that's long distance running, but you do see more African American women and men in shorter distances, sprints, things of that nature. Um, but as far as the long distance running, I guess that's not something that's huge in the African American community and I guess I'm not really sure why. I think probably maybe just because it's not popular in the community. Uh, or even in the schools maybe. Like my daughter, 16, she's in high school and she knows I run and she's supportive, you know. And I asked her if she wanted to start running and she said that she said "Well, Black people don't run".

I: Really?

R: And, as far as what she sees, that's the case. And, I guess, well, it's pretty much what I see as well. But exactly why, I don't know.

I had a similar conversation with another Black woman who runs with the same running group:

I: Um, I talked a little bit to [R's running partner] about this and we were talking about who makes up the running group that you run with and that they're predominantly White runners. Why do you think that is?

R: It's just something that Black women don't do. For various reasons. They don't wanna mess up their hair. I mean, that growing up, my best friend, her mom used to run. She used to do races and I used to think "Oh that's so weird, Black women don't run". Because like we can go out and run sprints but...

I: Not the distance?

R: Not the distances. Yeah.

I: And, because of the hair. Can you elaborate on that?

R: They don't wanna get their hair sweaty, you know they pay like \$85 to get your hair done every two weeks you're no gonna go out and get it all sweaty you're gonna keep it nice. A lot of people, the same reason why Black women don't really swim is they don't wanna mess up their hair. Which, you know, seems crazy but it's true.

I: So, even as a child, when your friend's mom was running, you thought that was odd?

R: Uh-huh. I thought it was very odd. I didn't know very many Black women that ran like that.

I: Okay. And, do you now as an adult? Know other Black women that run?

R: Not many, not many! I mean, in addition to [R's running partner] and I, I think there's two other women in the running group and that's about all I know.

In addition to the “*Black women don’t run*” comments, some of the other women also talked about problems with hair and sweat via participation in exercise and the sport. One 41-year old Black health facility manager said,

So, in my opinion, we’d rather have the weight than deal with the hair. And, I went out last night and I noticed that a lot of women are chubby but then they have all this hair but they don’t wanna put in the work to lose the weight but we wanna, we say we wanna lose the weight.

A couple of the women who run talk about wearing their hair natural, in a twist or short overall which allows more of an ease in their participation of the sport. They suggested that their more maintainable hair styles made their running lifestyles easier to sustain.

I asked one Black runner how her marathoning was perceived by other Black women (and men). She said,

I think that Black people are super surprised when they find out I run, they’re like “You run?” or exercise in general, in general is just a surprise so they’re like “Why do you do that?” and then they get excited though I think after they start having a conversation, they get excited like “Well maybe I can do that too!”, like “I never thought about that!”, “That’s cool that you’re doing that” and then on the same side some of them are like “I’m not doing all that, I’m not working out”, “That’s too much.”

During another interview, I began to uncover more insight, this time more about early influences, into why some women thought more Black women are not participating in the sport.

Our conversation went like this:

I: And who are you seeing when you’re running? Are there other athletes there? Are they Black or White?

R: There are not a lot of people who look like me, at all. Whether I’m on the street or whether I’m in the park, I’m in the minority for sure.

I: And, what’s your opinion on that, why do you think that is?

R: I don’t know, honestly, I don’t know. Um, I just, I don’t think a lot of people of color look at running long distance as an option and I don’t know. They just don’t. I think, even if I think about my influences of marathoning, one of the reasons I became

interested in [marathoning] is because I had a high school teacher who was a Black woman who I ran into one time and um I don't even think I was in, yeah, I was in college. I ran into her on the street and I was like "What are you doing?". I was like "Why are you sweating like that?". She's like "Oh I'm training for a marathon"... Okay, so now that I think about it, I think maybe the influences are not there like I found somebody who I admired, who looked like me, who ran a marathon and I said "Oh, I can do that". So yeah, that probably has a little bit to do with it.

I: Okay, yeah, that makes sense. I appreciate your thoughts on that. I don't have any other questions. Is there anything I didn't ask that you want to tell me?

R: ...As I look at my race schedule, one of the reasons I'm thinking about Seattle [marathon] is so that I can see more [Black] women that look like me. 'Cause usually I'm like one of a handful who are scattered, which is fine. But, it'd be nice to see more people that looked like me.

Yet another Black woman I interviewed responded like this when I asked why she thought Black women were missing from the sport:

...I think in the African American culture, unfortunately, I think we rely on food as something and food and eating is a, is something that is social. And, I think, in our culture, if you're bored... "Hey, let's go out to eat", if you, you know, get a promotion, "Okay, let's go out to it." Whenever we celebrate, it is around food. We don't think about getting out to exercise the way we think about planning our next meal. And, I don't know, I don't understand it, I don't know why. And, I look, when I look at people, especially my age or younger, I don't just look at African Americans, I look at everybody because I am like, yeah, I don't expect you to get out and run a marathon but obesity is huge, it's a huge epidemic and...things can be done, that should be done and for whatever reason, people are just ignoring it.

DISCUSSION

Sports, in general, are a gendered arena, one in which men hold the assumed superiority (Messner, 1988). Messner says, "It will be argued that women's movement into sports represents a genuine quest by women for equality, control of their own bodies, and self-definition, and as such it represents a challenge to the ideological basis for male domination (p. 198)." Messner goes on to say that while men in sports confirm masculinity, women's participation in sports, contradicts it. The women I interviewed are directly challenging this segregated and gendered notion. Many of these women have family and children obligations in

addition to career commitments. So, this becomes a balancing act of expected gendered duties and bodies.

As anticipated, the theme of health and fitness and weight control was prevalent throughout the interviews. But, the women also run for mental clarity and problem solving, both which were discussed under the pretense of the significance of the time and the freedom they experience on the road. Women, as well, run for reasons of goal achievement and for the challenge (of finishing the race). These motivations are consistent with findings in the literature. But that is where the similarities end. It became interesting to uncover the overlapping nature of the women's motivations as well as the evolution of these very motivators. The women do not run for singular or linear reasons but rather for many intertwined and complicated reasons. And while many women initially began running for reasons of health and fitness and weight control, these reasons have since shifted and their continued participation in the sport has less to do with these reasons. Many women talked about their primary motivator being that of the social component: they run for the social connectivity they experience in the sport. They run to feel connected to other women, to problem solve, to work through family, career and personal concerns: all during runs with other women. Many women told me that of the majority or near majority of their social networks are now comprised mainly of fellow running and marathoning women. Had I not conducted in-depth interviews and instead implemented the sole use of the MOMS survey, I may not have uncovered the significance of this social component.

The literature suggests that women are less likely than men to run for reasons of competition. And, the women in my study were no exception. The subject of competition (among others not herself) became a remarkable element because it was nearly completely absent from the conversations among the women. It became a non-factor and upon reflection I

began to question if it was distinctly and intentionally avoided altogether. In the case or two that women “confessed” to running for competitive reasons, they did so with shame and apology. One woman even disclosed shielding her young daughter from this “inappropriate” side of her.

In terms of motivations, among the women I have interviewed there were more similarities than differences between the Black and White runners. However, that being said, there were different challenges faced by the group of Black women. For example, safety and location were a challenge for some of the Black women who chose to either run great distances from the inner city, run in groups, or run with a gun. While the White women who run in the dark morning hours did talk of safety concerns, none disclosed the carrying of a handgun during their runs and none spoke of driving any distance to run in “safer” neighborhoods. One of the Black women interviewed told the story of being issued a ticket, a civil infraction, by the police for running in the street in the city. Aside from the stories these women tell, many of the Black women lacked a social network of other women runners. Does this inhibit the frequency by which they run? Do issues of safety and smaller social networks limit the number of Black women who marathon?

Interestingly, more limitations were experienced as an effect of motherhood than by race. Women, both Black and White, with partners and children struggle to find a balance between their familial obligations and their time spent on the road. The women are running pre-dawn as a necessary means to allow them to squeeze in their runs. The limitations and thus constraints are many, but what is of particular curiosity is the manner in which the women talk of them. With an air of casualness, the women hoist their familial responsibilities into the “family-first” category and any self-pleasure (i.e. running) into a distant second. Their strong obligations overpower their longing for the sport despite the many benefits the women associated with the

sport: feelings such as confidence, freedom, strength and spirituality. From the stories told by the women, it is as if it is understood that participation in the sport is secondary to their gendered duties. Most of the women in some way expressed a conflict stemming from the collision between their running and non-sporting lives. Even the women who did not speak explicitly of this limitation, exposed the contradictions in their actions as they negotiated their time and social engagements to make room for marathoning in their lives.

Regarding the MOMS results, the differences among the women by race were insignificant. And, because of the small size of the sample, it is difficult to generalize the results outside of my sample. Both White and Black women run for similar motivations according to the MOMS. Based on the MOMS results, both groups of women run first for health, fitness and weight control, second for psychological (including mental clarity and problem solving), third for goal achievement, and fourth, for social reasons. It should first be noted that the only difference between the groups of women, albeit a slight difference was that Black women rated health and fitness 15% higher than White women. There was one discrepancy between the MOMS results and the interviews and this is in reference to the ordering of importance of the motivations. The MOMS results indicated the social component to be the least important motivator, whereas throughout the dialogue of the interviews, women placed more value in the social component than that of goal achievement. This is an instance in which the MOMS may not accurately reflect the true nature of the motivations that I was able to extract during my interviews. Without the inclusion of the interviews, I most certainly would not have been able to gain access to the many layers of motivations these women experience.

Although we know that much of what is “acceptable” femininity tends to differ culturally and racially, there were little differences between the groups of women when it came to the

discussion of the body. The women spoke narrowly about masculinity, muscularity and femininity. Although they define femininity narrowly, they strongly identify as “feminine” athletes. They spoke solely about their muscularity in opposition or contrast to the social ideals of feminism. Neither group ventured beyond femininity as that of a slight musculature as the acceptable running body and the majority of the women continued to fight toward the “thin” and “fit” running body. The women’s discourse throughout our interviews consistently reified this notion. The women often spoke about their running bodies as though they were not cognizant of their words and meanings and certainly not their implications. Although I had hoped and even anticipated the women might embrace their muscularity and diversity in their running bodies, the overarching themes of empowerment, confidence, and strength were nonetheless prominent as we spoke of the body. This does not necessarily mean the women are fiercely challenging hegemonic masculinities. Rather, the women are beginning to do so; by controlling their bodies (in the sport), they are seeking an equality that otherwise may not be sought after nor achieved. Much like the heavier Clydesdale runners and the great distance runners, the ultramarathoners, these marathoning women are beginning to make initial strides toward challenging hegemony with each of their bodies, regardless of body shape and type.

As I reflect upon my early autoethnographic writings and observations, I am reminded of the initial intent of my project: to understand why women – both Black and White – marathon and to understand the dynamic and the meaning of the running body. The questions are important to me as a woman who marathons but also as a feminist scholar, framing gender, race and the body within the context of the sport I love. It is important to ask these questions because, as I stated early on, women are new participants in the sport and are fast increasing in numbers. It is important to explore these questions in terms of race. We cannot begin to

understand gender and the body through a White perspective only. Although my findings produced little difference between the groups of women, it is equally important to acknowledge race within the sport.

Despite my intentions, this study is not without its limitations. Due to financial as well as time constraints, I am restricted in the range and number of marathons I was able to participate in and study. This introduces a sampling bias as geography and time have limited the women I have access to. Utilizing snowball sampling as a means to gain access to the respondents also introduces a selection bias. I am neglecting women outside of the circle of women I had access to; the sample is far from random. My sample is transparently homogeneous by social class. Additionally, the small sample size does not allow me to make generalizations about my findings. The sample is non-exhaustive. Because I interviewed four of the women over the phone, I was unable to establish adequate rapport with some of the women. This became noticeable during the transcription process. I also was unable to denote body type of these women, other than the information they had provided to me. Similarly, two of the women did not return their self-administered surveys, thus resulting in missing data

It is my hope that my research helps to shape the direction of future and additional research in the arena of race and gender within the organization of the sport itself. Many leftover questions remain unanswered and many new questions become uncovered. Do the women who marathon, by running with their children, help to reduce the gendered divide of the sport? Or, via the many constraints they abide by, do they reinforce the divide? Do women who run during pregnancy further challenge the gendered and sexualized body? What are the perceptions, motivations and limitations of pregnant women who run? As more and more women decide to participate in the sport, will the idea of this normative running body dissipate? Do women

outside of the United States have different motivations and limitations? Why don't more Black women marathon and why does the sport to be dominated by White runners in the United States? Are there more Black women who run shorter distances and in a non-race environment? Is parental guilt experienced differently by men than by women? What changes as women participate in the sport over long periods of time? How do women in different age groups experience the sport? Do women gain power such as in the division of household labor by continuing to participate in the sport? How much more of a motivator for men is competition? The questions are increasingly provocative and remain open.

Marathoning has become a contagious social event in the lives of many of the women I have interviewed. It has become a social phenomenon, an obsession for many who dedicate their time running, training and racing. But there is more to the sport than running on race-day. This "more" includes careful calculations and sacrifices of time, sleep and diet. Women as a population have been marathoning for less than thirty years, many are fresh and new to the sport, and are making such sacrifices by managing the sport within their full lives along with their career and familial responsibilities. Many women, Black and White, some with family responsibilities, others with demanding careers, several with both, are running. By doing so, they are beginning to challenge (hegemonic) male dominance and demand an equality on and off the road. Women who marathon are beginning to question many cemented social expectations. Through their involvement in the sport, they are beginning to redefine the social standards of femininity.

Based on the significance and influence of the social component as a motivator, the number of women who run and marathon will continue to climb. In the process, new and seasoned generations of women will be thumping the streets and trails alike. Women have

created meaning in their lives as a result of marathoning. They carry an empowerment and critical awareness of their bodies, beyond the cultural expectations of the (running) body. Their lives, perceptions and experiences, and bodies are changing in the process.

APPENDIX A

Interview Guide

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. Feel free at any time to ask questions. Or, if you feel I haven't understood something you've said, please feel free to interrupt me. It's important that I understand exactly what you're saying and what you mean. If you don't understand a particular question, please let me know and I will do my best to explain it.

PART I: Interview Guide Schedule

Motivations: The first set of questions is about your motivations. Let's get started.

1. Why do you run?
 - a. Can you recall what initially motivated you to run?

2. Would you say that you feel compelled to run?
 - a. Why do you continue running?
 - b. Do you think you will continue to run? If so, how long?
 - c. Do you see yourself not running at any point?

3. Why do you run marathons specifically?

Body: The next set of questions concern the body, the female running body.

4. Do you think your body is similar to other female runners?
 - a. In what ways is it similar?
 - b. In what ways are you different?

5. Do you strive for a certain body type?
6. Do you think there is an ideal running body type?
7. What does it mean to be feminine? What does it mean to be masculine?
8. Are you satisfied with your current body type? Why or why not?
9. Do you have difficulty finding running clothing that fits your body type?
10. Have you ever been ignored by staff or a sales person at a running store? Why do you think the sales person ignored you?

Effects on Running Life: The next group of questions focus on the effects running has on your Running Life.

11. Do you identify as a runner? What does being a runner mean to you?
12. What do you think about when you run?
13. How do you feel after a run?

Effects on Non-Running Life: These next questions are regarding the effects running has on your life outside of running.

14. Do you run as often as you would like?
 - a. If not, what prevents you from running?
 - b. How do you feel when you cannot run?
15. How do women respond to your running lifestyle? And, how do men respond?

16. Do you feel men or women are more accepting of your running lifestyle?
17. How do people respond when you tell them you are a marathoner?
18. What effects has running had on your non-running life? Can you give me some examples?
19. Has there been a time in your non-running life when someone identified you as a runner because of your muscularity? How did this make you feel? Did you feel conflicted with your femininity?
20. How is your life different as a runner? Would you say that running has changed your life? If so, how?
21. Does running affect your career? Your social life? Your family? Please tell me how it does.
22. Are there any negative effects you experience from running/marathoning?

Running Demographics: The next group ask about demographics – specifically regarding you and running.

23. How old were you when you began running? How old were you when you began marathoning?
24. Do you run alone or with others?
 - If answered yes to #24, ask questions 25-26.
 - If answered no to #24, skip to question 27.

25. What do you talk about during your runs with other female runners? With other male runners?
26. The others you run with, who are they? Tell me about them.
27. How many miles a week are you currently running? Are you currently training for any particular upcoming marathon?
28. How many marathons have you ran? When was the last one you run? When is your next?
29. How many White runners do you know? Do you run with them?
30. How many African American runners do you know? Do you run with them?
31. How many bi- or multi-racial runners do you know? Do you run with them?

PART II: Self-Administered Demographic Questions

Please fill out the following information. The following questions are about you.

What is your age?

What is your occupation?

With what race (or races) do you identify?

What is your highest level of education?

What is your current marital status?

Do you have children? If yes, how many children do you have?

What are the ages of your children?

What is your sexual orientation?

Part III: **MOMS SCALE** (Ogles & Masters): Lastly, I'd like to ask you to look at the attached set of statements and rate then how applicable they are to how YOU feel about running.

Please rate each of the following items according to the scale below in terms of how important it is as a reason for why you run. A score of 1 would indicate that the item is "not a reason" for running; a score of 7 indicates that the item is a "very important reason" for running; and scores in-between represent relative degrees of each reason. Please circle the number the most accurately matches your response.

Not a						A Most	
Reason						Important	
Reason						Reason	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.To help control my weight.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.To compete with others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.To earn respect of peers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.To reduce my weight.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.To improve my running speed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.To earn the respect of people in general.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.To socialize with other runners.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. To improve my health.							

- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 9.To compete with myself.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 10.To become less anxious.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 11.To improve my self-esteem.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 12.To have something in common with other people.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 13.To add a sense of meaning to life.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 14.To prolong my life.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 15.To become less depressed.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 16.To meet people.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 17.To become more physically fit.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 18.To distract myself from daily worries.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 19.To make my family or friends proud of me.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 20.To make my life more purposeful.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 21.To look leaner.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 22.To try to run faster.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 23.To feel more confident about myself.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 24.To participate with my family or friends.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 25.To make myself feel whole.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 26.To reduce my chance of having a heart attack.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 27.To make my life more complete.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 28.To improve my mood.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 29.To improve my self-worth.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 30.To share a group identity with other runners.
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 31. It is a positive emotional experience.

- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
32.To feel proud of myself.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
33.To visit with friends.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
34.To feel a sense of achievement.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
35.To push myself beyond my current limits.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
36.To have time alone to sort things out.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
37.To stay in physical condition.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
38.To concentrate on my thoughts.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
39.To solve problems.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
40.To see how high I can place in races.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
41.To feel a sense of belonging in nature.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
42.To stay physically attractive.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
43.To get a faster time than my friends.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
44.To prevent illness.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
45.People look up to me.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
46.To see if I can beat a certain time.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
47.To blow off steam.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
48.Brings me recognition.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
49.To have time alone with the world.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
50.To get away from it all.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
51.To make my body perform better than before.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
52.To beat someone I've never beaten before.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
53.To feel mentally in control of my body.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
54.To get compliments from others.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

55.To feel at peace with the world.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

56.To feel like a winner.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

APPENDIX B

Breakdown of Motivation Categories

MOMS Instrument (Masters & Ogles): Categories of Motivations: 9 Scales within 4 Area

Scoring Instructions: *Average the items for each of the following nine scales. No items are reverse scored.*

I. Physical Health Motives

General Health Orientation – MOMS Questions: 8, 14, 17, 26, 37, 44

- to improve my health, to prolong my life, to become more physically fit, to reduce my chance of having a heart attack, to stay in physical condition

Weight Concern – MOMS Questions: 1, 4, 21, 42

- to look leaner, to help control my weight, to reduce my weight

II. Social Motives

Affiliation - MOMS Questions: 7, 12, 16, 24, 30, 33

- to socialize with other runners, to meet people, to visit with friends, to share a group identity with runners

Recognition- MOMS Questions: 3, 6, 19, 45, 48, 54

- to earn respect of peers, people look up to me, brings me recognition, to make my family or friends proud of me

III. Achievement Motives

Competition- MOMS Questions: 2, 40, 43, 52

- to compete with others, to see how high I can place, to get a faster time than my friends, to beat someone I've never beaten before

Personal Goal Achievement- MOMS Questions: 5, 9, 22, 35, 46, 51

- to improve my running speed, to compete with myself, to push myself, to beat a certain time, to try to run faster

IV. Psychological Motives

Psychological Coping- MOMS Questions: 10, 15, 18, 28, 36, 38, 39, 47, 50

- to become less anxious, to distract myself from daily worries, to improve my mood, to concentrate on my thoughts, to solve problems

Self-Esteem- MOMS Questions: 11, 23, 29, 31, 32, 34, 53, 56

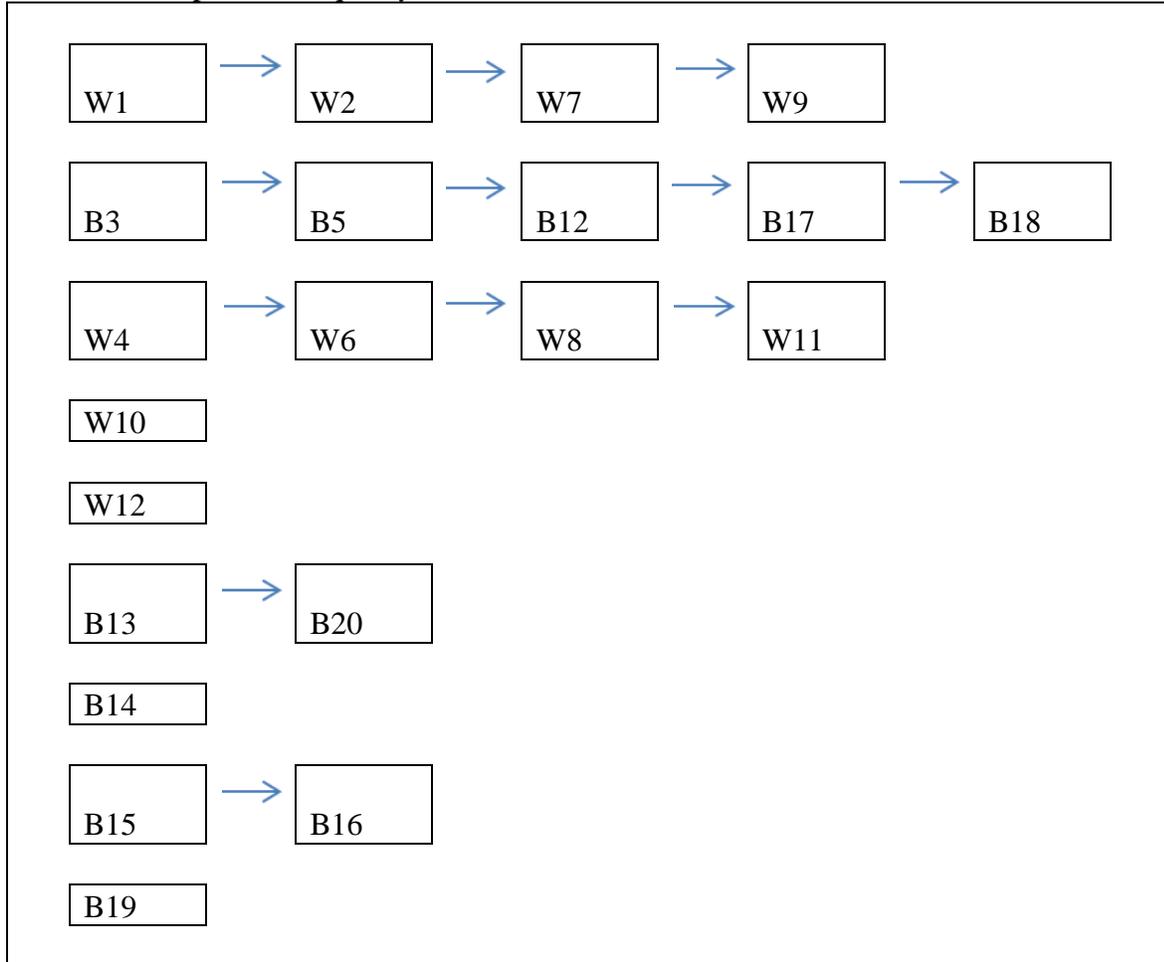
- to improve my self-esteem, to feel more confident, to feel proud of myself, to feel a sense of achievement, to feel mentally in control of my body

Life Meaning- MOMS Questions: 13, 20, 25, 27, 41, 49, 55

- to make my life more purposeful, to make myself feel whole, to feel a sense of belonging with nature, to feel at peace with the world

APPENDIX C

Snowball Sample Technique by Race



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ABSTRACT**BLACK & WHITE RUNNING BODIES:
MASCULINITY, MUSCULARITY & FEMININITY**

by

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Women as a population have been marathoning for less than thirty years, many are fresh and new to the sport, and are making such sacrifices by squeezing the sport into their full lives along with their career and familiar responsibilities. Many women, Black and White, some with family responsibilities, others with demanding careers, several with both, are running. By doing so, they are challenging male dominance and demand an equality on and off the road. Women have created meaning in their lives as a result of marathoning. Their lives, perceptions and experiences, and bodies have changed in the process.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

I am a Sociology student at Wayne State University, Detroit, MI. My fields of specialization are gender, sociology of sport, quantitative methodology and sociology of the body. I currently teach ESL to expatriates and am an avid marathoner.