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### The Way Consumers View Male and Female Athletes

Kayla M. Kent  
*St. John Fisher College*

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## The Way Consumers View Male and Female Athletes

### Abstract

American society has created separate and unequal gender roles for men and women. It logically follows that male and female athletes also receive unequal treatment. This inequity has been shown in the quantity of media coverage each receives as well as the consumption patterns of the general public. Using a survey method, this study sought to uncover responses of consumers when presented with four different types of images of athletes. Results indicated that for image conditions of athletic competence and sexy, male and female respondents showed distinct behavioral differences. Adjective descriptors of athlete images also revealed significant insights into how the general public attends to variations in athlete portrayal. These findings matter because they have direct implications for those who manage, market, and promote women's sports.

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The Way Consumers View Male and Female Athletes

Kayla M. Kent

St. John Fisher College

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### **Abstract**

American society has created separate and unequal gender roles for men and women. It logically follows that male and female athletes also receive unequal treatment. This inequity has been shown in the quantity of media coverage each receives as well as the consumption patterns of the general public. Using a survey method, this study sought to uncover responses of consumers when presented with four different types of images of athletes. Results indicated that for image conditions of athletic competence and sexy, male and female respondents showed distinct behavioral differences. Adjective descriptors of athlete images also revealed significant insights into how the general public attends to variations in athlete portrayal. These findings matter because they have direct implications for those who manage, market, and promote women's sports.

### **The Way Consumers View Male and Female Athletes**

1998 marked the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Women's Rights Movement, which is a movement by women to achieve full civil rights in America (Eisenberg & Ruthsdotter, 1998). The National American Women's Suffrage Association first came together to obtain the right to vote for women. After this women's rights began to increase more while looking into workforce issues for women, job discrimination, and contraception. With the inclusion of Title IX and the Equal Rights Amendment in 1972 equal access was further strengthened in educational systems and the workforce (Eisenberg & Ruthsdotter, 1998). While none of these laws were brought to congress on the basis of sport, they have all been contributing to the rise of female equal rights in sport. The rise in girls and women's participation in athletics has gone from one in twenty-seven girls playing sports, to an astounding number of one in every three girls participate in athletics (Eisenberg & Ruthsdotter, 1998). Yet, still the playing field for males and females isn't equal. Researchers know that when it comes to the coverage of athletes, males have always received a greater amount of coverage than females. What is less clear is why this is. This research will aim to discover the way consumers interpret different images of male and female athletes.

This research is significant because equal treatment between male and female athletes should be at its peak because of the Women's Rights Movement and Title IX but current research has shown that this is not the case (Bernstein, 2002). It becomes a violation of the law when men and women are treated differently in areas of society that they are protected under with laws such as Title IX and the Women's Rights Movement yet it still happens. The even broader view is the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) which was passed into law in 1972 after fifty years of it lingering through Congress. The ERA simply stated that equality of rights under

the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex (Eisenberg & Ruthsdotter, 1998). Women are athletes just as much as men, both men and women have worked hard to achieve great goals in their lives and play professional sports, therefore the coverage of each should be equal.

All the three different laws listed above share great significance to this research. Each of them has set the standard for what should be followed when it comes to equal treatment. While all of these laws are in place, the coverage and treatment still does not seem to be portrayed as fair.

## **Literature Review**

### **Understanding gender and gender roles**

Historically speaking women were to be housewives not out playing sports and getting dirty (Gottesman, 1994). It was believed that they should only be raising families, cooking meals, and cleaning around the house. Gottesman also states that many of the people that are in charge now a day of newspapers and televised events didn't grow up with females being athletes and if they did it was only as a cheerleader not a "masculine" sport (1994). She also believes that once a new wave of people come into these jobs that things will change because it was different for that age group while growing up. What really needs to change though is the term women's sports she says, all athletics whether males or females should be termed as sports (Gottesman, 1994). This is very true and something as small as grouping them in categories such as male and female sports can hurt athletes just as much as saying that women belong in the kitchen and males belong outside.

Before we are even born though there is a preconceived notion on how we should act, that is based on our gender. Boys grow up being told that they have masculine qualities and a

female has feminine qualities. Hargreaves argues that individuals understand their gender because of the way that they have been brought up. Girls should be dressed in pink and play with toys that have to do with being a care taker while boys should be dressed in blues and participate in sports and play outside (Hargreaves, 1994). So, does the way we view females begin when you are just a child being taught that if you are a boy you should play with action toys and girls should play with dolls and kitchen sets? Young boys grow up with television bombarding them with heroic and confident images of other boys playing sports and being in control. This teaches them at such a young age that they are expected to be tough and encouraged to play sports, while girls are not receiving this message at all. They are being taught that their place is in the house taking care of the family (Lopiano, n.d.). Most sports now should be considered gender neutral and should not be classified as masculine sports. There are few to no sports that are only played by men in the U.S. today, but when female athletes play these traditionally masculine sports they aren't receiving the same coverage as a male playing the same sport.

The statement "throwing like a girl", also contributes to viewing females as not as good as males (Ross & Shinenew, 2008). This is interpreted by many as not having the ability to throw proficiently, which would mean that the ability of female athletes is at a much lower level than that of males. Therefore girls who do have the ability to throw would be viewed as possessing male like qualities. So even though participation is at an all-time high right now for female athletes, it still isn't fair treatment between men and women, with the power still with males. When you are a great female athlete you will be called masculine, you can't put a feminine name to things that males do without them thinking you are telling them they are acting like a girl. So why a woman can't just be a great athlete that worked extremely hard to get where she is and receives the exact same coverage as a male athlete is unfair (Ross & Shinenew, 2008). This

reinforces Hargreaves (1994) perspective about how individuals are brought up learning about masculinity and femininity.

### **Visual Perceptions of Gender**

People make first impressions on a daily basis, whether it is at school, work or when you're driving by someone in a car. Many first impressions last a lifetime, and can be carried on in our everyday lives when meeting other new people that may "look" or "act" the same (Friedman & Riggio, 1998). Just one glance of someone can give you an instantaneous evaluation, and these evaluations can influence a lot of which we do in our lives such who we may sit next to, hire, or what gender of athletes we would rather watch on television. When taking into account first impressions we need to start include not just the visual aspect but also the dynamic and emotional aspects as well (Friedman & Riggio, 1998).

Joseph Harry presents another idea about why male and female athletes may be viewed differently that is because of perceptions regarding sexuality (1995). People can contain many perceptions of sexuality on a person based on their own personal beliefs which can also happen when it comes to athletes and if they are gay or not. If they are, this could possibly have a negative effect on the way that some consumers view them. A test was done to see the association with sport ideology and attitudes toward women with 304 college students both males and female to find out how they would link themselves to this ideology. The results came back that sports ideology which consists of a set of moral beliefs that sport confers important benefits on both society and the individual (its "character building" qualities) is closely linked to anti-homosexual attitudes but only among males (Harry, 1995).

Marie Hardin, an Associate Director for Research at the College of Communication at Penn State, is a leading scholar in the area of the impressions of male and female athletes.

During her 2009 study that examined the relationship between media use, sports participation and gender role socialization with the typing of sports as masculine or feminine, some interesting information was discovered (Hardin & Greer, 2009). To conduct this study they sent out a web survey to a sample of 320 students that were enrolled in a web-based class. After collecting the data and analyzing it overall they found that traditional gender-typing was present (Hardin & Greer, 2009). Gender typing is when individuals perceive what sport a male or female should participate in. In an attempt to explain their findings Hardin and Greer stated that a reason for female athletes receiving a significant amount of less coverage is because that the most “spectator sports” are those that are considered masculine, such as football. Yet, since the passage of Title IX in 1972 there has been several professional women’s football leagues operated in the United States since the year 2000 (Hardin & Greer, 2009).

An assessment was done to view the perceptions people give of female athletes and the influences that gender, type of sport, and rater athletic identity (athlete vs. non-athlete) have on them (Hoiness & Weathington, 2008). Results show that females participating in sports that were viewed as masculine were less likeable than those competing in feminine sports. Male participants rated female athletes competing in masculine sports as less respectable than those competing in feminine sports, while females rated female athletes participating in masculine sports as more respectable.

In terms of participation and equality, women have made tremendous strides in the past few decades. Today it is commonplace to see females participating in all levels of the workforce, the political arena, and athletics. However, while it is generally accepted in many cultures that women can partake in facets of life that were once considered male oriented, there are still many stigmas that surround females that chose to do so. This is especially obvious in the area of sports (Hoiness & Weathington, 2008, p.2).

This quote provides great significance to the research because it explains that yes women have made great strides in many areas of life because of the Women's Rights Movement, the Equal Rights Amendment and Title IX, yet still especially in the area of sport equal rights of women are lacking.

Males generally are viewed as athletes, while females generally become categorized as athletes or attractive athletes (Knight & Giuliano, 2001). This affects female athletes in many ways such as placement in newspapers, magazines, coverage on television, and even possibly the amount that fans will attend their games. If a female athlete is pretty you will not see her portrayed as an athlete you will see her portrayed as a sex symbol in a magazine such as the swimsuit edition for Sports Illustrated. Yes, she will be getting more coverage but not as the athlete that she really is (Knight & Giuliano, 2001). Therefore, while there may be expanding coverage of female athletes, they are more often seen as attractive individuals rather than those with great athletic abilities.

### **Media Coverage of Males and Females**

It is well documented that women are receiving different coverage than their male counterparts in television, newspapers, and magazines. Multiple researchers have explored this phenomena and discovered that the coverage varies based on quantity, placement of articles, and content of the articles. A recent study by Tuggle, showed that two national highlights programs, CNN's Sports Tonight and ESPN's Sports Center devoted only 5% of their airtime to women's athletics (Adams, 2004). Conversely stated, 95% of their airtime was devoted to men. This is clearly a great discrepancy. In an attempt to justify the findings academic reviewers claimed that if two professional leagues (the WNBA and WUSA) were in season at the time then

the findings would have been different. But when Tuggle went on to look at other media coverage, he found the same results on multiple internet websites (Adams, 2004).

It is recognized that a certain amount of selections in coverage is based on time constraints, so media managers will base decisions of the perceived level of public interest and it of course is assumed that there is a greater interest in men's competition (Adams, 2004). There have been studies done that show that more men than women watch sports, however 50% or more of women in various industrialized countries report that they watch sports regularly and women comprise nearly 40% of the viewers for Major League Baseball, National Basketball Association, and the National Football League (Gantz & Wenner, 1991). These statistics are of great importance to show that women enjoy sports almost just as much as men, so when watching televised events women should be able to watch their gender as well as the other gender.

The commentary that accompanies sporting events on television affects the viewers. If the commentary is negative, or marginalizes particular athletes, then these opinions may be internalized by viewers. There was a study done that had people listen to a commentator that was discriminatory against females and results proved that this did have an effect on the dependant variable (Parker & Fink, 2008). If a commentator is discriminatory against an athlete, this could completely change the way you are viewing the event that you are watching. Quite possibly, putting a negative thought in your head as well.

Another study explored relationships between the gender of the author and placement of articles in various newspapers. After a content analysis was done of 889 stories they found that male athletes and subjects received more mentions and their stories were more prominently placed. Results also indicated that the presence of females is a significant factor of females

appearing in the news story. (Armstrong, 2004). While Title IX may have given women more equality on the playing field, the coverage disparity remains off the field with the media world or televisions, internet websites, newspapers, magazines and etc.

It also has been found that in some newspapers females did have a great deal of coverage (Kian, 2002). Yet when being covered they were being compared to male athletes, and they were not just praised for their athleticism. This study compared two different newspapers and found that the articles written about female athletes were more often comparing them to males, rather than just giving them praise for their athleticism (Kian, 2002). Kian (2002) states that the one problem that could occur from viewing magazines and newspapers. This is when the study is taking place if researchers are doing a study on how often female athletes are being covered during for example March Madness, of course you will find that males are being covered more. To get a true statistic for this type of a study it would need to be studied year round to make sure that there is no bias (Kian, 2002).

Another form of media coverage is the websites of colleges and how often they are covering their student athletes. The NCAA however, has specific rules that must be followed by colleges and universities when it comes to the coverage of male and female athletes. When it comes to the college websites for NCAA member schools, it was found that males and females both had written articles that showed coverage of their athletic events and athletes but when it came to advertisements and multimedia, females had little to no coverage (Cooper, 2009). Not advertising equal amounts for male and female athletic teams or male and female athletes in general is unfair to the athletes, making one superior to the other.

## **Factors That Impact Media Coverage**

There are many different factors that may have an impact on media coverage of male and female athletes. The first being higher prices with higher value. Many people equate a higher price with a higher value to a team, since male athletes/sport teams make more money, they quite possibly are receiving more coverage. Males without a doubt are automatically receiving more attention than females just because of the amount of money it costs to attend a male sporting event compared to that of a female sporting event (Hebl, & Giuliano, 2004). This seems like it would be an easy fix just changing the prices of all events to be of the same value, but unfortunately this probably won't be done because of all of the other factors that have been found that are affecting the coverage as well.

Psychologists have done research that can demonstrate that there are physical aspects that draw us to different types of people, in this case males and females. Our opinion of someone can lead us to also begin to base an opinion on the specific athlete (Zebrowitz & Collins, 1997). Zebrowitz & Collins (1997) found that females who are generally pretty and more concerned about image are assumed to be poor athletes. They also found that individuals were more likely to read or watch attractive female athletes compared to unattractive female athletes. Another study was conducted where sport psychologists were asked to decide which female athletes they would like to work with from only viewing an image of them (Lovell & Parker, 2011). The results showed that these psychologists themselves made their decision of who they would like to work with based on body mass index and their general look (Lovell & Parker, 2011). Not only do sport fans choose to view the image of an athlete based on their own personal preference so do sport psychologists themselves, giving many females athletes a disadvantage if they are not the perfect weight or flash a perfect smile (Lovell & Parker, 2011).

Another factor that contributes to the lesser amount of coverage of female athletes is the glass ceiling in sport (Hadin & Shain, 2005). Women have integrated in almost all fields of work but there is still a lack in the coverage of sports whether it is broadcasting, reporting, and others. The lack of coverage that females are given could be due to this. With this reason alone pushing females out of the career because they don't agree with the negative attention that has brought to this topic of coverage of athletes and not seeing any change (Hardin & Shain, 2005). If women were to start to gain strength in numbers in positions such as broadcasting and reporting, then this issue may be able to be reduced. Female athletes will then get the coverage they deserve, and be viewed as equals to male athletes. This is of great significance because under the Women's Rights Movement and the ERA it is very important to see women being represented not only on the athletic field but in the world as an equal to men.

Title IX is an act that banned sexual discrimination in education and athletics in schools, it was brought into congress in 1972. This law states that no person in the U.S. shall, on the basis of sex be excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal aid" (Yuracko, 2002). Title IX has increased the growth in women athletics, giving them a better opportunity to not be discriminated against. While Title IX has helped women, there are still many things that remain unfair to females. Such as: males generally will receive more funding for their sports, women don't get nearly the same amount of recruitment advances as men do, and less than half of women's coaching jobs are given to females (Yuracko, 2002).

A study that was conducted looked at 1,228 issues of Sport Illustrated magazines, which represented 3 time spans: before Title IX, during Title IX, and after Title IX. The amount and type of coverage was also considered. It was found that women in athletic versus non-athletic

(swimsuit model) roles had increased significantly. However, they gave more coverage to women athletes in gender appropriate sports such as tennis and swimming, compared to rugby, soccer and basketball. This shows that in a way coverage had increased for women, but still not in a fair manner because the only coverage being given was that in what people termed to be sex appropriate sports (Kane, 1988)..

Coverage disparity is based on quantity, placement of articles and the content of articles. The previous research done shows that the media coverage of athletes is unequal, what is yet to be discovered is why this is. In a previous study that was done by Kane and Maxwell (2011) which also looked at the way consumers viewed athletes stated that there were two different problems: 1) female athletes, compared with their male counterparts are significantly underrepresented in terms of amount of coverage and 2) sportswomen are routinely presented in ways that emphasize their femininity and heterosexuality rather than their athletic competence. In this study they looked only at female athletes, and after completing a mixed method approach they challenged the notion that when it comes to female athletes “sex sells” rather than as highly competent, dedicated athletes (Kane & Maxwell, 2011).

The purpose of the present study is to explore how members of the general public are consuming images of male and female athletes and to see if there is significance between buying or attending behaviors. This could be helpful to the way sport marketers or managers are marketing these athletes. The research questions that will be focused on are:

1. Are there any differences in the buying behaviors?
  - Gender of consumers
  - Type of images seen
  - Gender of the image seen

2. Are there any differences in attending behaviors?
  - Gender of consumers
  - Type of images seen
  - Gender of the image seen
3. What adjectives have been used to describe athlete images?

## **Method**

### **Participants**

The participants in this study were undergraduate students at St. John Fisher College. Both males and females were included to help determine if different genders view these images differently from each other. It was helpful to use this population because they are a small sample of the people that these athletes are being marketed to on a daily basis. The demographics that took the survey showed a good representation of St. John Fisher College students. A total of sixty-nine males and one hundred and forty three females with a total of 218 fully completed surveys. Even though that is more females than males it represented our campus well. The years of the participants were all also represented with almost an equal split between freshman, sophomore, juniors, and seniors who responded.

### **Variables**

Sport media scholars have identified specific categories of representation found in print and broadcast journalism, as well as in marketing campaigns that promote women's sports or individual athletes (Kane, 2008). This research however used images of both male and female athletes to determine if there is significance between the two. These categories represent a continuum of images ranging from athletic competence to those that feature sportswomen as objects of sexual desire. The following categories of images were used:

- Athletic Competence ( athlete, portrayed in uniform, on court, in action) (Kane, M.J., & Maxwell, 2011)
- Ambivalence (some indication of athleticism is present, but the primary image features a non-athletic, off the court portrayal) (Kane, M.J., & Maxwell, 2011)
- Hyper-Heterosexual (image of well known athlete explicitly linked to traditional heterosexual role such as mother, father, husband, or wife) (Kane, M.J., & Maxwell, 2011)
- “Sexy” (image of “hot” athlete, just short of pornography) (Kane, M.J., & Maxwell, 2011)

### **Data Collection Instrument**

The survey was made using Qualtrics. It asked the participants’ gender and current year in college. The main part of the survey was the different images that they will need to give a brief description of upon first glance of the images. A brief description is important because of what a consumer thinks when they first view an athlete can give insight into how they feel about that athlete. They then were asked two measureable questions:

- 1) If the picture was on the cover of a magazine, how likely would you be to buy it?
- 2) If the athlete was having an appearance at a local event, how likely would you be to attend?

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

A cover letter explaining the purpose of this survey and asking for their participation will be sent out by email with the survey attached to all undergraduate students at St. John Fisher College (see Appendix A). The survey link was open to the undergraduate students at Fisher to

take for approximately three weeks. After three weeks, the survey was then closed because there was sufficient information already found that would help to analyze my research.

Upon completion of the survey they clicked 'submit' and their results were automatically sent to the account that was created through Qualtrics. Any survey that had incomplete data was ultimately thrown out and not used for analysis of the data. The data for the quantitative answers was then all put into an excel worksheet where it was organized with its particular athlete so that it was ready to do analysis on. Data was now able to easily be run through the statistics software to see what types of commonalities if any could be discovered.

The qualitative adjectives were also organized into excel spreadsheets; this helped for all adjectives to be easily available for the analysis. For the analysis of the adjectives, the top three words used were pulled out and compared for each athlete. This helped to show what people thought about these athletes upon first glance.

To finally complete the data analysis, a mixed-method approach was used difference in groups (chi-squared) as well as qualitative analysis of the images. Chi- squared analysis was useful because it is the most appropriate analysis for categorical related information and also when looking at the frequencies of the images. Comparing for example male participants viewing male athletes in uniform and what was said or female participants viewing male athletes out of uniform and what they had said.

## **Results**

When looking at all of the images, they were grouped into their categories (ambivalence, hyper-heterosexual, competence, sexy) instead of looking at them just as the male picture and the female picture. This was done to find out if there was any significance between the two genders and how they were being portrayed. The research was looking to find if there was any

significance between the photos, gender of photos, gender of person viewing the photo, and also the buying/attending behaviors that the consumer may have.

The significance of buying behaviors of the sexy photo was a  $\chi^2$  value of .928, and the significance of attending behaviors was a  $\chi^2$  value of .729. When it came to the significance of the competence photo, the buying and attending behaviors was at a  $\chi^2$  value of .001 (see Appendix D). The hyper heterosexual and ambivalence photos didn't show any significance between the buying or attending through genders that would occur while running this analysis (see Appendix D). A clear and consistent pattern emerged with the athletic competence photos and the sexy photos when running the chi-squared analysis. These two sets of photos, sexy and competence showed significance between buying and attending and the genders of the photos, and gender of the consumers.

The qualitative data that was gathered also showed some rather insightful information with the descriptive that were given about the different images of the athletes. When looking at the different photos the most reoccurring words were used to begin analysis. The hyper heterosexual photo of Nomar Garciaparra and Mia Hamm used words such as cute, love/romance, soccer/baseball, and athletes. The Ambivalence photo of Derek Jeter used baseball (most frequently used adjective), Yankee, shortstop, Jeter, and an occasional hot/handsome, and for Alex Morgan words such as pretty, soccer, and athlete were used. It is important to note that for her photo as much as people said that she is pretty they also talked about her athleticism. For Athletic Competence photos, the words most commonly used for Kobe Bryant were pretty general being basketball, athletic, and talent, and for Venus Williams strong, intense, powerful, and manly were the most common. The Sexy photo of David Beckham used words such as hot/sexy, soccer, and David Beckham, and for Jennie Finch they said sexy, swimsuit model,

boobs, and pretty/hot. I think that it is also important to know that for the photo of Jennie Finch only 8 people out of 90 that saw this photo said anything that had to do with softball or athletics.

### **Discussion**

To address each research question that was asked first the question of: Are there any differences in the buying behaviors? This showed for the competence and sexy photos that there was no significance between males and females and whether they would buy something that this athlete was portrayed on. For the hyper-heterosexual and ambivalence photos there was significance between males and females and whether they would buy. Meaning that there was no real difference between genders and whether they would buy or not.

The next question asked was: Are there any difference in attending behaviors? This also showed for the competence and sexy photos that there was no significance between males and females and whether they would attend a free event where this athlete would be in attendance. The research shows for the hyper-heterosexual and ambivalence photos that there was significance between genders and their attendance rates. Yet again for these two types of photos, it means that there wasn't a different between genders and whether they would attend the free event.

The last research question asked was: What adjectives have been used to describe athlete images? This aspect of the research was extremely beneficial to my findings. The adjectives that were found proved that the notion of unfair portrayal of athletes was true. These adjectives showed that the way consumers are viewing these athletes aren't looking at them just as the great athletes that they are.

### **Implications**

There are a couple of factors that could possibly skew the results of this research. When compiling this survey questions on personal preference on what the consumers favorite sport may be were never asked, so when it came time to look at the photo they may not buy or attend because they have no desire in that particular sport. Also upon sending out my survey the ambivalence photo of Derek Jeter was accidentally sent out to each and every consumer, therefore when looking at the significance between the two photos he had a greater number more respondents than that of Alex Morgan. To improve any further research that could be done on the prior findings, expanding the age range of the demographic that was surveyed and gain input from older people that are out of college with jobs could all be useful to the results. This would have an effect on the buying aspect of the research especially because they may have money to be spending on things like magazines, newspaper, or other sources of media.

### **Future Directions in Research**

### **Conclusion**

The results found show a connection between media coverage and the way that athletes are viewed in images. By reviewing the results from the chi-squared and qualitative analyses it demonstrates that the media isn't portraying these athletes in ways that is going to get the consumers to respond positively by buying or attending something that has to do with the athletes. In general, the media expects that showing these athletes in their "sexy" poses is going to get the consumers to buy or attend (Hoiness & Weathington, 2008). The chi-squared analysis however shows that there is significance between buying, attending, and gender of the photos. This means that it doesn't matter if they are shown this way they still aren't going to get consumers to respond positively to it.

It also is extremely beneficial for those who manage and market these athletes to know that the descriptor words that consumers give to athletes aren't portraying them in an equal way. An athlete should be portrayed as an athlete no matter how he or she is shown in an image, and the current research results show that especially for women they aren't referred to as an athlete especially if the image is sexy or if it is showing strong athletic competence. On the other hand though the male no matter how he is shown he is viewed more times than not by using the term athlete.

This investigation of research, though limited, challenges and disrupts a commonly held yet largely unexamined narrative that sexualizing female athlete's increases interest in and supports their athletic endeavors. The information that has been found and is being found by other scholarly authors needs to be used to educate those who create these images and then post them in newspaper ads, media guides, magazines, and etc. With the hope of all sport managers and marketers learning about the most recent findings that show that the portrayal is unequal, not fair, and not producing positive responses hopefully the coverage, and portrayal will soon become equal for both male and female athletes.

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## **Appendix A**

### **Cover Email to Population**

Dear St. John Fisher Student,

Good Afternoon,

My name is Kayla Kent and I am a senior Sport Management major. I am currently completing my senior thesis by conducting a study that examines the way consumers view male and female athletes. The linked survey below will examine the different reactions that you have to certain images of athletes. As a member of the St. John Fisher community, your completion will be of great importance in my research. This survey is completely anonymous and will take about 10 minutes.

There are no known physical or psychological risks associated with completing the survey. You may refuse to answer any questions and may withdraw from completing the survey at any time.

By completing the survey, you consent to participate. No personally identifiable information will be associated with your responses in any published and reported results of this study.

Feel free to contact either myself at [kmk01188@sjfc.edu](mailto:kmk01188@sjfc.edu) or my supervising instructor, Dr.

Emily Dane at [edane@sjfc.edu](mailto:edane@sjfc.edu) if you have any questions.

It would be greatly appreciated if you would complete the survey by Friday March 16, 2012.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Below is a link to the survey.

Sincerely,  
Kayla Kent  
St. John Fisher College  
Sport Management

Dr. Emily Dane  
St. John Fish College  
Professor



## **Appendix C**

### Survey Demographic Questions

1. Please indicate your gender

Male or Female

2. What is your year in school?

Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior

**Appendix D****Ambivalence**

	<u>Male Athlete Photo</u>		<u>Female Athlete Photo</u>	
	Male View	Female View	Male View	Female View
<b>Would you Buy?</b>				
Not likely	27	10	70	27
Depends	15	10	24	19
Definitely	1	4	1	1
<b>Would you Attend</b>				
Not likely	12	38	9	20
Depends	18	41	7	20
Definitely	14	14	8	7

Note. Numbers indicate frequency in each category

\*\*\*p < .001

**Hyper Heterosexual**

	Male View	Female View
<b>Would you Buy?</b>		
Not likely	47	55
Depends	21	83
Definitely	1	4
<b>Would you Attend</b>		
Not likely	15	42
Depends	35	75
Definitely	19	25

Note. Number indicate frequency in each category

\*\*\*p < .001

**Sexy**Male Athlete Photo\*\*\*Female Athlete Photo\*\*\*

	Male View	Female View	Male View	Female View
<b>Would you Buy?</b>				
Not likely	23	19	7	52
Depends	3	20	12	12
Definitely	2	13	7	1
<b>Would you Attend</b>				
Not likely	11	11	5	46
Depends	11	17	13	15
Definitely	6	24	8	4

Note. Numbers indicate frequency in each category

\*\*\* $p < .001$

<b>Competence</b>	<u>Male Athlete Photo***</u>		<u>Female Athlete Photo***</u>	
	Male View	Female View	Male View	Female View
<b>Would you Buy?</b>				
Not likely	9	48	18	30
Depends	21	15	9	21
Definitely	2	1	1	6
<b>Would you Attend</b>				
Not likely	3	21	7	15
Depends	7	26	19	29
Definitely	22	17	2	14

Note. Numbers indicate frequency in each category

\*\*\* $p < .001$