As the game of hockey has evolved, so naturally has the cultural and social environment surrounding it. Out of the multiple outstanding sessions at “Putting It On Ice III: The 2012 Hockey Conference – Constructing the Hockey Family: Home, Community, Bureaucracy and Marketplace” comes this multifaceted collection of essays that rightfully bring into clear focus current issues confronting hockey (Sections I: Hockey and the Community; II: Film, Literature and Hockey; and, III: Women and the Hockey Family) while properly balancing them in a way that honors the rich history of the game (Sections IV: Hockey in the Formative Years and V: Constructing Contemporary Hockey Life).

Much is to be gained by the interdisciplinary perspectives reflected in this collection. For example, Fred Mason’s “‘Pure Hockey,’ Community and ‘Canada’s Game’ in Documentary Film” had me re-think the role I have played in the making of various documentary film projects as well as how stories are conveyed and later interpreted whether it be done in literary or cinematic form. In a similar vein, as a 2006 transplant to the Buffalo area, Michael Kimaid’s “‘Buffalo is Hockey Heaven’: The Buffalo Sabres and a City in Flux” rang true and close to home for me. It is thus that I am confident that there is something for everyone in this collection. It easily provides an inspiration for further research or a foundation for a previously unexplored area of research. In addition, it offers a formal context for discussing topics of concern that are relevant to today’s ever expanding global hockey family that extends well beyond the ice rinks of the North American continent and those that are now prevalent across Europe, Asia, and beyond to include the wider realms of social, racial and gender integration, not to mention the doctor’s office, the family home front, and newspaper headlines where concussion injuries and
the possibility of successful rehabilitation from this type of injury and the anticipated return to play are the main subject at hand.

If the success of the previous five hockey conferences that began in Halifax in 2001 and that continued with the most recent one in 2012 is any indication of what the future holds for serious hockey scholarship and studies, we have much to look forward to at the seventh hockey conference to be held at the University of Western Ontario and then later the eighth possibly in Sweden where we can continue to debate such thematic ideas as how the game of hockey continues to evolve or what the impact of the recent NHL lockout that resulted in an abbreviated 2012-2013 season will have on the game, including but not limited to the recruitment of players and fan loyalty, and to consider whether or not today’s athletes are as gifted and talented as those from the early days of the game. To keep the discussion alive and thriving until world renown as well as new budding hockey scholars reconvene at the University of Western Ontario, it is most fortunate that the Proceedings volume from “Putting It On Ice III: The 2012 Hockey Conference – Constructing the Hockey Family: Home, Community, Bureaucracy and Marketplace” has free on-line access for all. The range of variety of authorial styles, from forcefully argued to poignantly humorous yet equally salient, establishes a forum in which all are able to participate and thus whereby contribute to the on-going discussion that pays homage to those who laid the foundation for the game as we know it today and that brings us all together as a hockey family.