Women's and Men's Intercollegiate Basketball Media Coverage on ESPN.com:

A Mixed Methods Analysis of a Complete Season

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to benchmark quantitative and qualitative media coverage of women's and men's collegiate basketball on the Internet, while simultaneously supporting or rejecting the theory of hegemonic masculinity in the contemporary media channel. Ultimately, the researcher studied whether patterns of under-representation and marginalization of female athletes observed in traditional media exist in new media, specifically the Internet.

Feature photographs and headline articles on the women's and men's college basketball home pages within ESPN.com were collected during the 2006-07 NCAA intercollegiate basketball season. A triangulation mixed methods design was used, as quantitative content analysis was used to quantify the number of new feature photographs and headline articles and analyze the foci of the feature photographs (e.g., coach, player, etc.) and how this person(s) is portrayed (i.e., in/out of uniform, on/off the court, in action/posed, etc.) and qualitative content analysis was employed to describe prevalent themes in the feature photographs and headline articles.

In conclusion, the findings of equal photograph impressions regardless of the sex of the athlete, more overall article impressions on the women's basketball home page, women's and men's basketball players equally likely to be presented in uniform and on the court, women's basketball players more likely to be shown in action, and more women's basketball photographs portraying True Athleticism compared favorably to men's basketball and challenges male hegemony in sport. However, male hegemony in sport was reinforced by the findings that men's basketball received more new feature photographs and headline articles, more game reporting articles, and more articles

focused on such topics as "Coach is King," "Athlete Health," and "Rule Breakers" compared to women's basketball. In addition, articles on women's basketball disproportionately focused on tangential topics represented by the article themes, Syndicated Lists and Professional Leagues, were over-represented in women's basketball articles.

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CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

The Rise of Women's Sport

The passage of Title IX, landmark legislation passed in 1972 affording females

equal opportunities in higher education, has given rise to record high female sport

participation and intercollegiate teams for women (Acosta & Carpenter, 2008). Sport

participation by females continues to increase 36 years later as female athletes in high

school and college are participating in higher numbers than ever before (Acosta &

Carpenter, 2008; NFHS, 2008). Throughout all NCAA divisions, women's basketball is

consistently ranked as the women's sport most often offered with 98.8% of all schools

sponsoring a team (Acosta & Carpenter, 2008). This increase in participation has led to

multiple flourishing women's professional sport associations such as the Women's

Tennis Association (WTA), Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA), and Women's

National Basketball Association (WNBA). Similar to participation increases, interest in

attending women's sporting events has increased, with women's collegiate basketball

experiencing the most public support as attendance increased 500% between the 1982-83

and the 2006-07 seasons (NCAA, 2006). Despite the parallel increases in female sport

participation and number of spectators at women's sporting events, media coverage of

women's sport has failed to keep pace (Bishop, 2003; Eastman & Billings, 2000;

Maxwell, 2006.)

Power of Mass Media

Mass media have the potential to shape, change, and re-enforce values and attitudes suggesting its power extends beyond simple transmission of information (Birrell & McDonald, 2000; Fink & Kensicki, 2002; Kane, 1998; Sabo & Jansen, 1998; Wenner, 1998). By portraying the dominant images, mass media depict life in our society (Creedon, 1998). Nearly every person in first-world countries is directly or indirectly influenced by words and images presented by mass media (Coakley, 2007; Creedon, 1994a). While mass media may not be able to tell people how to think, they definitely tell individuals what issues are important to think about (Birrell & Theberge, 1994a; Kane, 1998; Ianotta & Kane, 2002). Traditional forms of mass media devote large amounts of column space and air time to the coverage of sports, communicating the importance of sport within our society. Indeed, society connects with sport through mass media.

Sports are social phenomena whose meaning exceed scores and performance statistics (Kane, 2007). Sport is an important part of cultures and societies, serving as integral parts of individual, city, and regional identities. For example, Detroit is known as "Hockeytown USA" and the state of Indiana is identified with basketball. Unifying countries during the Olympics and other worldwide events such as the Tour de France and soccer's World Cup (Coakley, 2007), sport transcends cultures and languages. At the intersection of mass media and sport, as deeply embedded as they are within our society, where within this hierarchal framework does women's sport reside?

Sport Media Research

The two overarching themes prevalent in sport media research concerning women's sport—under-representation and trivialization—indicate women's sport resides

in a position of subordination (e.g., Bishop, 2003; Eastman & Billings, 2000; Fink & Kensicki, 2002; Kane, 1998; Kane, 2007; Messner, Duncan, & Cooky, 2003). In nearly every comparative study, men receive more overall media coverage than women at all competitive levels of sport (e.g., Eastman & Billings, 2000; Vincent, 2003; Wann, Schrader, Allison, & McGeorge, 1998). Furthermore, these results hold true regardless of the media channel (spanning from newspapers to the Internet) or unit of analysis (i.e., headlines, column inches, positioning, photographs, etc.) (Bishop, 2003; Cunningham, 2000; Eastman & Billings, 2000; Kane & Buysse, 2005; Pedersen, 2002; Sagas, Cunningham, Wigley, & Ashley, 2000).

Marginalization of female athletes is not limited to disparaging quantities of coverage as it also manifests itself in the type of coverage women's sport receives. Male athletes receive a particularly high percentage of coverage in sports that are thought to emphasize traditional masculine qualities such as strength, speed, and endurance (Daddario, 1997; Kane & Lenskyj, 1998). For example, men are portrayed significantly more often participating in basketball, weightlifting, and ice hockey compared to women (Duncan, Messner, & Williams, 1990; Coakley, 2007). In similar stereotypical fashion, female athletes are presented more often as participants within individual sports emphasizing more traditional feminine qualities, such as grace, balance, and beauty (Kane & Lenskyj, 1998; Vincent, 2003). Sports considered feminine in nature involve no physical contact with the opposition (Weiller & Higgs, 1999) and are sports in which women receive a higher percentage of coverage, and in some instances the majority of coverage. These sports include gymnastics, figure skating, swimming, and tennis (Elueze & Jones, 1998; Urquhart & Crossman, 1999). As a result, media coverage of women's

sports considered more feminine receive far more media attention compared to coverage of women competing in sports constructed as more masculine, such as rugby and softball (Fink & Kensicki, 2002; Vincent, Imwold, Masemann, & Johnson, 2002). In addition, accomplishments of female athletes are often compared to accomplishments of male athletes using essentialist remarks that ultimately trivialize females' skills (Halbert & Latimer, 1994).

Hegemonic Masculinity, Sport Media, and Sport

Under-representation and marginalization of female athletes in the media produces and reproduces symbolic annihilation, creating an illusion that females are nonexistent in the sporting world, and subordinates female athletes (Kane & Greendorfer, 1994) which ultimately perpetuates male hegemony. Male hegemony in sport and society asserts males are privileged in relation to females; nonetheless, this opposition is complex and ever-changing, not simply binary (Hargreaves, 1994). Many authors have argued that sport helped create and now helps uphold a masculine hegemonic order in society where men occupy positions of power and masculinity is the standard and femininity is "less than" (e.g., Dworkin & Messner, 2002; Sabo & Jansen, 1992;). Historically, sport was associated with males and masculinity (Kane, 2007) and, despite an increasing number of women participating in sport throughout the world. Schell and Rodriguez (2000) contend sport remains a mostly male domain. Similar to the institution of sport, mass media assist in maintaining sport as a masculine hegemonic domain (Duncan & Messner, 1998; Harris & Clayton, 2002; Prinen, 1997). The historical under-representation and marginalization of female athletes in traditional mass media profoundly influences how society views women and women's sport independent of and

in comparison to men and male athletes. Just as women's sports participation has increased since the passage of Title IX in 1972, the number of media channels distributing sports information has also increased. In the past, traditional media (television, newspapers, radio, magazines, etc.) primarily reported on sporting events. Since the Internet became publicly available in the mid-1990s and technology has become more advanced and mobile (wireless Internet, smart phones, etc.), sports news is increasingly being consumed electronically primarily through the reading of sports content online. The question is this: Given the growth or evolution of sports coverage into new media, is the masculine hegemonic order reproduced or challenged in new media, specifically on ESPN.com?

Women's Basketball Challenging Hegemonic Masculinity

Perhaps exemplifying an increasingly visible exception to the previous historical account, women's college basketball in the United States has emerged as a popular women's sport receiving major media coverage despite being a more masculine sport. Over the years, basketball was a sport considered too masculine for women to play (Baroffio-Bora & Banet-Weiser, 2006; Rader, 2004). It is viewed as one of the most aggressive games played by women at high levels of competitive sport (Baroffio-Bora & Banet-Weiser, 2006). However, perhaps surprisingly, the women's sport most successfully consistently attracting fans in the masses is basketball. In 1997, the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) was formed with eight teams participating in the inaugural season and has since expanded to the current number of 14 teams. The 2006 league attendance average was 7,480 (Maxwell, 2006) and increasingly more sponsors are committing to multiple year sponsorships agreements (Discovery,

Craisins) confirming the viability of the league. Although the WNBA has enjoyed much support from the American public, National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I women's basketball has enjoyed the most consistent and increasing levels of fan support. According to NCAA statistics (2008), in 1982 across all divisions 1,926,989 people attended women's basketball; however, between 1982 and the 2006-07 attendance increased by over 500% as a record-number 10,878,322 fans passed through arena gates to watch women's basketball (NCAA, 2008). A testament to the growing popularity of the sport, the NCAA Division I women's basketball Final Four has garnered an advance ticket sell-out for 15 consecutive years including most recently the 2008 Final Four in Tampa drawing over 21,000 fans (NCAA, 2008; Adelson, 2008). Interest can also be measured using the media. During the 2008 women's NCAA championship game and the entire tournament, television ratings were up 30 percent compared to the previous year ("TV ratings increase," 2008). The women's college basketball national championship game between Connecticut and Tennessee in 2004 remains the college basketball game— men's or women's—with the highest Nielsen national television rating ever shown on a cable channel (Reynolds, 2004). An estimated 3.8 million American households tuned in to watch Connecticut win the title (Reynolds, 2004).

Statistics indicate the rule and expectation norms of the gendered institution of sport are shifting as an increasing number of women participate and fans attend their competitions. Interestingly, 35 years of sport media scholarship documenting traditional media are not following suit as women's sport remains under-represented and marginalized thus maintaining male hegemony. The domains of sport and media are under constant struggle, never static, and ever-evolving (Birrell & Theberge, 1994a;

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Glenn, 1999; Ridgeway & Smith-Lovin, 1999), therefore continuous benchmarking studies are needed to track women's participation in sport and representation in the media.

As influential forms of mass media communications morph from regional newspapers and magazines to global channels such as satellite television and the Internet, research must keep pace with informational technologies and their potentially unique influences on society. In the past, traditional media were limited by number of pages supported by revenues from advertisers and time allotments for television programs; however, new media such as the Internet have seemingly limitless amounts of space. The increase in space potentially increases the likelihood of women's sport being covered by the media. As the Western World's dependence on the Internet for information and entertainment swells, awareness of the representation of women's sport in new media is imperative. Traditional media has historically underrepresented and marginalized female athletes thus reproducing male hegemony. As the Internet becomes even more interwoven into society's daily lives and their primary information resource, it is important to understand if new media will represent the increase in women's sports participation and challenge male hegemony or simply reproduce male hegemony similar to the coverage of women's sports in traditional media over the last 35 years. Despite the pervasiveness of sport and the Internet in contemporary society, few studies have combined the bodies of literature associated with each institution to produce new knowledge. Of the seven studies analyzing the Web and representation of female athletes, private media coverage (e.g., sport organization Web sites, university Web sites, etc.), public media coverage (e.g., publicly owned media organizations such as ESPN,

CBS, etc.) for a short duration of time, or media coverage of a special event (e.g., Olympics) were reviewed (Bissel & Holt, 2005; Cunningham, 2003; Cunningham & Sagas, 2002; Sagas, Cunningham, Wigley, & Ashley, 2000; Jones, 2004, 2006; Kachgal, 2001). More specifically, a gap in the academic literature exists in that published research quantitatively or qualitatively analyzing media coverage of women's and men's collegiate basketball on the Internet over a full season is nonexistent.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to benchmark quantitative and qualitative media coverage of women's and men's collegiate basketball on the Internet, while simultaneously supporting or rejecting the theory of hegemonic masculinity in the contemporary media channel. Ultimately, the researcher studied whether patterns of under-representation and marginalization of female athletes reproducing male hegemony observed in traditional media exist in new media, specifically the Internet. This overarching purpose was accomplished in three ways. First, the study provides a descriptive account of the quantity of new feature photographs and headline news articles presented on ESPN.com during the NCAA Division I women's and men's basketball seasons. For this study the term "new" will be operationally defined as a feature photograph or headline news article published for the first time during the study (N=159 days). For example, a photograph or headline news article is "new" when posted on a Monday; however, if this photograph or headline news article remains posted online the following day, Tuesday, the unit of analysis is no longer "new" and is now labeled as "repeat." No published academic studies have examined online media coverage of women's and men's collegiate basketball for a portion of the season yet this study

includes data for a complete season. Instead, the majority of published studies comparing media coverage of women's and men's college basketball have primarily examined television broadcasts and print coverage in newspapers and magazines, (e.g., Adams & Tuggle, 2004; Pedersen, 2003; Salwen & Wood, 1994).

Secondly, this research utilizes categories developed to analyze photographs in traditional media (Buysse, 1992; Kane & Buysse, 2005) to analyze photographs featured on the Internet, specifically photographs presented on women's and men's collegiate basketball Web sites within ESPN.com. Previous researchers compared the quantities of photographs portraying female athletes compared to male athletes in newspapers and magazines consistently resulting in the underrepresentation of female athletes (e.g., Bishop, 2003; Hardin, Chance, Dodd, & Hardin, 2002; Pedersen, 2002). The lone exception to these findings are presented in a study by Capranica, Minganti, Billat, Hanghoj, Piacentini, Cumps, and Meeusen (2005) analyzing newspaper coverage of the 2000 Summer Olympic Games in Europe.

Researchers have also compared the type of photographic coverage given to female athletes versus male athletes in print media. Consistently, results indicate female athletes are highlighted for their physical attractiveness compared to their male counterparts being recognized for their athletic competence (Kane & Buysse, 2005; Kane, 2007; Pedersen, 2003). Thus, the current study utilized categories initially established by Buysse (1992), in/out of uniform, on/off the court, and active/passive position, and extends the medium of analysis from traditional print media to the world of online sport media.

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Lastly, this study provides an account of themes presented in headline news articles in the online media content for women's and men's collegiate basketball on ESPN.com. While studies concerning television broadcast commentary of women's and men's college basketball exist and repeatedly indicate the prevalence of gender-specific stereotypes of both male and female athletes (Billings, Halone, & Denham, 2002; Bruce, 1998; Eastman & Billings, 2001; Messner, Duncan, & Wachs, 2001; Tuggle, Huffman, & Rosengard, 2002), studies examining online content themes concerning female and male collegiate basketball players are nonexistent. In addition, the only studies examining online sport media content span a much shorter time frame and pertain to the Olympic games and collegiate softball and baseball coverage on a university Web site, the latter being private media. The current study provides data that reinforces gender-specific stereotype descriptors in print publications' coverage of women's and men's college basketball.

Conceptual Framework

Drawing principally from Hegemony theory (Gramsci, 1971), a content analysis of feature photographs and headline news articles during the 2006-2007 NCAA Division I women's and men's basketball seasons was conducted on the women's and men's basketball home pages on ESPN.com, the most popular online sport news site. Historically men have been constructed as the standard in sport prompting their domination of the sports arena (Kane, 2007), and directly leading to men's sports and male athletes being over-represented in sport media (Hardin, 2005). This longstanding pattern of inequity can be examined through the conceptual lens of hegemonic masculinity (Pedersen, 2002). Hegemonic masculinity is the subordination of women to

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men by placing emphasis and value on masculinity, thereby maintaining male power and control (Birrell & Theberge, 1994; Connell, 1987). In her classic article on gender and sport in 1988, Birrell identified four themes, still cited in many scholarly research 20 years later, associated with hegemonic masculinity, sport, and sport media: (a) masculine ideologies and power produced through sport; (b) media assisting in legitimating false commonsense knowledge concerning female athletes; (c) physicality, sexuality, and body ideologies; and (d) the ever-present resistance of women to dominant notions of sport and the body (McDonald, 2006). Hegemonic masculinity is relevant to the current study because as long as the male body and men's sports are valued more compared to the female body and women's sport the disparate media coverage will continue. The over-representation of men's sport in the media will continue to inform society that men's sport is more important than women's sport and males are naturally superior athletes compared to female athletes (Kane, 1998). The subtle acceptance by women that the natural order of sport is men's sport as the sporting standard and then complacently remaining in this subordinate position supports the theory of hegemony.

The conceptual framework of hegemony was employed in the current study to analyze the featured photographs and headline news articles on ESPN.com. Hegemonic masculinity has consistently been represented in traditional media coverage. The current study explored whether the pattern of hegemonic masculinity also pervades sport media on the Internet. With the understanding that sport is a hegemonic social institution that "…naturalizes men's power and privilege over women" (Pedersen, 2002, p. 304) the research questions were formed and a lens of hegemonic masculinity was used during the examination of the results.

Significance and Implications of the Study

Benchmarking Media Coverage in New Media

As influential forms of mass media communications morph from regional newspapers and magazines to global channels such as satellite television and the Web, research must keep pace with informational technologies and their potentially unique influences on society. The primary significance of this study is the findings will serve as a benchmark for an examination of Internet coverage of women's collegiate basketball. It is well documented that female athletes are under-represented in traditional forms of media; however, as society transitions from consuming traditional media to receiving information via the Internet it is important to track what information is being disseminated and whether historical sport media coverage patterns of traditional media are reproduced on the Internet. This is the first known study analyzing Internet coverage of women's basketball and men's basketball throughout an entire season via a public media source, ESPN.com.

Answering the Call for More Qualitative Research

Quantitative differences on the coverage of women's sports versus men's sports are attributed to external factors such as managerial decisions, traditions, long-established work routines, and the perceived interests of media consumers (Hardin, 2005). However, the aforementioned reasons could not validate any qualitative differences that emerge in what feature photographs and headline news article themes are deemed newsworthy, thus published to cover women's and men's collegiate basketball. Indeed, we do not know if any differences exist, since no known researchers have analyzed the feature photographs and headline news articles covering women's and men's collegiate basketball on the

Internet. Indeed, gendered commentary by television broadcasters covering the NCAA women's and men's basketball tournaments has been studied (Billings et al., 2002) as well as the pervasiveness of gendered language spanning many sports and media channels such as newspapers (Christopher, Janning, & McConnell, 2002; Pederson, 2003; Vincent, Imwold, Maseman, & Johnson, 2002) and a variety of sports programming on television, from the commentary during live competition (Billings et al., 2002; Messner, Duncan, & Jensen, 1996) to nightly sports news/highlight shows (Eastman & Billings, 2000) and sport radio talk shows (Nylund, 2004). However, a dearth of research qualitatively examining online media coverage exists.

Qualitative methods are the best means for comprehending the true meanings behind texts (Patton, 2002); this study will contribute to the current deficient body of qualitative research in the burgeoning academic field of sport management (Olafson, 1990; Slack, 1996). In a content analysis of all research articles published in the *Journal of Sport Management* from its first issue in January of 1987 until October 2004, Quarterman, Jackson, Yoo, Koo, Pruegger, and Han (2006) found less than 8% of all research articles employed qualitative methods.

Lack of Online Sport Media Studies

Little research, quantitative or qualitative, has been published concerning sports coverage via the Internet. The existing research, produced exclusively by American scholars, has focused on university-sponsored Web sites (Sagas, Cunningham, Wigley, & Ashley, 2000) or Internet coverage of the Olympic Games by private media outlets such as CBS SportsLine (Bissel & Holt, 2005; Jones, 2004, 2006), or it has examined private media outlets over a short time frame (Tachgal, 2001).

Understanding Female Athlete Representation in a Wider Context

In their 2005 article titled, "Rupture: Promoting critical and innovative approaches to the study of sport management," John Amis and Michael Silk challenged sport management scholars to, "understand sport management in its wider political, economic, and ideological context and be concerned with exposing patterns of inequality and intervening in local communities" (p. 358). While it is easy for sport management scholars interested in media representation of female athletes to become disheartened by over 20 years of unchanging results of underrepresentation and marginalization, sport media scholars of the 21st century must continue to document media coverage as new media channels are created. Rebuttals in defense of disparate media coverage of women's and men's sports have historically been grounded in the economics of limited print media space and television or radio programming time and lack of interest in women's sports (Hardin, 2005). However, as the world increasingly becomes one inexpensively connected and collaborative world by way of the World Wide Web and Internet (Friedman, 2006) and spectators continue to flood the arenas hosting women's sporting events (NCAA, 2008), the aforementioned rebuttals will not hold the same explanatory power. The significance of this study abounds in its potential to filter barriers relevant to traditional media from the possible reasons offered for disparate coverage of women's and men's sports online, potentially revealing the power of hegemonic masculinity in the institutions of sport and media.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This literature review will begin with broad descriptions of Hegemony Theory

and hegemonic masculinity and gradually narrow with an account of hegemonic

masculinity in sport and the relationship many Western scholars contend exists between

hegemonic masculinity and media coverage and representation of female athletes. Next,

the role of sport media, followed by key quantitative and qualitative research on sport

media coverage related to gender in photographs and text/commentary in newspapers,

magazines, and television will be discussed. Finally, the literature review will conclude

providing a summary of the few research studies analyzing sport media on the Internet.

Hegemony Theory

Italian revolutionary Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) conceptualized the theory of

hegemony to describe the dominance of one social class over other classes (Gramsci,

1971). After forming an Italian Communist Party, Gramsci was imprisoned by Italian

fascist dictator Benito Mussolini and spent the remainder of his life incarcerated (Bocock,

1986). However, many of his diary entries and writings from prison led to countless

feminist and Marxist scholars framing their explanations of power between groups in

society using the Gramscian notion of hegemony (Bocock, 1986).

The foundation of hegemony is created and maintained through the construction

of political, ideological, and cultural norms aligning members from the dominant group

(Hardin, Dodd, & Chance, 2005a). Hegemony "embodies a sense of culture as a way of

life imbued with systems of meanings and values which are actively created by

individuals and groups in different social settings, such as families, schools, the media,

leisure contexts and sports" (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 22). Interestingly, hegemony is not achieved or maintained by force as consent is given by the class being ruled to the ruling social or economic class (Gramsci, 1971; Pedersen, 2000). Often the ruling class maintains hegemonic power through a variety of means such as the use of political parties, as well as assistance from educational institutions, religious groups and, most pertinent to this study, the mass media (Gramsci, 1971). Alternative ideologies or oppositional forces continue to challenge hegemony (Hardin, Lynn, & Walsdorf, 2005b; Lewis, 1992) resulting in hegemony constantly being negotiated, never static (Lewis, 1992). An example of hegemony in sport is the dominant position of power held by the sport of football in the hierarchy of sports and in the media. In the United States, "football's mythology and symbolism are probably meaningful and salient on a number of ideological levels: Patriotism, militarism, violence, and meritocracy are all dominant themes" (Messner, 1994, p.70). Symbolically, football links males across race, age, and educational background. Only men are given access to participation on the gridiron thus aligning males as the dominant group participating and creating societal and gender norms where females are rendered supportive, e.g., as cheerleaders (Messner, 1994). Females challenge hegemony when they play football (e.g., Women's Professional Football League), and donning the armor of football padding initiates negotiations of the norms associated with who is allowed to play and who is relegated to cheering.

Although the dominated classes subtly challenge the power structure, ultimately an acceptance by the masses that the control of the ruling class is inevitable maintains Gramsci's notion of hegemony (Pedersen, 2000). For example, females challenge hegemony by participating in sports that are typically reserved for males (e.g., football,

ice hockey); however, by being satisfied with whatever opportunities for participation females are given and often accepting inferior facilities, fewer resources, and less media coverage, women maintain their position of inferiority in the realm of sport. The sheer repetition of privileging males and subordinating females reinforces the power structure of hegemony (Artz & Murphy, 2000).

Hegemonic Masculinity

Perhaps the most well-known and greatest contributing researcher of masculinities, Robert Connell, formulated a widely-accepted formulation of hegemonic masculinity as "the global subordination of women to men that provides an essential basis for differentiation" (1987, p.183). Connell contends that multiple masculinities and femininities exist, forming a gendered hierarchy of structured power relations (Connell, 1987, 1995, 2002). The dominant form of masculinity among men is hegemonic; however, a hegemonic form of femininity is nonexistent (Connell, 1987). This hegemonic masculinity firmly supplants all other masculinities and femininities, thus the interplay between the subordinated forms of masculinity and femininity form the ever-changing dynamics of the gender social order (Connell, 1987, 1995). Hegemonic masculinity and "social structures, presented as natural, help the powerful (able-bodied White men and their primary institutions) but disadvantage others (women and racial minorities)" (Hardin, Dodd, & Lauffer, 2006, p. 431). This dominant form of masculinity thereby becomes the standard by which everything is measured, since traits associated with this form have been constructed as the most desired by society (Duncan, 1990; Hardin et al., 2005b; Hargreaves, 1994; Vincent, 2004). This social ascendancy of men is "achieved in a play of social forces that extends beyond contests of brute power into the organization

of private life and cultural processes…embedded in religious doctrine and practice, mass media content, wage structures, the design of housing, welfare/taxation policies and so forth" (Connell, 1987, p.184). Notions of hegemonic masculinity are constantly challenged, but rarely significantly altered without the consent of men because most men benefit from the subordination of women (Connell, 1987, 1995; Hardin, Lynn, Walsdorf, & Hardin, 2002). Hierarchal formations of masculinity vary across cultures but are always evident in institutions where men hold power over women and strive to maintain that power (Pedersen, 2000). Similar to the dominant, position of superiority males have ascended to throughout most organizational social orders, the subordination of women in also maintained in the institution of sport.

<div align="center">Hegemonic Masculinity and Sport</div>

Sport has been defined as a male preserve, long associated with men and masculinity in nearly every society in the world (Coakley, 2007; Kane, 1998). Sport is a social institution constructed by rules, normative beliefs, and expectations that govern it thus influencing the behaviors of participants, coaches and spectators. Elueze and Jones (1998) concluded, "Sport is a powerful institution through which male hegemony is constructed and reconstructed" (p. 48). The male athlete body and men's sports have been the standard for "true athlete" and "true sports." Thus, the idealized sporting body is socially constructed as male, muscular, and aggressive (Hargreaves, 1994); therefore, all sport participants' bodies are compared to this standard. Using the idealized male athlete body as the evaluation mode, while simultaneously representing masculinity, creates a challenging dichotomy between female athlete bodies and femininity norms (Hargreaves, 1994).

Women's increased presence in the male domain of sport has been met with resistance. Female participation in sport challenges the gender ideology that positions women as "naturally" inferior to men, privileging males and subordinating females (Coakley, 2007). Resistance to females in sport is manifested in the following ways: (a) socially constructed differences between female and male athletes establishing males as the universal norm and females as the marginalized "other" (Kane, 2007); (b) creating hierarchal differences between women's and men's sports (e.g., gender marking women's sporting events; Billings, Halone, & Denham, 2002; Hallmark & Armstrong, 1999); and (c) males holding overwhelming percentages of powerful sport administration positions (Acosta & Carpenter, 2006; Hardin & Shain, 2005a; Hardin & Shain, 2005b). The gendered nature of sport as an institution reproduces male hegemony by valuing male sporting experiences more than female sporting experience and ultimately influences mass media to perpetuate male hegemony in sport.

Hegemonic masculinity is maintained in sport by creating and perpetuating power through differences between female and male athletes. Accentuation of socially constructed gender differences and creation of differences between women's and men's sports magnifies differences between female and male athletes creating a binary that favors males (Kane, 1995). Hegemonic order is organized and maintained by establishing male athletes as the universal norm or the dominant group while relegating female athletes to being the subordinate group. This deferential allocation of privileges and opportunities within sport has manifested itself as females in powerful management positions within women's sport being engulfed by males and inequality in media coverage between female and male athletes (Acosta & Carpenter, 2008).

The most powerful technique used to maintain male hegemony in sport transpires by socially constructing differences between female and male athletes thus establishing males as the universal norm and females as "the other" or "less than" (Kane, 1995). Connell (1987) goes further to say, "the meanings in the bodily sense of masculinity concern, above all else, the superiority of men to women, and the exaltation of hegemonic masculinity over other groups of men which is essential to the domination of women" (p. 85). Identifying biological differences as determinants of "natural" stereotypical differences in behaviors and attitudes between males and females has perpetuated the subordination of women and maintained men's positions of power while ignoring this power dimension and serving to increase the perceived differences between male and female athletes (Hargreaves, 1994). A valuing male and devaluing of female sport experiences and performances influences the cultural values of society leading to the acceptance of males and masculinity as the legitimate participants and gender in sport. This definition of acceptance involves a qualifier: Masculinity is valued when packaged in a male body. Being a muscular and skillful athlete is empowering for male athletes, whereas strong female athletes are questioned and maligned (Hargreaves, 1994). Therefore, when females acquire the strength, muscularity, and athletic skill to satisfy most of the idealized sporting body requirements, female athletes still fall short because of the impossibility of them having male biological bodies. Masculine female bodies performing athletic skills threaten to minimize the differences between male and female athletes. If athletes, males and females, are similarly strong, competent athletes then socially constructed gender differences forming men's inherent superiority over women are more difficult to maintain. The accentuation of difference has created appropriate

sport behaviors/roles for men and women such that men are the performers and the athletes, and women are the supporters of men, cheerleaders, or participants in aesthetically pleasing sports (e.g., figure skating, gymnastics; Duncan, 1990).

Bryson (1990) argues that, in general, people accept the notion that men are naturally superior to women in sport due to physical differences between genders. She wrote that this notion has negative consequences for all women, including those not affiliated with sport.

> Sporting prowess is positively valued and is a basis through which social and economic powers are distributed. To be better at sport (by implication even for those men who do not participate in athletics) is symbolically translatable into being better or more capable in other areas of life. Through a dialectical process, who are culturally defined and perceived as incapable of equaling men at sport, are rendered inferior and, by inference, less capable in many areas of life. (p. 173)

Many learn hegemonic masculine norms on the playing fields; and these hegemonic masculine standards are reflected and maintained throughout other organizations in society, informing the public. For instance, if males fulfill the role of leader or participant in sports then they will be considered a natural selection for leadership positions in the work force. Similarly, if females are relegated to supportive position in sport they will naturally be limited to supportive roles such as administrative assistant positions in the working world. A common thread connecting the sports world and society—mass media—serves to inform the masses. Historically, mass media has reinforced to the masses the masculine hegemonic notion that male athletes and men's sports are the norm (Daddario, 1997; Pedersen, 2002; Vincent, 2004).

Hegemonic Masculinity and Sport Media

Many mass communication scholars still maintain what Mary Jo Kane professed twenty years ago, that "mass media has become one of the most powerful institutional forces for shaping values and attitudes in modern culture" (Kane, 1988, pp. 88-89) and are essential to the production, consumption, revision, and preservation of information in the age of the information society (Creedon, 1994; Kane, 2007). In the Western world, many scholars have noted how the institutions of mass media and sport help preserve male hegemony (e.g., Duncan & Messner, 1998; Harris & Clayton, 2002; Pedersen, 2002; Prinen, 1997). Hilliard (1984) asserted, "Sports and the media form a symbiotic relationship. Each depends on the other and economic interests govern both. In this view, neither the media nor the athletes are willing to challenge the assumptions upon which their economic successes depend" (p. 202). By not recognizing the assumption-challenging increased sport participation by females, several authors argue mass media have helped uphold antiquated definitions of gender (e. g., Hargreaves, 1994; Hilliard, 1984; Kinkema & Harris, 1998).

Michael Messner (1988), in his landmark theoretical paper, initiated a legacy of sport media scholarship contributing theoretically and empirically to the body of literature concerning gender ideology underlying women's participation and media representation in sport. Sport media scholars have focused extensively on dissimilar media coverage given to female and male athletes. This disparate treatment is based on two consistent sport media trends evident over decades of research: (a) disproportionate quantity of media coverage; and (b) marginalizing types of media coverage, compared to the proportion of female athletes and type of men's media coverage, respectively.

First, despite females' increased participation in sport and increased interest by fans viewing women's sports, female athletes and women's sport are significantly underrepresented in mass media (Bishop, 2003; Higgs, Weiller, & Martin, 2003; Maxwell, 2006; Messner, Duncan & Cooky, 2003; Tuggle, 1997; Tuggle, Huffman, & Rosengard, 2002; Wann, Schrader, Allison, & McGeorge, 1998). This under-representation resulting from mass media refusing to cover, or very minimally providing coverage to female athletes and women's sports, perpetuates male-dominated sports hegemony (Elueze & Jones, 1998). Second, the limited overall coverage of female athletes in turn results in the general public under-estimating the number of women participating in competitive athletics.

The second media trend is observed when the small percentage of articles and photographs in sport media reporting on female sporting events often minimize or trivialize women's athletic accomplishments through their use of language or commentaries (Duncan & Messner, 2000; Prinen, 1997; Vincent, 2004). Male athletes are shown participating in a wider variety of sports as competent, strong, and dominant athletes using various media techniques (e.g., camera angles, descriptors, etc), whereas female athlete narratives emphasize physical attractiveness, passivity, and subordination (Billings & Eastman, 2002; Buysse & Embser-Herbert, 2004; Daddario, 1994; Duncan & Messner, 1994; Kane & Buysse, 2005; Tuggle, 1997; Tuggle, Huffman, & Rosengard, 2002).

Ultimately, mass media emphasize certain events or persons, while omitting or trivializing other events or persons thereby creating a hierarchy by gender in sport (Adams & Tuggle, 2004; Kane, 1998). The implicit superiority of male athletes is

represented and reproduced in the media by differential quantities of media coverage of women's and men's sports and, in addition to the content of the coverage, *how* the athletes are portrayed or their performances discussed. Hardin and Shain (2005) wrote:

> Mass media are key to the function of cultural hegemony in the United States. The media inculcate individuals with values essential to the institutional structures by adopting dominant assumptions and framing content within them. Hegemonic ideas are presented as universally valid, and alternative views are appropriated into the dominant frame. (p. 106)

Thus far, the lack of representation and stereotypical coverage in traditional media has subordinated women's sport in the minds of society (Knight & Giuliano, 2001). Similarly, research concerning the information, images and text that online sport media are disseminating is scarce.

<center>Hegemonic Masculinity, Sport Media, and Newsworthiness</center>

Mass media informs, interprets events, and entertains the public (Coakley, 2007). Media have long been recognized as playing a key role in shaping public opinion—what is seen on television, heard on the radio, or read in the newspapers sanctions what is acceptable or expected (Kane, 1988). Sport scholars have contended that the under-representation and marginalization of female athletes and women's sports are the result of the masculine hegemonic standard influencing the definition of newsworthiness for sport media. Scholars in various disciplines have long postulated the elements of a story deeming it newsworthy.

In a classic article, sociologist Gaye Tuchman (1978) identified six major news elements journalists believe increase the newsworthiness of events: proximity, timeliness, prominence, consequence, human interest, and the unusual. The likelihood of media coverage is increased when an event or story contains more of these six news elements.

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However, inevitably media personnel deciding what events are newsworthy enough for coverage "…are influenced by social, political, and economic factors—including dominant ideologies related to gender, race and class" (Coakley, 2004, p. 442).

Alternatively, sport sociologist Jay Coakley (2007) pragmatically identified additional factors impacting coverage decisions of editors and managers. Coakley (2007) utilized an approach entrenched in capitalism attributing decisions of editors and managers to five newsworthy criteria: generating profits for the network or publication, shaping values, providing services that are in the best interests of the public, building their individual reputations/careers, and allowing journalists to creatively express themselves through their writings or commentaries.

The criteria for media coverage reported by Belliotti (1983) twenty-five years ago—that sports editors and sports information directors determine their viewers' interest in an athletic event by the number of spectators attending the event, the perceived skill-level of the athletes, and comments or letters that viewers present in response to historical coverage—remains the criteria in present day journalism. However, a disconnect has historically existed between the perception of reader interest by sport editors and the reality of reader interest, as sport editors did not systematically gauge reader interest (Hardin, 2005).

In addition to perceptions of the desires of their reader, space limitations limit the quantity of new stories presented in print, radio and television media. For example, a newspaper company can only print a quantity of pages that produces a return on their initial investment and exceeds operational costs. Most operational costs are covered by paid advertisements and newspaper subscriptions. Thus, advertisements and quantity of

pages restrict the space allotted for news stories. Similarly, within radio and television programming time for new stories is limited by predetermined programming time slots constrained by advertising. For example, in print, newspaper companies must meet the content needs of their subscribers in order to maintain or grow the subscription base and so provide advertisers with a large circulation quantity. Consequently, in an effort to maintain the economical structure of newspaper companies, most newspapers reflect the sport content that have traditionally been popular, such as baseball, football, and men's basketball. Unfortunately, as the definition of popular sports has extended beyond the traditional sports of yesteryear and now includes women's basketball, soccer, lacrosse, and extreme sports, the evolution of sport newspaper coverage has failed to keep pace. While space and time constraints influence sport media coverage for males and females in traditional media channels (Coakley, 2007), these restrictions influence sport coverage on the Internet less as the cost structure for publishing news content on the Internet differs from the cost structure of traditional media.

In the following sections, sport media coverage of female athletes in each mass media channel, from traditional forms to the most contemporary form, the Internet, will be discussed. In addition, women's sport media coverage for each channel will be discussed in relation to its position of reinforcing or challenging the masculine hegemonic order in sport.

Newspaper Coverage of Female Athletes

The sports section is the first or second most widely read part of the majority of metropolitan daily newspapers in the United States. (e.g., Hardin, 2005; Sabo & Jansen, 1992; Wanta, 2006). Since the early 1900s sports news has been an important part of

daily newspapers and its place of prominence within our newspapers was evident in the 1920s with the creation of a dedicated sports section in nearly every major American newspaper (Bryant & Holt, 2006). However, as media coverage of sports increased in general, this increase did not extend to women's sport as their coverage was and remains minimal in comparison to media coverage given to men's sports. The quantity and qualitative content of newspaper coverage of women's sport has been examined for interscholastic, intercollegiate, and Olympic levels of competition.

Paul Pedersen (2003) examined a sport media research area needing more attention: written and photographic newspaper coverage of interscholastic athletics. Over the course of one year, articles and photographs in randomly selected issues from 43 daily newspapers in Florida were analyzed. His findings indicate, according to Matteo's (1986) sex typing of sports as male appropriate, female appropriate or neutral, that female and male athletes were over-represented in written and photographic coverage in "sex appropriate" sports. Females and males in "sex inappropriate" sports were under-represented in photographic coverage whereas males were also under-represented in written coverage and females were not. Similar to Pedersen's research concerning sport media coverage of interscholastic sports, researchers have also examined the news articles and photographs reporting on intercollegiate sports.

Wann, Schrader, Allison and McGeorge (1998) contributed to the body of literature of sport media coverage by investigating media coverage of male and female athletics in university newspapers. Sport sections of university-sponsored newspapers were collected each Friday during a time period overlapping fall and winter intercollegiate seasons at a small, medium and large university. Three sport media

coverage variables were compared: (a) number of articles, (b) number of lines, and (c) numbers of photographs focusing on male or female athletics. The researcher's findings indicate university-sponsored newspapers at medium and large universities presented significantly more articles, lines, and photographs focusing on male athletics. Despite university-sponsored newspapers at small universities providing equitable numbers of articles and number of lines for male and female athletics, male athletics still receive significantly more photographs compared to their female athletic counterparts.

A foundational contribution to sport media and gender research, Duncan, Messner, and Williams (1991) studied the amount of coverage given to male and female athletes in four large-market daily newspapers in the United States: *The Boston Globe*, *The Dallas Morning News, The Orange County Register,* and *USA Today*. Their findings indicated articles focusing exclusively on men's sports outnumbered articles pertaining to women's sports by a ratio of 23 to 1 in all sports articles. Less than 5% of all sports articles in each of the four examined newspapers reported exclusively on women's sports. Similar disparities between genders were found in newspaper photographs appearing in the sports pages as 92% portrayed men (Duncan et al., 1991).

The Olympic Games have long been a sport spectacle worthy of scholarly research, especially sport media research. During the 1984 and 1988 Summer Olympic Games, Lee (1992) studied media portrayals of athletes in major newspapers in the United States and Canada. Her results indicated men received significantly more written and photographic coverage than women, particularly in sports traditionally thought of as "male-appropriate" and team sports. Women did receive more coverage in what the author noted as having traditionally been thought of as "feminine-appropriate" sports and

individual sports emphasizing aesthetic characteristics, such as gymnastics and horseback riding.

During the 1996 Summer Olympic Games, sport media articles and photographs of female athletes were examined in newspapers from Canada, Great Britain and the United States (Vincent, 2003). A comparative content analysis was conducted between sport media coverage of historically "gender-appropriate" sports and "gender-inappropriate" sports. Vincent (2003) discovered female athletes participating in "gender-appropriate" sports received significantly more written and photographic coverage and the coverage was presented in more prominent positions. Similar to previous research findings female athletes competing in gender-appropriate sports were more than three times as likely to have photographs published than other female athletes (Vincent, 2003). The qualitative content comparison revealed females participating in "gender-appropriate" sports were likely to be described in traditionally feminine and stereotypical ways and photographs were more likely to portray the athletes in posed positions instead of in-action compared to females participating in "gender-inappropriate sports."

An international sample of newspaper articles and photographs documenting the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games was utilized to compare newspaper coverage of male and female athletes (Capranica et al., 2005). Sport sections and front pages in twenty newspapers from Belgium, Denmark, France and Italy provided equitable article sizes, placement of articles, and quantities and sizes of photographs for male and female athletes. While male athletes received more absolute numbers of articles and photographs compared to female athletes, the numbers of articles and photographs were representative of the percentage of male and female participants.

Although not as prevalent as traditional quantitative content analyses of sport media, qualitative studies of newspaper content have shown the accomplishments of female athletes are devalued and marginalized. In contrast, male athletes—particularly those who play what are socially accepted as more masculine sports—are described and portrayed as athletic and physically powerful (Urquhart & Crossman, 1998).

A qualitative textual analysis of newspaper coverage during the 1999 Women's World Cup soccer championships revealed patterns of masculine hegemony. The media coverage surrounding the gold medal winning team, the United States, was unique in its amount and depth of coverage as it was declared the "largest women's sporting event in history" (Penner, 1999, A1). The dramatic and clinching penalty kick of Brandi Chastain followed by Chastain ripping her shirt off leaving her wearing a sports bra and shorts is an indelible memory preserved on the covers of *Time*, *Newsweek,* and *Sports Illustrated*. Despite unheralded popularity and media coverage for a women's sport surrounding the 1999 Women's World Cup, research on newspaper coverage of the event showed reporters still wrote about the athletes through a "…gendered lens that highlighted and reinforced gender stereotypes about women" (Christopherson, Janning, & McConnell, 2002, p. 183). In their qualitative content analysis of 576 newspaper articles from six major metropolitan areas in the United States, writers depicted most American female soccer players as feminine, patriotic, and heterosexual more so than as competent athletes.

In conclusion, men's sports and male athletes are over-represented and women's sports and female athletes are under-represented in newspapers throughout the Western world thus reproducing male hegemony. Additionally, language reinforcing gender-

specific stereotypes (e.g., males are masculine and powerful, while females are feminine and graceful) and masculine hegemony in sport abound in newspaper articles and photographs.

Magazine Coverage of Female Athletes

Although media coverage of female athletes and women's sports is more wide-spread in magazines due to sport-specific niche magazines (Cohen, 1993); media coverage of women's sport in popular general sport magazines continues to be minimal.

Sports Illustrated, the largest circulating sports magazine in the United States, continues to be studied as a benchmark of media representation of female athletes (Bishop, 2003; Fink & Kensicki, 2002; Lumpkin & Williams, 1991; Salwen & Wood, 1994). Despite a tremendous increase in female sport participation, media representation of female athletes in articles and photographs on the covers and within sport magazines has failed to keep pace.

Two longitudinal *Sports Illustrated* studies examined the articles from 1954-1987 (Lumpkin & Williams, 1991) and magazines covers from 1957-1989 (Salwen & Wood, 1994). Male athletes were over-represented in *Sports Illustrated* articles as 90.8% of all articles reported on men's sports (Lumpkin & Williams, 1991). Similarly, male athletes were over-represented on *Sports Illustrated* covers as 95.5% of the covers featured males compared to a scant 4.4% featuring female athletes (Salwen & Wood, 1994). The qualitative components of each study revealed men's sports and male athletes were described and illustrated as more athletically competent compared to their female counterparts. Lumpkin and Williams (1991) analyzed the content of 3,723 *Sports Illustrated* articles and coded blatantly chauvinistic terminology in many of the sporting

accounts. Likewise, Salwen and Wood (1994) reported significantly more male athletes were shown in active poses on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* compared to female athletes.

Expanding the growing body of literature examining female representation in magazines, Reid and Soley (1979), and later followed up by Bishop (2003), predicted coverage of female athletes by *Sports Illustrated* would increase during Olympic Games years. During the Olympic years of 1956, 1960, 1964, 1968, 1972, and 1976, the percentage of feature articles reporting on women's sports and female athletes ranged from 3.2% to a high of 6.9% in 1976 (Reid & Soley, 1979). The follow-up study included 1984, 1988, 1992, 1994, and 1996 (Bishop, 2003). Initially, the percentage of *Sports Illustrated* feature articles reporting on women's sports tallied all-time highs of 9.1% in 1992 and 9.6% in 1994. However, amidst much Olympic success and the formation of the Women's National Basketball Association, media coverage dropped surprisingly to 3.3% in 1996, the lowest percentage for any Olympic year from 1956 through 1996.

More recently, researchers have examined sport magazines targeting women's sport such as the now defunct *Sports Illustrated for Women* (Fink & Kensicki, 2002). Fink and Kensicki analyzed the content of 1,105 articles and 1,745 photographs from *Sports Illustrated* and *Sports Illustrated for Women* from 1997 to 1999. Female athletes accounted for only 10% of the published photographs in *Sports Illustrated* and most of these women participated in sports socially constructed as traditionally feminine sports, such as gymnastics, tennis, and ice skating. The researchers found that in *Sports Illustrated* articles for male and female athletes were both likely to be sport related but male athletes were depicted in active poses more often than female athletes. When

comparing male athletes in *Sports Illustrated* and female athletes in *Sports Illustrated for Women*, a larger percentage of written coverage and a greater proportion of active photographs exist for male athletes in *Sports Illustrated* than for female athletes in *Sports Illustrated for Women*. Thus, despite it being a magazine created for women's sports, female athletes were still depicted in stereotypically feminine ways that superseded descriptions of their athletic accomplishments and skills.

Overall, media representation of female athletes in sport magazines mirrors portrayals of female athletes in newspaper sports sections. In general, males are over-represented in sport magazine articles and photographs whereas females are consistently under-represented. In addition to being under-represented, when women are covered by the media they are typically depicted in "stereotypical feminine ways" (Fink & Kensicki, 2002). Indeed, magazine coverage of women's sport, quantitative and qualitative, supports the theory of male hegemony.

Collegiate Media Guide Coverage of Female Athletes

An overwhelming majority of National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I athletic departments publish media guides for their athletic teams. Media guides "are the primary means by which colleges and universities market their athletic teams to the press, advertisers, and corporate sponsors as well as alumni, donors, and other campus and community members (Buysse & Embser-Herbert, 2004, p.67)." Similar to newspapers and magazines, media guides—especially the image(s) on the covers—communicate what is important to the publishers and thus what should be important to the reader. Over the past 16 years, Jo Ann Buysse has dedicated her scholarship to studying media representations of female athletes in collegiate media guides.

Beginning with her dissertation in 1992, Buysse studied the images on women's and men's basketball, golf, gymnastics, tennis, and softball/baseball media guide covers for NCAA Division I schools within six conferences in 1990: Big Ten, Big Eight, Pacific Athletic Coast Conference (PAC 10), Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC), Southwest Athletic Conference (SWC), and the Southeast Athletic Conference (SEC). The media guide cover photographs were analyzed to answer four questions: (a) Are the athletes portrayed on or off the court? (b) Are they pictures in or out of uniform? (c) Are they portrayed in active or passive positions or poses? (d) What is the theme of the cover photograph? Results indicated male athletes were significantly more likely to be on the court, in uniform and in action compared to female athletes. In addition, males were significantly more likely to be portrayed in the theme titled "true athleticism" and females were more likely to be portrayed in the theme titled "femininity/masculinity." Thus, males were more likely to be shown on the court, in action, and in uniform compared to their female counterparts. Similarly, females were more likely to be portrayed in traditionally feminine roles compared to males being portrayed in traditionally masculine roles. The relationships between sex of athlete and the remaining media cover themes of sport equipment, sexual suggestiveness, pop culture, and student-athlete were not significant.

Seven years later, Buysse and Embser-Herbert (2004) replicated Buysse's initial study (1992). In 1997, the relationship between sex of athlete and the likelihood of being portrayed on the court or in action remained significant as significantly more male athletes were portrayed on the court and in action compared to female athletes. In addition, the significant cover themes of true athleticism and femininity/masculinity

remained significant. In contrast, while in 1990 significantly more males were portrayed in uniform compared to females, in the follow-up study, females and males were equally likely to be portrayed in uniform. Also a new finding emerged in 1997 regarding the thematic category of sexual suggestiveness: More females were portrayed sexually compared to their male counterparts.

During the 2003-04 season, Kane and Buysse (2005) collaborated to replicate and extend the previous media guide studies (Buysse, 1992; Buysse & Embser-Herbert, 2004) by including women's and men's hockey. Overall, there were no statistically significant differences for uniform presence, court location, or pose presentation as a function of sex of athlete (Kane & Buysse, 2005). This most recent finding suggests female and male athletes were equally likely to be portrayed in uniform, on the court, and in action.

During the timing of the three aforementioned media guide studies, it was common for the media guides to be physically received by fans, sports reporters, high school recruits, etc.. However, it is increasingly more common for schools to simply publish their media guides electronically on their respective sport Web sites. Advancements in computer and information technology allow easy access to a prodigious amount of online information. Given this shift in media consumption it is important to study what sports information is published online.

Internet Coverage of Female Athletes

Although media coverage gender inequities have been well documented in studies of traditional media and despite the pervasiveness of sport and the World Wide Web in contemporary society, few studies have combined the bodies of literature associated with each institution to produce new knowledge. Five notable studies have attempted to

analyze private (e.g., sport organization Web sites, university Web sites, etc.) or public

(e.g., publicly owned media organizations such as ESPN, CBS, etc.) media coverage of

female athletes on the Web (Bissel & Holt, 2005; Jones, 2004, 2006; Kachgal, 2001;

Sagas, Cunningham, Wigley, & Ashley, 2000).

In the private media realm, Sagas et al. (2000) analyzed softball and baseball Web

sites produced by NCAA Division I universities representing the four major geographic

locations in the United States. Results indicated baseball sites compared to softball sites

were consistently allocated lengthier press releases and coach and player biographies and

a larger quantity of coach and player photographs. In addition, data analysis revealed

baseball Web sites compared to softball Web sites were updated in a significantly

timelier manner for press releases, scores and individual and team statistics. Length of

articles, quantity of photographs, and timeliness of updates communicates

newsworthiness and importance. Thus, the finding of significantly more importance

associated with men's sports news compared to women's sports news within sport media

coverage on the Internet mirrors traditional media coverage inequities by athlete sex.

These results were specific to intercollegiate Web sites throughout a season thus not

generalizeable to the public sphere of online mass media sport coverage. Building upon

Sagas et al., similar studies were conducted by analyzing Internet media coverage of

female and male athletes during Olympic Games.

Historically, the amount of media coverage of female athletes during Olympics

Games has been greater than during non-Olympic years. The Olympics are a world-wide

spectacle where each athlete, regardless of sex, represents the national identity of his/her

country. Years including Olympic Games increase proportions of female athletes in the

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media thus perhaps inflating the overall average media coverage of women's sports. Research regarding media coverage of female athletes on the Web during the Olympic Games has been conducted in Australia (Jones, 2004, 2006) and the United States (Bissel & Holt, 2005).

Jones (2004, 2006), focusing primarily on images of Australian female athletes, examined Australia's national public broadcaster's Web site, ABC *News Online,* during the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney and replicated the study during the 2004 Olympics in Athens. In 2000, in terms of quantity of text, Australian female and male athletes received equitable coverage (2004). However, Australian male athletes were featured significantly more in online images compared to their female counterparts. Jones' (2006) replication of her original study conducted during the 2004 Olympic Games offers indications of improvement in the proportion, positioning, and posing of female online images. The quantity of female athlete online images outnumbered male athlete images, women were featured in the prominent lead story position more often than men, and female Olympians were more commonly shown as active competitors compared to 2000 (2006). These findings indicate male hegemony in sport media coverage is being challenged on the Internet by equitable or Australian female favoring media coverage in Australia.

Bissel and Holt (2005) conducted a similar study examining the amount and type of online media coverage of male and female athletes across three news and sports Web sites (SI.com, ESPN.com, NBColympics.com) during the 2004 Olympics in the United States. Unfortunately, the findings from Bissel and Holt's Internet sport media study based in the United States did not represent increases in media coverage of female

athletes similar to Jones' Australian Internet sport media findings (Jones, 2004, 2006). Male individual athletes and male sport teams received the largest proportion of dominant photo coverage, lead stories and headlines. Concerning type of coverage, male athletes were portrayed as active athletes and in contact sports more often than female athletes who were shown disproportionately in passive poses and twice as likely to be shown in aesthetic sports (e.g., gymnastics; Bissel & Holt, 2005).

Studies examining sport media coverage of female and male athletes on the Web during Olympic Games contributes to the research foundation of Internet sport media research. However, the Olympic Games as special sporting events may not be representative of daily media coverage of women's sports online.

The seminal Internet sport media study analyzing Web site content during a non-Olympic Game time period by Tara Kachgal (2001) provides findings more representative of average online female sport coverage. Kachgal analyzed the content of the three most popular general-interest sports Web sites: CBSSportsLine.com, CNNSI.com, and ESPN.com. Using descriptor indicators and framing analysis, Tachgal examined the amount of coverage and use of ambivalent news frames in leading news items by athlete gender. The sample included golf, soccer, and tennis pages for each Web site during the month of May 2000. Results indicated significantly more top stories and photographs focused on male athletes across the studied sports. In addition, the use of ambivalent frames was not statistically different for female and male athletes.

Society is becoming increasingly more connected by the Internet yet research documenting sport coverage available on wide-reaching sport Web sites is not commensurate (Real, 2006). The influencing and information disseminating power of the

Internet during the 21st Century and beyond beckons for more communication scholars to conduct studies examining the content published on these sites. Although media research comparison studies concerning broadcast commentary and game productions for television have been conducted, combining the Internet and college women's and men's basketball is nonexistent to date.

Media Coverage of Women's and Men's College Basketball

The majority of scholarly research has analyzed television media coverage of NCAA women's and men's basketball. Basketball has traditionally been perceived as a masculine sport thus inappropriate for women (Matteo, 1986). These constructed differences were further reinforced as the NCAA men's basketball tournament starting in 1939 (NCAA, 2006) was held for 43 years before the first NCAA Division I women's basketball tournament was held in 1982 (NCAA, 2006). Since the first women's national tournament through the 2005-06 season, 500% more fans have passed through arena gates to watch women's basketball (NCAA, 2006). The rising popularity of women's collegiate basketball has challenged the notion female athletes are incapable of receiving media attention in sports historically construed as masculine in nature (Reynolds, 2004).

In 1987, Duncan and Brummett published the first research examining media coverage of women's and men's collegiate basketball. Specifically, they analyzed language used by broadcasters during the 1986 men's and women's NCAA Division I tournament games. Their results indicated broadcast commentary generally trivialized and devalued female players by focusing on individuals more for the women's game. In contrast, during the men's games the commentators focused more on physical prowess of the athletes (Duncan & Hasbrook, 1988).

Two years later, a follow-up study compared the television announcer commentary for the 1989 men's and women's Final Four tournaments (Messner, Duncan, & Jensen, 1996). Overall, a smaller percentage of the women's Final Four commentary was sexist compared to previous research (Duncan & Brummett, 1987; Duncan & Hasbrook, 1988). Despite progress toward equally respectful reporting, female athletes and women's sports are still marked as the "other" compared to male athletes and men's sports thereby reinforcing male hegemony in sport (Messner et al., 1996). The "othering" of women's sport is interwoven within commentary; however, its marginalized status is explicit in the naming of the NCAA tournament. For example, the women's Final Four is designated by the gender marking of "women's" whereas the men's Final Four is referred to simply as the "Final Four," or the standard.

Despite attracting increasingly large crowds and the formation of the WNBA, gendered broadcast commentary still exists in the 21st century (Billings et al., 2002). Throughout the 2000 NCAA Division I women's and men's Final Four tournaments announcers described the athletes and their performances using distinctly different vocabularies. Often more commentary from announcers was included in broadcasts of men's games communicating the event was more important and worthy of preparatory research. In addition, personalities, looks and appearances, and personal backgrounds of female players were more likely to be discussed compared to their male counterparts. Spanning decades, comparison studies of broadcast commentary for women's and men's Final Four tournaments have illuminated discourse reinforcing hegemonic masculinity. The prevalence of male athletes and men's sports as unchallenged standards was also

discovered in quality of television production for men's and women's championship basketball games.

Broadcast commentary is one of many components comprising a quality production of a championship basketball game. Often multiple cameras are used to capture the live action from multiple vantage points and specialized graphics are created and utilized to illustrate statistics or contextual information. During the NCAA Division I men's and women's championship basketball games from 1991-95, Hallmark and Armstrong (1999) studied the quantity of camera shots and graphics during television broadcasts for each respective championship. Researchers reported women's games were produced using fewer camera shots and graphics than men's games.

Previous research documenting media coverage of female and male athletes in newspapers, magazines, and the Internet in the forms of articles and photographs have reinforced the premise that mass media strengthen hegemonic masculinity in the sport realm. As society shifts their news gathering habits from traditional communication channels to the Internet, it is imperative to analyze online text and photographs presented on ESPN.com, the most popular general sports information Web site.

CHAPTER 3:

METHODOLOGY

The primary purpose of this mixed method study was to analyze and compare the feature photographs and headline articles for NCAA women's and men's basketball on their respective Web sites within ESPN.com during the entire 2006-2007 season. A triangulation mixed methods design was used, a type of design in which different but complementary data is collected on the same topic. In this design, "the researcher collects and analyzes quantitative and qualitative data separately on the same phenomenon and then the different results are converged (by comparing and contrasting the different results) during the interpretation" (Creswell & Piano Clark, 2007, p. 64). In this study, quantitative content analysis was used to quantify the number of new feature photographs and headline articles and analyze the foci of the feature photographs (e.g. coach, player, etc.) and how this person(s) is portrayed (e.g., in/out of uniform, on/off the court, in action/posed, etc.). For the purpose of this study, "new" was defined as a feature photograph or headline article published on ESPN.com for the first time and "repeat" was defined as a feature photograph or headline article previously published on ESPN.com that reappears during the basketball season. This quantitative data was used to explore the theory of hegemony that predicts the sex of the athlete, when female, will negatively influence the quality of portrayal and quantity of new photographs and articles. Concurrent with this data collection, qualitative content analysis was also employed to describe prevalent themes in the feature photographs and headline articles. This chapter presents the methods used in conducting a mixed method content analysis on electronic media coverage of NCAA women's and men's basketball. After stating the quantitative

research questions, qualitative research question and the mixed methods research question of this study, this chapter provides a discussion on quantitative and qualitative content analyses, reasons for the population chosen, and an explanation of the units of analyses. To conclude the chapter, intercoder reliability, and data analysis are discussed.

Quantitative Research Questions

RQ1.   Will media coverage of men's basketball include more new feature photographs compared to women's basketball on their respective Web pages on ESPN.com throughout the season overall and/or during the non-conference, conference, or post-season portions of the season?

RQ2.   Will media coverage of men's basketball include more new headline articles compared to women's basketball on their respective Web pages on ESPN.com throughout the season overall and/or during the non-conference, conference, or post-season portions of the season?

RQ3.   Will feature photographs on the women's basketball Web page on ESPN.com show more female players out of uniform, off the court, and posed compared to their male counterparts on the men's basketball Web page on ESPN.com throughout the season overall and/or during the non-conference, conference, or post-season portions of the season?

Qualitative Research Question

1.   Using textual analysis, what are the common themes within the feature photographs and headline articles on women's and men's basketball Web pages on ESPN.com over the season overall?

Mixed Method Research Question

1. To what extent will the quantitative and qualitative data concerning electronic media content on women's and men's college basketball Web sites on ESPN.com converge, challenging or supporting hegemonic masculinity in sport media?

Content Analyses

Over the last 35 years, approximately a quarter of all studies published in the leading mass communication journal, the *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly,* employed content analysis (Riffe & Frietag, 1997). Nearly every form of communication, such as newspapers, television, radio broadcasts, and the Internet, has been examined using content analysis (Gunter, 2000; Krippendorff, 2004; Pedersen, 2000). Analysis of research methods utilized when specifically studying the Internet in five leading communication journals over five years revealed content analysis is the most popular method of inquiry (Tomasello, 2001). Although quantitative content analysis was a strategy used by allied intelligence units as early as World War II when they tracked the number and types of popular songs on European radio stations (Gunter, 2000), Berelson originally popularized content analysis as a research technique in the 1950s (McMillan, 2000). Similarly, famed researcher Harold Lasswell introduced qualitative media content analysis in 1927 while studying propaganda. However, using qualitative research methods to analyze published media content did not become widely accepted until the late 20th Century and they are still less commonly used than purely quantitative content analyses (Gunter, 2000; Macnamara, 2003).

The mixed methods triangulation convergence design utilized by this study employed two methodologies: quantitative and qualitative content analyses. The data

collected used each methodology to comparatively determine if the data converged or conflicted. In this study, the quantitative and qualitative data will converge regarding the reproduction (or lack thereof) of hegemonic masculinity in online photographs and headline articles concerning women's and men's college basketball Web pages on ESPN.com. Generally defined, content analysis is the study of the content of recorded information using any systematic procedure (Gunter, 2000) and is an unobtrusive or non-reactive method used by social scientists that has been applied to a range of media contexts (Gunter, 2000; Krippendorff, 2004; Pedersen, 2000). Content analyses are unobtrusive and non-reactive since the content has already been written, spoken, or conveyed thus, have no effect on subjects studied (Babbie, 1995; Berelson, 1952; Pedersen, 2000). Although quantitative and qualitative content analyses fulfill these definitions, specific differences between the methodologies exist.

Historically, quantitative content analysis has been used to provide descriptive accounts of what media texts contain (e.g., number of photographs, length of article, specific word counts, etc.; Gunter, 2000). Informed by the epistemological stance of positivism, quantitative content analyses ensure objective and replicable results by coders utilizing consistent coding categories and analyses protocols (Gunter, 2000). Thus, the overarching goal of quantitative content analyses is accurate representation of a collection of information (Gunter, 2000). While quantitative content analyses describe or reveal the number of various units of analyses such as articles, photographs, length of videos or segments on particular topics, researchers influenced by the critical and interpretivist paradigms believe a greater value is accrued from identifying meanings transmitted by media texts (Fowler, 1991; Krippendorf, 2004). Quantitative content

analyses can provide descriptions that form the foundation for analysis, "but we need to go beyond description: we want to interpret, to understand and to explain" (Gray, 2004, p.327).

Qualitative content analysis extends beyond quantifying data and can be defined as an "…approach of empirical, methodological controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication, following content analytical rules and step by step models, without rash quantification" (Mayring, 2000). McKee (2001) argued there are many advantages to the less "scientific" approach of qualitative content analysis compared to the more rigid quantitative content analysis. For instance, since no precise methodology is used by the majority of researchers conducting qualitative content analyses a wider array of possible interpretations is produced (McKee, 2001). Typically, developing a coding system or scheme is the first step of qualitative content data analysis as it significantly reduces the quantity of data (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). However, sometimes coding is not established *a priori* as the coding may be achieved inductively (Mayring, 2000). Bogdan and Biklen (2003) defined coding as the "…process of developing categories to sort data" (p. 258). Krippendorf adds, "How categories are defined...is an art. Little is written about it" (1980, p.76)

Numerous researchers have utilized quantitative *or* qualitative content analyses to study media coverage given to women's and men's sports at nearly all levels of competition in a multitude of countries and through various mediums, including newspapers, magazines, television, radio broadcasts and Internet sites (e.g., Duncan et al., 1991; Eastman & Billings, 2000; Jones 2004, 2006; Kane & Buysse, 2005; Sagas et al., 2000). However, no known researchers have ever conducted a mixed methods study,

collecting quantitative and qualitative data, to describe and interpret online media coverage of female and male basketball players during an entire basketball season. There has been a call for interpretive measures to complement the counting and quantifying associated with quantitative content analyses to reveal potential impacts upon society and reveal the agenda of media producers (Gunter, 2000). Thus the triangulation design employed within this study answers this call by combining the unique strengths and weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative research to form valid and well-substantiated conclusions (Creswell & Piano Clark, 2007; Patton, 2002) about online media coverage of women's and men's collegiate basketball.

<div align="center">Sampling Content Selection</div>

The sport of basketball and the content source, ESPN.com, were purposively chosen for analysis in this study. First, attendance at women's collegiate basketball contests is similar in quantity to crowds watching men's collegiate basketball games (NCAA, 2008). According to NCAA statistics (2008), in 1982 across all divisions 1,926,989 people attended women's basketball contests; however, between 1982 and the 2006-07 season, attendance increased by over 500% as a record 10,878,322 fans passed through arena gates to watch women's basketball. The NCAA Division I women's basketball and men's basketball tournaments are national events. No other American team sport played by both men and women receives as much media attention as college basketball, highlighted by the season-ending tournaments for both men and women held over the same three weeks (Bialik, 2004). CBS spent an estimated $6 billion for the rights to televise the men's tournament for 11 years. Meanwhile, the Women's Final Four tournament has enjoyed 15 consecutive sellouts culminating most recently in Tampa with

over 21,000 spectators watching the semifinals and Tennessee defeating Stanford in the final (Adelson, 2008). Similar to the popularity of women's collegiate basketball amongst women's sports, ESPN.com is the leading sport Web site as it continually attracts significantly more visitors than competing sport Web sites.

The most frequented Web site overall among online sport visitors was the ESPN Internet network, with an average of nearly 16 million unique visitors per month ("Sports search," 2006). This figure indicates people logged onto at least one of the pages on the ESPN Internet network nearly 16 million different times during the course of each month ("Sports search," 2006). More specifically during the three weeks of March Madness, Nielsen ratings showed an Internet high 4.5 million unique visitors logged onto ESPN Web pages uniquely devoted to March Madness or other college basketball news (Real, 2006). Not only is ESPN.com attracting visitors but ESPN as an organization is reciprocally attracted to women's collegiate basketball. In 2003, ESPN and the NCAA reached a $200 million, 11-year deal guaranteeing all women's NCAA basketball tournament games along with an assortment of softball, volleyball, swimming, Division II basketball and other sports will be televised on ESPN television networks for years to come (Horrow, 2005). Additional ESPN coverage of women's basketball has been secured through inclusion with football and men's basketball in multi-year regular season contracts with the Big East, Big Ten and BIG XII conferences (ESPN, 2006, 2007).

Being the most popular sport Web site coupled with its vested financial interest in televising all NCAA Division I women's basketball tournament games, ESPN.com was chosen as the Web site to examine for quantity and quality of online coverage of women's and men's collegiate basketball in this study. The sheer number of visitors to

ESPN.com and the masses of people watching women's college basketball games during March Madness on ESPN television networks suggests the exceptional reach of ESPN. Given the dearth of academic research on the emerging field of online sport journalism (Real, 2006), it is imperative that research keep pace with communication and technological advances by examining the messages being disseminated across the world on the Internet.

Population of the Study

Feature photographs and headline articles on the women's and men's college basketball Web pages within ESPN.com were collected during the 2006-07 NCAA intercollegiate basketball season. Specifically feature photographs were collected from the first week of official practices until the national championship game, October 18, 2006, through April 4, 2007, totaling approximately 5.5 months or 159 days. Headline articles were collected for the entire season as well; however, the files of headline articles representing the portion of season before non-conference games occur—October 18, 2006, through November 18, 2006—were corrupted by a virus and not available for analysis. Since all photographs and articles published on ESPN.com during the season were collected, the data represents the population of ESPN.com photographs and articles on its women's and men's college basketball Web pages (Gray, 2004). Historically, studies of Web content have spanned one to two months (McMillan, 2000); however, population data was used instead of sample data from a constructed week(s) in an effort to obtain more accurate comparisons of the quantities of new feature photographs and headline articles and the qualitative content of headline articles between women's and

men's college basketball Web pages during four segments of the college basketball season: season overall, non-conference, conference, and post-season.

For the sake of consistency, data were collected each day from 10:00 -11:00 a.m. Central Time. Collecting data on the World Wide Web at similar times each day is important for consistency as Web page content may change throughout the day (Weare & Lin, 2000).

<center>Units of Analysis</center>

This study employed content analysis to examine feature photographs and headline news articles situated in prominent positions "above the fold" on the women's and men's basketball Web pages on ESPN.com. The most valued part of any Web page is the content one may view without scrolling, generally known as "above the fold" ("Above the fold," 2006). On the respective Web pages for women's and men's basketball on ESPN.com, when a visitor initially enters these sites the feature photograph and the titles of the headline news articles are the only pieces of information visible without scrolling. Therefore, each day during the 2006-07 women's and men's college basketball season from 10:00-11:00 a.m., utilizing the computer software titled Snagit™, each feature photograph and headline news article was captured as individual files to examine.

The feature photograph is the largest photograph visible on each basketball home page without scrolling. Similar to the cover of a magazine or a photograph on the front page of a newspaper, the viewer is drawn to this photograph as it covers a large percentage of the Web page (see Appendix A).

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The headline news articles are also featured on each basketball home page when initially viewing (see Appendix A). The headline news articles are positioned to the right of the feature photograph. These articles are listed in a table of contents format. Occasionally included among the online articles for examination were subscriber-only stories or inside members' articles; however, these articles were not included in the analysis. The average sport Web site viewer would not have access to these privileged articles so they were omitted from the study. The headlines and article texts for the headline news articles were examined to discover dominant themes in the qualitative data analysis because they represent the majority of the area above the scroll. The articles associated with the feature photographs were not included in this study because these articles represented a significantly smaller portion of the information above the fold compared to the feature photograph and headline news articles.

Coding Procedures

Quantitative Photograph Coding

Quantitative content analysis was conducted using a priori coding categories on both women's and men's feature photographs. First, each feature photograph was coded for the publication date including month, date and year (i.e., November 18, 2006, would be represented by "111806"). Secondly, each feature photograph was coded as "female" or "male," representing the sex of the athlete such as "female" represented a feature photograph on the women's basketball home page. Next, each feature photograph was coded according to the season time period in which it was published, such as non-conference, conference, or post-season (see Appendix B for exact dates corresponding with women's and men's basketball seasons). Next, feature photographs were coded as

"new," meaning the photograph on the current day differed from the previous day. If the feature photograph remained unchanged from the previous day or had not been published any other time during the season the photograph was coded as "repeat." If the photograph was published earlier in the season and then re-published later in the season the photograph was coded as "recycled" and, generally speaking, would represent a "repeat" and not a "new" photograph. Next, the focus of the feature photograph was coded as: (1) athlete(s) only, (2) head coach, (3) combination of athlete(s) and head coach, or (4) other. Next, content analysis protocol for analysis of the feature photographs followed procedures employed by previous sport media researchers (Buysse, 1992; Buysse & Embser-Herbert, 2004; Kane & Buysse, 2005). The *a priori* categories examining the presence of masculine hegemony in online media coverage of female and male college basketball players, coaches, and teams were derived from an extensive literature review and one central question: "How seriously is the female athlete presented?" (Kane & Buysse, 2005, p.220). If the photograph focused on the athlete(s), the court location, uniform presence, and pose presentation were coded. Regarding court location, the coder coded each photograph as: (1) if the athlete(s) was on the basketball court, (2) if the athlete(s) was off the basketball court, or (3) if unsure of athlete(s)'s location. Concerning uniform presence, the coder coded each photograph as: (1) if athlete(s) was wearing a game uniform, (2) if athlete(s) was not wearing a game uniform, or (3) if unsure the athlete(s) was wearing a game uniform. Next, when coding the pose presentation, each photograph was coded as: (1) if athlete(s) was exhibiting an active skill he/she might exhibit during an organized basketball practice, (2) if athlete(s) was not exhibiting an active skill he/she might exhibit during an organized basketball practice, or

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(3) unsure if athlete(s) was exhibiting an active skill he/she might exhibit during an organized basketball practice.

Next, the primary and secondary researchers coded the first 10 percent of the feature photographs independently using the utilizing the reliable definitions within the Online Media Study Code Book (see Appendix B). It was important to code the first 10 percent of the photographs chronologically since part of the coding involved coding whether the photograph had been published multiple times. If a random sample had been coded the researchers would be unable to know if the photographs had been previously published. The coders worked independently of each other to control for coercion (Cuneen & Sidwell, 1998; Duncan & Sayaovong, 1990).Then both researchers compared their codes for the first 10 percent. An appropriate level of intercoder reliability, 95%, was achieved. Ultimately, scholars argue intercoder reliability or intercoder agreement in content analyses should be near 90% (Carey, Morgan, & Oxtoby, 1996; Miles & Huberman, 1994) and the coders in this study surpassed this mark. Since understanding the definitions for the codes is a key component of reaching a high level of intercoder reliability, the primary researcher and the secondary coder reviewed the 5% of the photographs they coded differently until consensus was reached. The coders reviewed the coding definitions and the photographs that were coded differently. After reviewing the definitions and photographs, the specificity of each definition was increased to aid the current coders and provide more clarity for future researchers hoping to replicate this study. For example, one of the coding discrepancies involved the pose presentation within a photograph. The photograph showed female basketball players in uniform, jumping up and down and clapping along the sideline. One coder coded this photograph

as "in action" because this photograph was taken during a competition and the players were active whereas, the other coder coded the photograph as "not in action" because the players were not executing basketball skills one would practice during a basketball practice. During the consensus-reaching discussion, each coder communicated her reasoning for coding the photograph as she did. Then the coders consulted the coding definition and concluded the definition allowed for a variety of interpretations. The coders agreed how photographs including players in uniform, jumping, and clapping on the sidelines would be coded throughout the remainder of the photograph coding. This coding disagreement and ensuing consensus-reaching discussion led to the revision of the pose presentation definition to include the players must be "exhibiting an active skill he/she might exhibit during an organized basketball practice."

Since an appropriate level of intercoder reliability was reached and many of the themes that emerged became redundant (coding was saturated), the primary researcher coded the remaining 90% of the photographs utilizing the reliable definitions within the Online Media Study Code Book (see Appendix B). After the primary researcher coded the remaining 90% of the photographs, the secondary researcher independently coded the next 20 percent of photographs chronologically following the initial 10% coded. Both coders coded over 10% to 20% of the total sample for reliability, surpassing Wimmer and Dominick's (1997) recommendation. Lastly, the primary and secondary researchers compared their codes for the 20% of the sample coded by each researcher independently. An appropriate level of intercoder reliability, 100%, was achieved. Upon completion of the quantitative content analysis, the feature photographs were qualitatively analyzed.

Qualitative Photograph Coding

Once the feature photographs for women's and men's basketball were analyzed quantitatively, the researchers qualitatively analyzed the feature photographs. Qualitative content analysis of the feature photographs allowed the researcher to go beyond the fixed meanings of media texts thus uncovering underlying ideological positions, perceptions of power relations and producers' level of interest and authority (Gunter, 2000).

At all stages of analysis Patton's (2002) guidelines for inductive content analysis were utilized. The primary and secondary researchers independently reviewed the first10 percent of the feature photographs. Each researcher independently coded each photograph for the main theme it represented (e.g., celebrating, jump ball, coach, computer graphics, etc.). The independently coded photographs were subsequently discussed by the primary and secondary researchers to establish the coding categories, ensuring consistency in coding. This discussion resulted in consensus on what criteria to include as the basic units of analyses for overarching themes and what photographs were representative of these themes. Based on these agreed upon units of analyses, the primary and secondary researchers coded the next 10% of the photographs independently. The coders worked independently of each other to control for coercion (Cuneen & Sidwell, 1998; Duncan & Sayaovong, 1990). During the coding of the second 10% of photographs the general themes illustrated by the photographs became saturated as no new photograph themes continued to emerge. The primary and secondary researchers compared their codes for the 10% of the photographs and an appropriate level of intercoder reliability, 98%, was achieved.

Since an appropriate level of intercoder reliability was reached, the primary researcher coded the remaining 80% of the photographs utilizing the reliable definitions within the Online Media Study Code Book (see Appendix B). After the primary researcher coded the remaining 80% of the articles, the secondary researcher independently coded a random sample of 50% of the 80% of the photographs previously coded by the primary researcher. Both coders coded over 10% to 20% of the total sample for reliability, surpassing Wimmer and Dominick's (1997) recommendation. Again, the primary and secondary researchers compared their codes for the random sample of 50% and an appropriate level of intercoder reliability, 96%, was achieved.

Next, researchers independently read the descriptive codes and combined them into groups with similar meanings. Then both researchers collectively discussed the codes and common photograph themes agreed upon by the two researchers were grouped to form the labels for the lower order themes. A total of 12 lower order themes were identified in this step of analysis: (1) athlete on offense in-action, (2) athlete on defense in-action, (3) athlete(s) clapping, (4) athlete(s) high-five, (5) athlete(s) embracing, (6) coach yelling, (7) coach clapping, (8) athlete(s) in a pile, (9) jump ball, (10) school logo, (11) player transposed onto a background, or (12) other, anything not in the above categories.

The same grouping process was repeated with the lower order themes to form higher order themes. This process resulted in a total of six higher order themes: True Athleticism, Celebration Time, Coach is King, Pile Up, Graphics, and Other. The new theme, True Athleticism, was formed by collapsing all lower order themes portraying athlete(s) performing a skill they would execute in a scheduled basketball practice thus,

all the game action photographs. Celebration Time photographs portrayed athlete(s) celebrating in various ways (e.g., clapping, embracing, chest bumping, etc.) Coach is King, was formed by all photographs focused on the head coach. Pile Up photographs presented players as not having complete control of the ball as in the players in a jump ball situation or a scrum. The theme Graphics included all photographs involving components of graphic design such as school logos or players superimposed onto computer-generated backgrounds. Lastly, the higher order theme represented images that were not representative of the other five photograph themes and often presented images tangential to the game, such as the tent of a season ticket holder waiting for tickets or the NCAA tournament committee. Table 1 provides definitions and examples for all higher order photograph themes.

Table 1. Definitions and Examples of Feature Photograph Themes

Theme	Definition	Examples
True Athleticism	• The athlete is portrayed in uniform, on the court, executing a skill the athlete practices during basketball practices	• Athlete shooting • Athlete passing • Athlete driving the lane
Celebration Time	• The athlete is rejoicing an outcome during a basketball game	• Athlete clapping • Athletes sharing "High 5s" • Athletes smiling and embracing
Coach is King	• The head coach is the focus of the photograph	• Coach yelling • Coach clapping • Coach calling plays
Pile Up	• Athlete portrayed in a "gridlock" or out of control resulting in non-skillful poses	• Athletes piled upon one another in pursuit of the ball • Athletes from each team "tying" the ball up
Graphics	• Photographs dominated by computer generated images	• Collage of school logos • Athletes superimposed onto computer-generated backgrounds
Other	• A photograph presenting images extremely tangential to the basketball games or coder was unsure of player(s) and coach action(s)	• A picture of a season ticket holder's tent • NCAA selection committee

The inductive content analysis was considered complete when researchers agreed that no further meaningful higher-order themes could be inductively formed. For each of the higher order themes examined in the study, frequency analysis was conducted to explore the percentage of the total population of photographs representative of the higher order themes.

Quantitative Article Coding

Quantitative content analysis was conducted using *a priori* coding categories on both women's and men's headline articles. First, each headline article was coded for the publication date including month, date, and year (e.g., November 18, 2006, would be represented by "111806"). Secondly, each headline article was coded as "female" or "male" representing the sex of the athlete, such as "female" represented a headline article on the women's basketball home page. Next, each headline article was coded according to the season time period it was published such as non-conference, conference, or post-season (see Appendix B for exact dates corresponding with women's and men's basketball seasons). Next, headline articles were coded as "new," meaning the article on the current day differed from the previous day. If the headline article remained unchanged from the previous day or was previously published during the season, the article was coded as "repeat." Then the researchers independently coded the focus of the first 10% of headline articles as: (1) game reporting if the main focus of the article was reporting on events that occurred during a game, (2) non-game reporting if the main focus of the article was reporting on non-game reporting topics (i.e., coaching contracts, player suspensions, etc.), or (3) unsure of focus of the article. It was important to code the

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first 10% of the articles chronologically since part of the coding involved coding whether the article had been published multiple times. If a random sample had been coded the researchers would be unable to know if the articles had been previously published. In addition, the coders worked independently of each other to control for coercion (Cuneen & Sidwell, 1998; Duncan & Sayaovong, 1990).The independently coded articles were subsequently discussed by the primary and secondary researchers to ensure consistency in coding, resulting in consensus on which articles to include as the basic unit of analysis, articles representing game reporting and non-game reporting. An appropriate level of intercoder reliability, 100%, was achieved. Ultimately scholars argue intercoder reliability or intercoder agreement in content analyses should be near 90% (Carey, Morgan, & Oxtoby, 1996; Miles & Huberman, 1994) and the coders in this study surpassed this mark.

Based on these agreed upon units of analysis and a high percentage of intercoder reliability, the primary researcher coded the remaining 90% of the articles utilizing the reliable definitions within the Online Media Study Code Book (see Appendix B). After the primary researcher coded the remaining 90% of the photographs, the secondary researcher independently coded the next 20% of articles chronologically following the initial 10% coded. Ultimately, the coders coded over 10% to 20% of the total sample for reliability, surpassing Wimmer and Dominick's (1997) recommendation. Lastly, the primary and secondary researchers compared their codes for the 20% of the sample coded by each researcher independently. An appropriate level of intercoder reliability, 100%, was achieved. Upon completion of the quantitative content analysis, the headline articles were qualitatively analyzed.

Qualitative Article Coding

Once the headline articles for women's and men's basketball were analyzed quantitatively, the researchers qualitatively analyzed the content of the non-game reporting articles. Similar to the qualitative content analysis of the feature photographs, qualitative content analysis of the headline articles allowed the researcher to go beyond the fixed meanings of media texts thus uncovering underlying ideological positions, perceptions of power relations, and producers' level of interest and authority (Gunter, 2000).

At all stages of analysis, Patton's (2002) guidelines for inductive content analysis were utilized. The primary and secondary researchers independently read the first 10% of the headline articles coded non-game reporting in the quantitative analysis. Each researcher independently coded each article for the main newsworthy theme it represented. The independently coded articles were subsequently discussed by the primary and secondary researchers to establish the coding categories, ensuring consistency in coding. This discussion resulted in consensus on which articles to include as the basic units of analyses for each newsworthy theme represented in the articles. During the coding of the first 10% new newsworthy themes were emerging so the coders coded the next chronological 10% of the non-game reporting articles. Based on these agreed upon units of analyses, the primary and secondary researchers coded the next 10% of the articles independently. The coders worked independently of each other to control for coercion (Cuneen & Sidwell, 1998; Duncan & Sayaovong, 1990). Then, the primary and secondary researchers compared their codes for the second chronological 10% of the non-game reporting articles. An appropriate level of intercoder reliability, 90%, was

achieved. Ultimately scholars argue intercoder reliability or intercoder agreement in content analyses should be near 90% (Carey, Morgan, & Oxtoby, 1996; Miles & Huberman, 1994) and the coders in this study met this mark. The 10% discrepancy was the result of new newsworthy themes emerging and the coders had coded the new themes by similar but different labels. Upon discussing the new themes and recognizing the labels were synonyms the intercoder reliability was 100%.

Since an appropriate level of intercoder reliability was reached, the primary researcher coded the remaining 80% of the articles utilizing the reliable definitions within the Online Media Study Code Book (see Appendix B). After the primary researcher coded the remaining 80% of the articles, the secondary researcher independently coded a random sample of 50% of the 80% of the articles previously coded by the primary researcher. Both coders coded over 10% to 20% of the total sample for reliability, surpassing Wimmer and Dominick's (1997) recommendation. Again, the primary and secondary researchers compared their codes for the random sample of 50% and an appropriate level of intercoder reliability, 95%, was achieved.

Next, researchers independently read the descriptive codes and combined them into groups with similar meanings. Then both researchers collectively discussed the codes and common article themes agreed upon by the two researchers were grouped to form the labels for the lower order themes. A total of 13lower order themes were identified in this step of analysis: (1) team polls/rankings; (2) athlete injury/sickness; (3) coach achievement; (4) coach illness/tragedy; (5) coach contracts; (6) player suspension; (7) player transfers/leaves team; (8) player rankings/award candidates; (9) recruits/player signings; (10) NBA/WNBA; (11) bad player (player violates U.S. law, NCAA rule,

Conference rule, or Team rule); (12) bad coach(coach violates U.S. law, NCAA rule, Conference rule, or Team rule); or (13) other.

The same grouping process was repeated with the lower order themes to form higher order themes. This process resulted in a total of seven higher order themes: Coach is King, Syndicated Lists, Professional Leagues, Roster Management, Athlete Health, Rule Breakers, and Other. In the next step of analysis, the thirteen lower order themes were collapsed into seven higher order themes. The new theme, Coach is King, was formed by collapsing Coaching Achievement, Coach Illness/Tragedy, and Coach Contract, as these lower order themes represented articles focused on the head coach. Team Rankings and Player Rankings/Awards represented syndicated team and player ranking lists and formed the new theme titled, Syndicated Lists. The lower order themes Player Transfers/Leaves Team and High School Recruits/Player Joins Team collapsed to form the higher order theme Roster Management. Two themes represented players and/or coaches breaking United States' laws, or/and NCAA, Conference, or team rules: Bad Player and Bad Coach. These themes combined to form the new higher order theme titled Rule Breakers. Three lower order themes were renamed or maintained to represent their higher order meanings: WNBA/NBA became Professional Leagues, Athlete injury/sickness became Athlete Health, and Other was maintained. Table 2 provides definitions and examples for all emergent lower and higher order article themes.

Table 2. Definitions and Examples of Lower and Higher Order Headline Article Themes

HIGHER ORDER Lower Order	Definition	Examples
COACH IS KING		
Coach Achievement	• The head coach is recognized for reaching elite status by winning large quantities of games, exhibiting sustained success, or winning an award.	• Coach gets 600th win • Coach nearing the all-time wins record • Coach recognized as Coach of the Year
Coach Illness/Tragedy	• A health condition or a personal tragedy closely related to the head coach is discussed.	• Coach battles cancer • Coach's son shot
Coach Contract	• The status of the head coach's contract is discussed.	• Speculation of coach remaining at current school • The financial specifics of a coach's new contract
SYNDICATED LISTS		
Team Polls/Rankings	• A syndicated list of the top 25 ranked college basketball teams	• Associated Press (AP) poll • Coaches' poll
Player Rankings/Awards	• A syndicated list of the top ranked college basketball players • A national award bestowed upon individual players	• Wade trophy watch list • Kodak All-American list Naismith National Player of the Year
PROFESSIONAL LEAGUES		
WNBA/NBA	• Article focuses on WNBA or NBA	• Player retires from the WNBA • WNBA team purchased • Media questioning if a player plans to enter the NBA draft
ROSTER MANAGEMENT		
Player Transfers/Leaves Team	• An announcement of a player transferring from or leaving his/her current team	• Player leaves team for personal reasons without mention of joining a new team • Player leaves his/her current team with expressed interest in transferring to a new team.
High School Recruits/Player Joins Team	• An announcement of a high school recruit committing to a college basketball team or a current college player transferring onto or joining another college team	• Report of a player joining a team roster after transferring from another school • A high school sophomore verbally commits to a college basketball team
ATHLETE HEALTH		
Athlete Injury/Sickness	• An update on an athlete's health or injury status	• Player battled mononucleosis during the NCAA tournament • Player out with ACL tear

RULE BREAKERS		
Bad Player	• Allegations or confirmation of a player violating a U.S. law, NCAA rule, Conference rule, or team rule(s)	• Driving under the influence • Accepting payment from boosters • Domestic violence
Bad Coach	• Allegations or confirmation of a coach violating a U.S. law, NCAA rule, Conference rule, or team rule(s)	• Driving under the influence • Illegal phone calls • Criticizing referees
OTHER	• An article discussing issues extremely tangential to the basketball games, players and coaches	• Weather postpones game • Basketball artifacts discovered • Rowdy fans thrown out of bar

The inductive content analysis was considered complete when researchers agreed that no further meaningful higher-order themes could be inductively formed. For each of the lower and higher order themes examined in the study, frequency analysis was conducted to explore the percentage of the total population of articles representative of higher and lower order themes.

Intercoder Reliability

Historically, quantitative content analysis has proven to be a reliable method despite the dynamic environment of the Web (McMillan, 2000) and dual coders coding the data in order to reach agreement verifies this reliability.

A second coder was used for the examination of the content of all feature photographs and headline articles to add intercoder reliability, which is also called intercoder agreement (Krippendorff, 2004; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Intercoder reliability, synonymously referred to as "intercoder agreement" when discussing content analysis, is the "…measure to the extent to which independent judges make the same coding decision in evaluating the characteristics of messages" (Lombard, Snyder-Duch,

& Bracken, 2002, p. 587). A single coder/researcher may increase the likelihood of subjective interpretation; however, the presence of a second coder assures objectivity and trustworthiness to a content analysis (Krippendorff, 2004; Mayring, 2000; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The author and researcher of this study was a doctoral candidate in sport management. She had experience conducting sport media research and worked with sports journalists and sports information directors for five years specifically with women's intercollegiate basketball. The second coder had worked six years as a college professor in sport psychology, and also spent nine years conducting research concerning youth sports. The second coder was knowledgeable of the pertinent studies utilizing the coding schemes this study employed for content analysis (Buysse, 1992; Buysse & Embser-Herbert, 2004; Kane & Buysse, 2005) and the major findings in research on gender and the sport media. However, her knowledge of basketball was limited, which served as a perfect complement to the author, who had playing, coaching, and marketing basketball experience.

<div align="center">Data Analysis</div>

<div align="center">*Quantitative Data Analysis*</div>

Categorical data was collected concerning the status of feature photographs and headline articles thereby leading to analysis employing a Pearson's chi-square test. Each day "new" and "repeat" were the categories representing their statuses. In addition, the categorical variables of (a) in vs. out of uniform, (b) on vs. off the court, and (c) in active vs. passive poses were the categories that will be used to label the content of the feature photographs. When categorical variables are included in the study, frequencies are

<div align="center">65</div>

analyzed, whereas when variables are continuous, means can be compared (Field, 2006). The quantitative research questions for this study called for comparisons to be made between men's and women's basketball online media coverage during three season time periods comprising a collegiate basketball season: Non-conference, conference, and post-season. Therefore, Pearson's chi-square tests allowed the relationships between men's and women's collegiate basketball online media coverage, photographs, and text to be examined.

Qualitative Data Analysis

After reviewing, coding, and reaching intercoder agreement concerning the overall themes in the feature photographs and headline articles, the themes between women's and men's basketball were compared. Since the qualitative themes represented categorical variables, the frequencies were analyzed whereas when variables are continuous means would have been compared (Field, 2006). The qualitative research questions for this study called for comparisons to be made between men's and women's basketball online media coverage during three season time periods comprising a collegiate basketball season: Non-conference, conference, and post-season. Therefore, Pearson's chi-square tests allowed the relationships between men's and women's collegiate basketball online media coverage, photographs and text, to be examined.

Mixed Method Data Analysis

The overall purpose of this triangulation mixed method study was to gather complementary data on an identical subject, in this case online media coverage of men's and women's collegiate basketball, during the same time frame and with equal weight (Creswell & Piano Clark, 2007). The researcher attempted to compare the quantitative

and qualitative results while contrasting these findings with the conceptual framework of hegemony. Photographs and texts on online sport sites combine to inform the public. One must not separate these pieces of information as they communicate an overall message to society. Thus, it is imperative to analyze the primary information sections above the fold on online news sites, the feature article and photograph, in totality.

Comparisons between the quantitative findings and the qualitative findings allowed the researcher to form a holistic, overall finding regarding how the photographs and articles on women's and men's basketball home pages on ESPN.com challenged and reinforced male hegemony in sport. For example, the quantitative findings may have suggested male hegemony was challenged but the qualitative findings may have suggested male hegemony was reinforced. The mixed method data analysis involves comparing and contrasting the quantitative and qualitative findings with each other and the conceptual framework of male hegemony.

CHAPTER 4:

RESULTS

Quantitative Results

New Feature Photographs

The first research hypothesis under consideration predicted ESPN.com media

coverage of men's college basketball would include more new feature photographs

compared to women's college basketball during the season overall, non-conference,

conference and post-season play. A total of 336 feature photographs were analyzed.

Equal quantities of feature photographs (n=168) were displayed on women's and men's

basketball home pages on ESPN.com throughout the 2006-07 season. Overall, 279 (83%)

of the 336 coded feature photographs were new feature photographs. Of the 168 women's

basketball feature photographs, 131 (78%) were new feature photographs, whereas 148

(88.1%) of the 168 men's basketball feature photographs were new. On the women's

basketball site, "repeat" photographs were presented during 37 days; 21 photographs

were repeated varying from two to seven days. On the men's basketball site, "repeat"

photographs were presented during 20 days; six photographs were repeated varying from

two to four days. During the overall season and the non-conference portion of the season,

feature photographs displayed on the men's basketball home page were significantly

more likely to be new feature photographs compared to feature photographs on the

women's basketball home page, χ (1, *N*=368) = 6.11, *p*=.01, and χ (1, *N*=162) = 5.80,

p=.02, respectively. This significant discrepancy between the likelihood of viewing new

photographs on the men's basketball site compared to the women's basketball site

represents the reproduction of male hegemony in new media similar to the preference

historically given to male athletes in traditional media. There were no statistically

significant differences in the likelihood of a new feature photograph being displayed on

the women's or men's basketball Web pages during the conference or post-season

portions of the basketball schedules. The similar likelihood of ESPN.com presenting new

women's and men's photographs during the conference and post-season portions of their

schedules challenges male hegemony. Tables 3 and 4 show a complete representation of

these results.

Table 3. Frequencies and Percentages of New Feature Photographs by Sex of Athlete and

Season Time Period

Sex of Athlete	Overall Season (N)	%	Non-Confer-ence (N)	%	Confer-ence (N)	%	Post-season (N)	%
Women's Basketball	131[a](168)	78.00	52[b](80)	65.00	49(56)	87.50	30(32)	93.80
Men's Basketball	148[a](168)	88.10	67[b](82)	81.70	56(59)	94.90	25(27)	92.60
Total	279(336)	83.00	119(162)	73.50	105(115)	91.30	55(59)	93.20

[a] χ (1, N=368) = 6.11, p=.01

[b] χ (1, N=162) = 5.80, p=.02

Table 4. Frequencies and Percentages of Repeat Feature Photographs by Sex of Athlete

Consecutive Days Photograph Posted	Women's Basketball (N) = 21	%	Men's Basketball (N) = 6	%
2 days	15(21)	71.43	2(6)	33.33
3 days	0(21)	00.00	1(6)	16.67
4 days	0(21)	00.00	2(6)	33.33
5 days	1(21)	4.76	0(6)	00.00
6 days	2(21)	9.52	0(6)	00.00
7 days	1(21)	4.76	0(6)	00.00
Recycled	2(21)	9.52	1(6)	16.67
Total	21(21)	100.0	6(6)	100.0

New Headline Articles

The second research hypothesis under consideration predicted ESPN.com media coverage of men's college basketball would include more new headline articles compared to women's college basketball during the season overall, non-conference, conference, and post-season play. Overall, 1,423 (59.2%) of the total 2,402 women's and men's basketball headline articles were new articles. Of the 1,251 women's basketball headline articles displayed over the entire season, 621 (49.6%) were new articles. In comparison, 802 (69.7%) of the 1,151 men's basketball headline articles were new, χ (1, N=2402) = 99.69, p=.00. On the women's basketball site, 375 "repeat" articles were published and repeated varying from two to ten days. On the men's basketball site, 258 "repeat" articles were published and were repeated varying from two to six days. In addition, 195 women's basketball articles published early in the season were "recycled" and re-published later in the season whereas only 52 men's basketball articles were "recycled" and re-published later in the season.

During all four basketball season time periods studied, overall season, non-conference, conference, and post-season, headline articles on the men's collegiate basketball Web page were significantly more likely to be new articles compared to headline articles on the women's collegiate basketball page: χ (1, N=2402) = 99.69, p=.00; χ (1, N=852) = 7.09, p=.01; χ (1, N=1007) = 44.15, p=.00; and χ (1, N=543) = 72.42, p=.00, respectively. The significant discrepancy between the likelihood of reading new articles on the men's basketball site compared to the women's basketball site during all portions of the basketball season represents reproduction of male hegemony in new media similar to the preference historically given to male athletes in traditional

media. Further reproduction of male hegemony is represented by the large percentage (52%) of repeated women's basketball articles that were recycled or re-published later in the season compared to the percentage of recycled men's articles (20%). Table 5 details the results of these analyses.

Table 5. Frequencies and Percentages of New Headline Articles by Sex of Athlete and Season Time Period

Sex of Athlete	Overall Season (N)	%	Non-Conference (N)	%	Conference (N)	%	Post-season (N)	%
Women's Basketball	621[a](1251)	49.60	235[b](442)	53.20	271[c](513)	52.80	115[d](296)	38.90
Men's Basketball	802[a](1151)	69.60	255[b](410)	62.10	361[c](494)	73.10	186[d](247)	75.30
Total	1423(2402)	59.20	490(852)	57.50	632(1007)	62.80	301(543)	55.40

[a.] χ (1, N=2402) = 99.69, p=.00

[b.] χ (1, N=852) = 7.09, p=.01

[c.] χ (1, N=1007) = 44.15, p=.00

[d.] χ (1, N=543) = 72.42, p=.00

Table 6. Frequencies and Percentages of Repeat Headline Articles by Sex of Athlete

Consecutive Days Article Posted	Women's Basketball (*N*) = 375	%	Men's Basketball (*N*) = 258	%
2 days	71(375)	18.93	146(258)	56.59
3 days	33(375)	8.80	39(258)	15.12
4 days	35(375)	9.33	15(258)	5.81
5 days	24 (375)	6.40	2(258)	0.78
6 days	12(375)	3.20	4(258)	1.55
7 days	2(375)	0.53	0(258)	00.00
8 days	0(375)	0.00	0(258)	00.00
9 days	2(375)	0.53	0(258)	00.00
10 days	1(375)	0.27	0(258)	00.00
Recycled	195(375)	52.00	52(258)	20.16
Total	375(375)	100.0	258(258)	100.0

Photograph Representation

The third research question under consideration predicted ESPN.com media coverage of women's college basketball would include more feature photographs showing female athletes out of uniform, off the court and presented in passive positions more often compared to male athletes during the season overall, non-conference, conference and post-season play.

During the season overall, 336 feature photographs, including new and repeat photographs, were displayed on the women's and men's basketball Web sites. The foci of the photographs were classified as athlete, head coach, athlete(s) and coach, or other. Overall, the majority (76.5%) of the photographs focused on the athletes. Analyzing the foci of the photographs by an athlete's sex, not surprisingly, reflected similar results as 134 (79.8%) of the 168 women's basketball photographs and 123 (73.2%) of the men's

photographs focused on the athletes themselves. The relationship between athlete sex and the percentage of photographs focused on the athlete was not significant, χ^2 (1, N=336) = 2.00, p=.16, was not significant. Table 7 represents a breakdown of photograph foci.

Table 7. Frequencies and Percentages of the Focus of Feature Photographs by Sex of Athlete During the Season Overall

Sex of Athlete	Athlete [a] (N)	%	Head Coach [b] (N)	%	Athlete(s) and Coach [c] (N)	%	Other (N)	%
Women's Basketball	134(168)	79.80	22(168)	13.10	6(168)	3.60	6(168)	3.60
Men's Basketball	123(168)	73.20	34(168)	20.20	8(168)	4.80	3(168)	1.80
Total	257(336)	76.50	56(336)	16.70	14(336)	4.10	9(336)	2.70

[a.] χ^2 (1, N=336) = 2.00, p=.16
[b.] χ^2 (1, N=336) = 3.09, p=.08
[c.] χ^2 (1, N=336) = .298, p=.59

Given one purpose of this study was to analyze how female and male collegiate basketball players are portrayed in online media, only the 257 photographs focusing on the athletes were analyzed. The photographs were analyzed according to how female and male collegiate basketball players were portrayed in terms of their uniform presence, court location, and pose presentation.

Uniform Presence

Concerning uniform presence, the overall question was: What is the likelihood of observing female and male athletes in versus out of uniform when viewing the women's and men's college basketball home pages on ESPN.com? More specifically, female and male athletes' uniform presence was compared during the season overall, non-conference, conference, and post-season play. Results indicate no statistically significant

differences existed for uniform presence as a function of sex of athlete across all time periods under consideration. The equal likelihood of viewing a women's or men's basketball player in uniform challenges hegemonic masculinity by showing both female and male athletes as competent athletes.

Although analyses did not indicate statistically significant differences, it is interesting to note the season time periods regarding when female and male athletes were most and least likely to be portrayed in uniform. In women's basketball, the highest percentage of female athletes who appeared in uniform occurred during conference play (100%), whereas the lowest percentage was during the post-season (88.5%). In contrast, the highest percentage of male athletes who appeared in uniform occurred during the post-season (100%), whereas the lowest percentage was during non-conference play (92%). Table 8 details the results of these analyses.

Table 8. Frequencies and Percentages of Uniform Presence by Sex of Athlete Across Season Time Periods

Season Time Period	Women		Men	
	In (N)	% In	In (N)	% In
Overall Season [a]	130(134)	97.01	117(123)	95.12
Non-Conference [b]	57(58)	98.30	46(50)	92.00
Conference [c]	50(50)	100.00	51(53)	96.22
Post-season [d]	23(26)	88.50	20(20)	100.00
Total	260(268)	97.01	234(246)	95.12

[a.] χ (1, N=336) = 1.67, p=.20

[b.] χ (1, N=162) = 2.48, p=.12

[c.] χ (1, N=115) = .265, p=.61

[d.] χ (1, N=59) = .062, p=.80

Court Location

Concerning uniform presence, the overall question was: What is the likelihood of observing female and male athletes on vs. off the court when viewing the women's and men's college basketball Web pages on ESPN.com? More specifically, court location of female and male athletes was compared during the season overall, non-conference, conference, and post-season play. Results indicate no statistically significant differences exist for court location as a function of sex of athlete across all season time periods. Overall, an overwhelming percentage of the female (98.5%) and male (95.9%) athletes were portrayed on the court. The equal likelihood of viewing a women's or men's basketball player on the court challenges hegemonic masculinity by showing both female and male athletes in their respective sporting contexts. Table 9 presents these findings.

Table 9. Frequencies and Percentages of Court Location by Sex of Athlete Across Season Time Periods

Season Time Period	Women		Men	
	On (N)	% On	On (N)	% On
Overall Season [a]	132(134)	98.50	118(123)	95.90
Non-Conference [b]	58(58)	100.00	47(50)	94.00
Conference [c]	50(50)	100.00	52(53)	98.10
Post-season [d]	24(26)	92.30	19(20)	95.00
Total	264(268)	98.50	236(246)	95.90

[a] χ $(1, N=336) = 1.73, p=.19$

[b] χ $(1, N=162) = 2.01, p=.15$

[c] χ $(1, N=115) = .051, p=.82$

[d] χ $(1, N=59) = .133, p=.72$

Pose Presentation

The third question under investigation concerning the pose of the athletes was: Were male athletes featured in action significantly more often than female athletes when viewing the women's and men's college basketball Web pages on ESPN.com? More specifically, pose presentation of female and male athletes was compared during the season overall, non-conference, conference, and post-season play. Contrary to the two previous athlete portrayal variables, when examining between-gender differences for pose presentation as a function of athlete sex, statistically significant differences existed as women's basketball players were more likely than their male counterparts to be presented in action during the season overall and the conference portion of the season. No statistically significant differences existed concerning pose presentation during non-conference and post-season. Thus, during the season overall and the conference portion of the season, hegemonic masculinity was challenged because females were more likely than males to be shown in action as competent athletes. Table 10 presents these findings.

Table 10. Frequencies and Percentages of Pose Presentation by Sex of Athlete Across Season Time Periods

Season Time Period	Women		Men	
	Active (*N*)	% Active	Active (*N*)	% Active
Overall Season	105[a](134)	78.36	78[a](123)	63.41
Non-Conference [b]	50(58)	86.20	36(50)	72.00
Conference	39[c](50)	78.00	32[c](53)	60.38
Post-season [d]	16(26)	61.54	10(20)	50.00
Total	210(268)	78.36	156(246)	63.41

[a] χ (1, *N*=257) = 6.99, *p*=.01
[c] χ (1, *N*=103) = 3.73, *p*=.05

Qualitative Results

Qualitative analysis of the feature photographs and headline article content on the women's and men's basketball Web sites provided complementary context beyond the categorical coding of the quantitative analyses. Using content and textual analysis, common themes emerged within the photographs and articles on women's and men's basketball Web pages on ESPN.com over the course of the entire season.

Feature Photographs

Overall, including new and repeat feature photographs, 336 photographs were coded. One hundred sixty-eight (168) photographs were presented for both women's basketball and men's basketball. Throughout the season overall, in identical rank order, through inductive analysis six themes emerged within feature photographs on women's and men's basketball home pages on ESPN.com. They can be classified or categorized under the following headings: True Athleticism, Celebration Time, Coach Is King, Pile Up, Graphics, and Other.

Three themes accounted for over 80% of the feature photograph themes for women's and men's basketball: True Athleticism, Celebration Time, and Coach is King. Despite sharing a common thematic rank order for both women's and men's basketball, a statistically significant difference concerning the theme True Athleticism also existed. No other between-gender differences were statistically significant. Table 11 presents the frequencies of dominant themes portrayed in feature photographs on women's and men's basketball Web pages on ESPN.com.

Table 11. Frequencies and Percentages of the Feature Photograph Themes by Sex of

Athlete During the Season Overall

Photograph Theme	Women		Men	
	Theme (N)	%	Theme (N)	%
True Athleticism	89[a](168)	53.00	70[a](168)	41.70
Celebration Time	31(168)	18.50	44(168)	22.60
Coach is King	26(168)	15.50	27(168)	16.10
Pile Up	12(168)	7.10	5(168)	3.00
Graphics	2(168)	1.20	5(168)	3.00
Other	8(168)	4.80	17(168)	10.12

[a.] χ (1, N=336) = 4.78, p=.03

The three dominant feature photograph themes are described in the following

paragraphs. Secondary descriptive statistical analyses are provided to further explore the

potential reproduction or challenging of hegemonic masculinity via content in the

featured photographs. These statistical analyses are provided simply to provide greater

context beyond identifying themes.

True Athleticism

The theme True Athleticism represented the most serious portrayal of an athlete

as the athlete was in uniform, on the basketball court, and actively executing a basketball

skill that would be practiced (e.g., shooting, passing, dunking, etc.). Of the 168 feature

photographs for both women's and men's basketball, including new and repetitive

photographs, 53.0% of women's photographs compared to 41.7% of men's photographs

represented True Athleticism. This relationship between sex of athlete and the likelihood

of viewing a True Athleticism photograph was statistically significant. Indeed, female

athletes were more likely to be portrayed in uniform, on the court and in action,

representing True Athleticism, compared to their male counterparts, χ (1, N=336) =

4.78, $p=.03$. This finding represents a strong challenge to male hegemony since females are more likely than their male counterparts to be shown as competent athletes.

Celebration Time

Feature photographs exemplifying Celebration Time included athletes celebrating by clapping, sharing "high 5s," pumping fists, chest bumping, embracing, etc. Often the athletes, female and male, were in uniform and on the basketball court but in these photographs the athletes were not executing active skills that would be purposely practiced in a basketball practice. Of the 168 feature photographs for both women's and men's basketball, including new and repeat photographs, 18.5% of women's photographs compared to 22.0% of men's photographs represented celebration time. Thus, male athletes were portrayed celebrating more frequently compared to their female counterparts; however, this relationship between sex of athlete and the likelihood of viewing a celebration photograph was not statistically significant, χ (1, $N=336$) = 2.90, $p=.09$. This finding challenges hegemonic masculinity as women and men were equally likely to be shown celebrating which could be stereotypically viewed as a more feminine, supportive activity since it's not representative of a competent athlete performing a skill.

Coach is King

Feature photographs featuring the head coach defined the theme Coach is King. Women's or men's basketball photographs categorized as Coach is King focused on the head coach yelling, clapping, conversing with players, gazing upon the court, calling plays, etc. Of the 168 feature photographs for both women's and men's basketball, including new and repetitive photographs, 15.5% of women's photographs visually presented the head coach compared to 16.1% of men's photographs. This relationship

between sex of athlete and the likelihood of viewing a Coach is King photograph was not statistically significant, as head coaches in men's basketball were shown nearly as often as head coaches in women's basketball, χ (1, N=336) = 0.22, p=.88. This finding challenges hegemonic masculinity as head coaches for both women's and men's basketball were equally likely to be presented in feature photographs. Since the head coach is in a position of power and women's basketball coaches were shown as often as men's basketball coaches, male hegemony was challenged. Twelve (12) Coach is King photographs for women's basketball were re-published to account for 22 total photographic impressions. In addition, of the 22 Coach is King photographs published on the women's basketball home page, 19 featured female head coaches while three (3) presented male head coaches. Thus, female head coaches were over-represented as they represent 59.1% of women's basketball head coaches (Acosta & Carpenter, 2008) but were portrayed in 86% of the feature photographs.

Headline Articles

Overall, including new and repetitive headline articles, the content of 2,402 articles was analyzed. Specifically by sex of athlete, 1,251 articles were presented for women's basketball compared to 1,151 for men's basketball. Thus, more articles were published overall for women's basketball (52.1% of 2,402) compared to men's basketball (47.9% of 2,402) and this relationship was statistically significant, χ (1, N=2,402) = 99.69, p=.00.

Through inductive analysis, the content of the headline articles was examined to uncover potential themes. Initially two macro-level themes emerged: game reporting and non-game reporting. Secondary descriptive statistical analyses are provided to further

explore the potential reproduction or challenging of hegemonic masculinity via content in the headline articles. These statistical analyses are provided simply to give greater context beyond identifying themes. The percentages of headline articles categorized as game reporting or non-game reporting were reviewed. Results indicate male athletes received significantly more game reporting articles, χ (1, N=2,402) = 7.08, p=.01, throughout the season overall compared to female athletes. This finding represents reproduction of male hegemony as significantly more men's basketball articles reported on game activity compared to women's basketball articles signifying men's basketball game activity is more worthy of being reported than women's basketball game activity.

Throughout the season overall, 13 content themes emerged within headline articles coded as non-game reporting on ESPN.com's women's and men's basketball Web pages: Team Rankings, Athlete Injury/Sickness, Coach Achievement, Coach Illness/Tragedy, Coach Contract, Player Suspension, Player Transfer/Leaves Team, Player Rankings/Awards, High School Recruits/Player Joins Team, WNBA/NBA, Bad Player, Bad Coach, and Other.

Results indicate statistically significant differences exist concerning five of the seven headline article higher order themes: Coach is King, Syndicated Lists, Professional Leagues, Athlete Health, and Rule Breakers. No statistically significant between-gender differences existed for Roster Management or Other articles. Table 12 presents the frequencies and percentages of the lower and higher order themes within the articles categorized as non-game reporting for women's and men's basketball.

Table 12. Frequencies and Percentages of the Lower and Higher Order Themes within Non-Game Reporting Headline Articles by Sex of Athlete During the Season Overall

Article Theme	Women		Men	
	Theme (N)	%	Theme (N)	%
Coach is King	**158[a](803)**	**19.68**	**185[a](678)**	**27.29**
Coach Achievement	40(803)	4.98	35(678)	5.16
Coach Illness/Tragedy	37(803)	4.61	20(678)	2.95
Coach Contract	81(803)	10.09	130(678)	19.18
Syndicated Lists	**156[b](803)**	**19.43**	**55[b](678)**	**8.11**
Team Rankings	75(803)	9.34	44(678)	6.49
Player Rankings/Awards	81(803)	10.09	11(678)	1.62
Professional Leagues	**146[c](803)**	**18.18**	**27[c](678)**	**3.98**
Roster Management	**40(803)**	**4.98**	**30(678)**	**4.42**
Player Transfer/Leave Team	34(803)	4.23	25(678)	3.69
High School Recruits/Join Team	6(803)	0.75	5(678)	0.74
Athlete Health	**56[d](803)**	**6.97**	**119[d](678)**	**17.60**
Rule Breakers	**19[e](803)**	**2.37**	**89[e](678)**	**13.13**
Bad Player	15(803)	1.87	65(678)	9.59
Bad Coach	4(803)	0.50	24(678)	3.54
Other	**226(803)**	**28.14**	**175(678)**	**25.81**

[a.] χ (1, N=1481) = 11.96, p=.001

[b.] χ (1, N=1481) = 38.52, p=.00

[c.] χ (1, N=1481) = 71.86, p=.00

[d.] χ (1, N=1481) = 39.48, p=.00

[e.] χ (1, N=1481) = 62.96, p=.00

[f.] χ (1, N=1481) = 1.29, p=.26

The dominant higher order themes identified in headline articles will be described and expanded upon with representative article text from women's and men's basketball articles in the following paragraphs. Descriptive statistical analysis will complement the findings to provide additional context.

Coach is King

The higher order theme, Coach is King, represented non-game reporting articles focused primarily on the lower order themes Coach Achievement, Coach Health/Tragedy and Coach Contract. Analyzing the headline articles of women's and men's basketball collectively, including new and repeat articles, 343 of the 1,481 articles (23.16%) focused on the head coach. This percentage represents the largest percentage accounted for by a coding category aside from the diverse Other category. Specifically for women's basketball, 158 of 803 (19.68%) headline articles focused on the head coach. In contrast, the head coach was featured in 185 of 678 (27.29%) men's basketball articles. This relationship between sex of athlete and the likelihood of the headline article focusing on the head coach was statistically significant, as head coaches in men's basketball were textually highlighted more often than head coaches in women's basketball, χ (1, N=1481) = 11.96, p=.001. This finding represents hegemonic masculinity being reproduced in new media since news concerning men's basketball coaches was significantly more likely to be reported compared to news concerning women's basketball coaches. The over-representation of articles reporting on men's basketball coaches implicitly communicates that men's basketball coaches are more important than women's basketball coaches.

The largest percentage within the higher order theme Coach is King for both women's and men's basketball included articles representative of the lower order theme, Coach Contract Statuses. The coach contract articles typically reported coach contract statuses such as coach resignations and retirements, contract extensions, and speculation about coaches' employment futures and coaches being fired and hired. A larger

percentage of the Coach is King articles in men's basketball focused on coach contract statuses, 130 of the 185 articles (70.27%), compared to women's basketball articles, 81 of the 158 (51.27%). For men's basketball, 82 new coach contract articles were re-published to total 130 impressions whereas, in women's basketball 20 new articles were re-published to account for 81 coach contract article impressions, an average of four days per article. Throughout the 2006-07 basketball season, similar percentages of contract status articles for women's and men's basketball announcing resignations, retirements, contract extensions and hired coaches were published. However, dissimilar percentages of articles speculating about the coaching futures and reporting on fired coaches were published as a higher percentage of these categorized articles existed in men's basketball compared to women's basketball.

Similar Representation of Articles within Coach is King

Throughout the 2006-07 basketball season, the percentage of articles announcing resignations of head coaches for women's and men's basketball were similar. Reasons for coach resignations for women's and men's basketball were linked to health issues, losing seasons, and for a couple women's basketball coach resignations no reasons were offered.

Health issues were reasons for resignation in women's basketball, but in men's basketball a health issue was defended to assure the coach would remain in his position. For example in women's basketball, the head coach at Lamar University abruptly resigned due to chest pains, while another coach resigned from coaching and assumed an athletic administration role within the same athletic department due to health issues in the article titled "No. Iowa coach DiCecco resigns, will work with AD" ("No. Iowa," 2007). However, in men's basketball, Lute Olson, the head coach at the University of Arizona,

defended his health in an article titled "Arizona coach denies Parkinson's rumor" ("Arizona Coach," 2007). "He was concerned about what the rumor would do in the heated competition for high school talent. … This is the kind of thing you get from people you are recruiting against," Olson said. "If the rumor is going around here, it's certainly going to be passed around" ("Arizona Coach," 2007).

Losing records were also cited as reasons for coach resignations. For example, in mid-March a women's basketball article titled "Durkin steps down as Duquesne's coach" ("Durkin Steps," 2007) alluded to a 2-12 conference record as the reason for resignation. Similarly, in a men's basketball article titled "Evansville's Merfeld resigns after 14-17 season" ("Evansville's Merfeld," 2007), Coach Merfeld's resignation was explicitly linked to the losing season and a first-round loss in the Missouri Valley Conference tournament.

The reasons for the next two resignations by Dianne Nolan at Fairfield University and Katie Abrahamson-Henderson at Missouri State University were unclear in the articles titled "Fairfield's Nolan resigns after 28-year tenure" ("Fairfield's Nolan," 2007) and "Abrahamson-Henderson resigns at Missouri State" ("Abrahamson-Henderson," 2007), as only their winning records and NCAA tournament appearances were mentioned. Lastly, the resignation of coach Rene Portland of Penn State in late March was the only resignation article using the word "quit" in the article title, "Penn State's Portland makes 'difficult' decision to quit" ("Penn State's Portland," 2007). Despite an extremely successful career, amid allegations of discrimination against lesbian players and being reprimanded and threatened with dismissal by Penn State for violating the institution's discrimination policy, coach Portland resigned.

The percentage of articles announcing retirements of head coaches for women's and men's basketball were similar. Reasons for coach retirements for women's and men's basketball were commonly linked to extensive years of coaching. For example, in women's basketball, the article titled "Pirtle retires after 21 seasons as Cincinnati coach" ("Pirtle Retires," 2007) explicitly mentions her years of tenure. The article titled "Second-winningest coach Conradt retires from Texas" ("Second-Winningest Coach," 2007) implicitly refers to many years of coaching women's basketball by mentioning her elite winning status achieved over the course of a long career. Similarly, in men's basketball, the article titled "Davey will retire after 30 seasons with Santa Clara" ("Davey Will," 2007) explicitly mentions his years on the sidelines, whereas the article titled "Davis retires after 4 seasons at Drake; son takes over" ("Davis Retires," 2007) is misleading because the article mentions that "Dr. Tom Davis is retiring from the Division I coaching ranks after 32 seasons, the last four spent at Drake."

The percentage of articles announcing contract extensions and hiring of coaches for women's and men's basketball were similar. The primary reason for contract extensions and hiring of coaches was also similar for women's and men's basketball: history of winning games. In men's basketball, the article titled "Alford left Iowa early for six-year deal with Lobos" ("Alford Left," 2007) cited Alford's success as a college basketball player at Indiana University, his success as head coach at the University of Iowa with a record of 152-106, and three NCAA tournament appearances as reasons for New Mexico to hire him. In women's basketball, ESPN.com reported Michigan State's head coach signed a contract extension in the article titled "McCallie signs five-year rollover deal with Spartans" ("McCallie Signs," 2007). The article cited her overall

record of 149-75 and leading her team to the national championship game in 2005 as indicators of success and worthy of a contract extension. Interestingly, McCallie's salary of "$643,000 with incentives" was reported; while more common in articles reporting men's basketball coaches' contract extensions, women's basketball salaries are rarely published. For example, highly successful head coaches Dawn Staley of Temple University and Charli Turner-Thorne of Arizona State University agreed to six- and five-year contracts, respectively; however, in both articles, the career successes for each coach were discussed but the salary details were not released. The similar representation of articles concerning coach statuses for women's and men's basketball coaches, a sub-category of the overarching Coach is King theme, challenged male hegemony. Women's basketball coaches' statuses were equally valued compared to their male counterparts.

Dissimilar Representation of Articles within Coach is King

While similar percentages of articles for women's and men's basketball announcing resignations, retirements, contract extensions, and hired coaches were published, differing percentages concerning speculation about the coaching futures of men's basketball coaches and reporting on fired men's basketball coaches were published compared to women's basketball articles.

Fired coaches

Over the course of the 2006-07 basketball season, 20 men's basketball headline articles referred to coaches being fired using a variety of contract-ending verbiage compared to a single (1) headline article for women's basketball focused solely on the firing of a head coach.

Reports of men's basketball coaches being fired varied from articles titled "Moser fired by Illinois State" ("Moser Fired," 2007) to "DeSantis out after 11 years" ("DeSantis Out," 2007) to "Amaker dismissed after six seasons as Michigan coach" ("Amaker Dismissed," 2007). In contrast, ESPN.com's women's basketball Web page reported on its only published coach firing in the article titled "Daugherty out after 11 seasons as Huskies' coach" ("Daugherty Out," 2007). While the difference in percentage of articles reporting on coach firings between women's and men's basketball was recognizable, the overall difference in percentage of articles speculating about coaches' futures by sex of the athlete was more visible.

Speculation about coaches' futures

The final contract status category associated with Coach is King was speculation about coaches' futures. In men's basketball, discussion about coaches' futures with their current teams or the likelihood of coaching a new team began in late February and was ongoing throughout the NCAA tournament. Often the speculation would begin with an article forecasting or questioning the likelihood of a coaching move followed by an article confirming the end result. However, in women's basketball, most reports of coaching changes occurred post-change. Thus, speculation about a coach's future was extremely rare.

The majority of articles speculating about coaches' futures involved the high profile, head coach position at the University of Kentucky. The future of Tubby Smith, then-head coach for Kentucky, was uncertain and potential replacement candidates were discussed. For example, early conflicting articles titled "Tubby tells team he's not going anywhere" ("Tubby Tells," 2007), "Board reluctant to get involved in Smith decision"

("Board Reluctant," 2007), and "Smith never considered Minny job until Wednesday"
(Katz, 2007), assured he would remain at Kentucky but later changed to his consideration
of coaching at the University of Minnesota. Upon Smith's departure from Kentucky,
discussion of former Kentucky head coach Rick Pitino and former Wildcat player and
head coach of the University of Florida, Billy Donavan, circulated. Articles titled "Pitino
not interested in replacing Tubby at Kentucky" ("Pitino Not," 2007) and "School
president confident Donavan will stay at Florida" ("School President," 2007) provided
information concerning the likelihood of Pitino and Donovan becoming Kentucky's next
head coach.

In contrast, speculation of only one women's basketball coach's future was
reported on ESPN.com. As the Duke women's basketball team headed into the
Greensboro Regional Semifinal against Rutgers, speculation about head coach Gail
Goestenkors' future remaining at the helm of the Blue Devils or replacing the recently
retired Jody Conradt at the University of Texas, surfaced in headline articles. This
speculation began on March 24th, with a lead article titled "Duke coach claims no contact
by Longhorns" ("Duke Coach," 2007). This article was re-published for three additional
days until March 29th when the article titled "Goestenkors not expected to make quick job
decision" ("Goestenkors Not," 2007) announced Goestenkors had interviewed, as
speculated, for the head coach position at the University of Texas. The following day an
article titled "Students, fans rally to keep Goestenkors at Duke" ("Students, Fans," 2007)
reported "about 200 Duke fans held an on-campus rally to show support for
Goestenkors." This article remained within the women's basketball headline articles for
the next four consecutive days during the season finale Final Four games. On April 4th,

the article titled "Goestenkors leaves Duke, heads for Texas" ("Goestenkors Leaves," 2007) marked the end of speculation about coach Goestenkors' future. The differing percentages concerning speculation about the coaching futures of women's and men's basketball coaches and reporting on fired women's and men's basketball coaches reproduces male hegemony in new media. The lack of media coverage of both issues implicitly communicates men's basketball is more important than women's basketball because the position of head men's basketball coach is worthy of speculative commentary.

Lower order themes that represented smaller percentages of Coach is King articles for women's and men's basketball articles included articles focused on the achievements and health of coaches. Percentages of achievement and health focused articles by sex of athlete were similarly small. While many women's basketball coaches and a few men's basketball coaches reached monumental career wins the quantity of articles discussing their achievements were few and far between.

Many longtime women's and men's basketball coaches reached career-win milestones during the 2006-07 season. In women's basketball, coaches Wendy Larry of Old Dominion and Joe Foley of University of Arkansas-Little Rock won their 500th games ("Larry Becomes," 2006; "ULAR's Foley," 2007) and Florida International's head coach Cindy Russo and coach Rene Portland of Penn State University won their 600th games ("FIU's Russo," 2006; "After 31 Years," 2007). In men's basketball, the dominant coaching achievement subject was coach Bob Knight's progress toward becoming the all-time winningest Division I basketball coach. Beginning in the non-conference portion of the season on December 7th, ESPN.com provided regular progress

updates and a countdown until coach Knight was expected to pass coach Dean Smith as the all-time winningest Division I coach. These coach Knight updates were published until January 1, 2007, when coach Knight won his 880th win and surpassed the previous win record. In addition, Oregon Tech's head coach, Danny Miles reached a milestone win when he collected his 800th win. This win was reported in the article titled "Coach Miles earns win No. 800 at Oregon Tech" ("Coach Miles," 2007). This article was the only article on ESPN.com for women's or men's basketball during the 2006-07 season to reference men's and women's basketball career-coaching wins collectively: "He [coach Miles] joins nine men's and three women's coaches at four-year schools to reach the 800-wins mark."

Just as the media celebrated the career win milestones, the media also documented the more personal health battles of women's and men's coaches. The primary personal illness or tragedy stories for coaches involved women's basketball coach Kay Yow's battle with breast cancer and men's basketball coach Jimmy Collin's season long struggle with an abdominal aortic aneurysm.

Early in the non-conference portion of the season, ESPN.com reported North Carolina State's women's basketball coach Kay Yow, one of the most accomplished coaches in women's basketball history, would take a leave of absence from coaching while she fights breast cancer ("Wolfpack Coach," 2006). In early January, a headline article titled "Yow says return to bench is a 'possibility'" ("Yow Says," 2007) upgraded coach Yow's status when reporting that "recent blood tests showed a decline in cancer cells since she began chemotherapy in November." Next, one of the lead headline articles announced "Coach Yow to rejoin NC State after two-month leave" ("Coach Yow,"

2007). In mid-February, a multiple page, photograph-filled article documenting coach

Yow's miracle season was published. One month later on March 13th, a report of NC

State earning a No. 4 seed in the Fresno Regional for the NCAA tournament was

enmeshed with the season long story of coach Yow's optimism and perseverance despite

battling cancer. Upon NC State's NCAA tournament loss her health updates were no

longer published.

Similarly, in men's basketball articles, regular updates were reported on Coach

Collins condition. As the conference portion of the season was approaching, an article

titled "Illinois-Chicago coach takes a leave of absence" ("Illinois-Chicago," 2006) lacked

an explanation for the leave. Next, an article informed the public of his health condition

prompting the leave of absence with the article titled "UIC coach hospitalized for

abdominal aortic aneurysm" ("UIC Coach," 2007). An article documenting Coach

Collin's progress titled "UIC's Collins in good condition following surgery" ("UIC's

Collins," 2007) led to the final article assuring basketball fans that Coach Collins would

return to the bench titled "Coach Collins says he'll be back in spring" ("Coach Collins

Says," 2007). While the accounts of both coaches Yow and Collins were quite personal,

many standardized articles exemplifying the higher order theme of Syndicated Lists were

also published on ESPN.com's women's and men's basketball Web pages.

Syndicated Lists

The higher order theme, Syndicated Lists, represented non-game reporting articles

reporting syndicated lists of the top 25 ranked Division I college basketball teams and

individual basketball player rankings.

Analyzing the headline articles of women's and men's basketball collectively, including new and repeat articles, 211 of the 1,481 articles (14.25%) presented syndicated lists ranking teams or individual players. This percentage represents the second largest percentage of articles across both women's and men's basketball articles. Specifically for women's basketball, 156 of 803 (19.43%) headline articles focused on syndicated lists. In contrast, syndicated lists were featured in 55 of 678 (8.11%) men's basketball articles. This relationship between sex of athlete and the likelihood of the headline article focusing on syndicated lists was statistically significant, as syndicated lists were presented significantly more often in women's basketball compared to men's basketball, χ (1, N=1481) = 38.52, p=.00. This finding represents the reproduction of male hegemony in new media since women's basketball articles were more likely to include the syndicated lists which are simple reporting of data that is distributed to the majority of news wires across the country free-of-charge and require few media resources (e.g., a reporter and his or her time to write the article).

Within the higher order theme Syndicated Lists, two lower order themes, Team Rankings and Player Rankings/Awards, existed for both women's and men's basketball. A larger percentage of the Syndicated Lists articles in men's basketball, 44 of the 55 (80.00%), focused on Team Rankings compared to women's basketball 75 of the 156 (48.08%) articles. In contrast, a larger percentage of the Syndicated Lists articles in women's basketball, 81 of the 156 (51.92%), focused on Player Rankings/Awards compared to men's basketball 11 of the 55 (20.00%) articles. The Team Rankings articles for women's and men's basketball reported the ESPN/USA Today Top 25 coaches' poll. The Player Rankings/Awards articles varied for women's and men's basketball. For

women's basketball 20 new Player Rankings/Award articles were re-published on average four days per article totaling 81 Player Rankings/Awards article impressions whereas seven new articles were re-published totaling 11 article impressions. The women's basketball articles representing Player Rankings/Awards reported candidates, semifinalists and the final winners for the John Wooden Award, Naismith Trophy, Lowe's Senior CLASS Award, Wade Trophy, Midseason All-American Team, Nancy Lieberman Award, Associated Press All-American team, and WBCA National Defensive Player of the Year. The men's basketball articles representing Player Rankings/Awards reported candidates and finalists for the John Wooden Award and the award winners for the Associated Press All-American team, Adolph F. Rupp Trophy, Associated Press Player of the Year, Bob Cousy Award, and the Naismith Trophy.

Professional Leagues

The higher order theme, Professional Leagues, represented non-game reporting articles focused primarily on activities in the women's and men's professional basketball leagues, the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) and the National Basketball Association (NBA). Analyzing the headline articles of women's and men's basketball collectively, including new and repetitive articles, 173 of the 1,481 articles (11.68%) focused on the professional basketball leagues. Specifically for women's basketball, 146 of 803 (18.18%) headline articles focused on the WNBA. In contrast, the NBA was featured in 27 of 678 (3.98%) men's basketball articles. This relationship between sex of athlete and the likelihood of the headline article focusing on a professional league was statistically significant, as articles focused on the WNBA were present within women's college basketball headline articles significantly more often

compared to the NBA within men's college basketball articles, χ (1, N=1481) = 71.86, p=.00.

During the 2006-07 women's basketball season, 34 articles focused on the WNBA were re-published an average of 4.3 days for a total of 146 WNBA article impressions. In men's basketball, 14 NBA focused articles were re-published an average of 1.9 days, totaling 27 NBA article impressions. Newsworthy themes within the Professional Leagues higher order theme varied greatly between women's and men's college basketball headline articles. The WNBA articles focused on: current WNBA player contract updates such as retirements, contract signings, and trades; WNBA player health updates such as injuries and pregnancies; and WNBA team/league news. In contrast, the NBA articles primarily reported on speculation about current men's college basketball players foregoing their remaining year(s) of NCAA eligibility to enter the NBA draft.

The primary focus of the Professional League articles for women's basketball reported on WNBA player and coach contract updates such as trades, contract signings, and retirements. For example, the most re-published WNBA article reported the retirement of Charlotte Smith, an eight-year WNBA veteran, from the Indiana Fever ("Fever F Charlotte," 2006). An assortment of articles exemplified the WNBA player contract articles concerning contract signings, such as the article titled "WNBA leader Holdsclaw re-signs with Sparks" ("WNBA Leader," 2007), player trades such as the article titled "Lynx trade forward Williams to Monarch" ("Lynx Trade," 2007), and coach contracts such as the article titled "Lynx go with Minneapolis native Zierden as coach" ("Lynx Go," 2006).

A secondary focus of the Professional League articles for women's basketball provided WNBA player health updates such as injuries and pregnancies. The pregnancies of Lisa Leslie and Kamila Vodichkova were newsworthy events as they would reportedly miss the 2007 season in articles titled "Leslie to miss '07 season because of pregnancy" ("Leslie To," 2006) and "Mercury's Vodichkova pregnant, to miss '07 season" ("Mercury's," 2007). Another newsworthy event resulting in a WNBA player missing the 2007 season was reported in an article titled "Sun G Phillips tears ACL, likely will miss WNBA season" ("Sun G Phillips," 2007).

An additional secondary focus of the Professional League articles for women's basketball reported on WNBA team/league news such as WNBA teams being purchased or going defunct, and speculation about new WNBA teams forming. During the 2006-07 college women's basketball season the Los Angeles Sparks and Houston Comets were purchased by season ticket holders from each respective team ("Sparks Purchased," 2006; "Season Ticket-Holder," 2007). Other newsworthy events included the WNBA's Charlotte Sting team going defunct with all the Sting players later dispersed in the draft in the article titled "Bobcats drop ownership, turn over control of Sting" ("Bobcats Drop," 2006). While one team was folding, organizing groups in Fort Collins, Colorado, and Atlanta, Georgia, were attempting to attract inaugural WNBA teams to their respective states ("Group Planning," 2007; "Colorado Group," 2007).

While the majority of the WNBA portion of the Professional Leagues articles focused on current WNBA player, team, and league news, an overwhelming majority of the NBA articles focused on speculation about current men's college basketball players foregoing their remaining year(s) of NCAA eligibility to enter the NBA draft.

Specifically, the professional futures of freshmen Kevin Durant and Brook Lopez, sophomores Josh McRoberts and Julian Wright, and junior Glen Davis were reported. The speculation about the future of Kevin Durant—to stay in college or to declare for the NBA draft—began in mid-February with an article titled "Texas star Durant may not enter draft, father says" ("Texas Star," 2007) and ended with an article re-published multiple times during the end of March and the beginning of April titled "Durant's family to discuss decision soon" (Katz, 2007). The speculation about Glen Davis' basketball future began in mid March with the article titled "Davis undecided on whether to sign with an agent" (Katz, 2007) and ended with Davis scheduling a press conference to announce his declaration for the NBA draft reported in an article titled "'Big Baby' Davis leaving LSU after three seasons" ("Big Baby," 2007). Articles discussing the professional basketball futures of Lopez, McRoberts, and Wright were presented on ESPN.com for three or less days each during the final weeks of March.

In contrast, only speculation surrounding the future professional basketball careers of two women's basketball players, Candace Parker and Sylvia Fowles, were discussed in the women's basketball articles. The articles, titled "Lady Vols' Parker not eligible for WNBA draft this year" ("Lady Vols," 2007), "Fowles and Parker both eligible for WNBA draft" (Voepel, 2007), and "Fowles says she will return to LSU next season" (Voepel, 2007), discussed their respective eligibility statuses to declare for the WNBA draft according to NCAA and WNBA rules. However, the conversations present in the articles speculating about men's college basketball players entering the draft were less about eligibility and more about their college accolades and statistics to draft pick predictions.

Roster Management

The percentage of articles within the higher order theme Roster Management for both women's and men's basketball were similar. These articles typically reported on players transferring from a team, leaving a team without mention of transferring, or players joining teams. The percentage of articles focusing on Roster Management in women's basketball, 40 of the 803 articles (4.98%), was comparable to the percentage in men's basketball articles, 30 of the 678 (4.42%). This relationship between sex of athlete and the likelihood of the headline article focusing on Roster Management was not statistically significant, χ (1, *N*=1481) = 0.74, *p*=.39. This finding represents a challenge to male hegemony since information concerning women's and men's basketball rosters were similarly likely to be reported. Just as the percentages of Roster Management articles for women's and men's basketball were similar, so were the newsworthy topics within the articles.

During the course of the 2006-07 women's basketball season, six (6) new Roster Management articles were re-published to total 40 impressions, an average of six days per article, whereas, in men's basketball 15 new articles were re-published to account for 30 Roster Management article impressions. Roster Management articles reported on players transferring, leaving or joining the college teams.

Roster Management articles reporting on players transferring were found only in men's basketball articles. Reasons for transferring included lack of playing time, homesickness, and illness. Typically the transfer decision was announced in the article title and the reason(s) for the transfer was implicitly or explicitly provided within the body of the article. For example, in the article titled "Washington redshirt freshman Perry

to transfer" ("Washington," 2006), the implicit reason for transfer reported within in the article was lack of playing time: "Perry, a top recruit for Romer two years ago, was buried in Washington's rotation this season. Romer has moved freshman guard Adrian Oliver into the starting lineup and that hurt Perry's playing time." The athlete, Harvey Perry, did not provide a reason for his transfer via a quote within the article. An example of an athlete providing an explicit reason for transferring occurred in an article titled "Memphis native to transfer from Arizona to Tennessee" ("Memphis Native," 2007) when the athlete communicated his desire to play closer to home: "The health problems I dealt with last spring have kept me from performing at the level needed here at Arizona. Right now I just want to get back home and get better physically." While Roster Management articles focused on players transferring were present only in men's basketball, Roster Management articles focused on players leaving their respective teams were present for both women's and men's basketball.

Roster Management articles focused on leaving the team were represented by articles that utilized the word "leave" instead of "transfer" and typically reported on players leaving their teams without immediate plans of transferring to another team. Similar to articles focusing on athlete transferring, the leave status was reported in the article title; however, in the leaving articles, often the reason for the athlete's departure was provided within the article title as well. For example, in women's basketball, articles titled "Robinson leaves Wyoming for personal reasons" ("Robinson," 2006) and "Players leave program after suspension for bomb prank" ("Players Leave Program," 2007) announced the leave statuses and the athletes' reasons for leaving. In men's basketball, an

article titled "Egerson leaves Georgetown for personal reasons" ("Egerson Leaves," 2007), also announced the leave status and provided a reason for departure.

Roster Management articles focused on joining the team were represented by articles that reported recruiting commitments from high school players and current/former college players joining new college team rosters. In women's basketball, two articles reported on players joining teams. The articles titled "Women's basketball signing lists" ("Women's Basketball," 2006) and "Sooners sign Rothlisberger's sis, two others to letters" ("Sooners Sign," 2006) provided information regarding high school players committing to college teams. Specifically, the former article provided a listing of all high school girl players who committed to Division I teams and the latter provided information about three specific commitments for the University of Oklahoma. Interestingly, the Oklahoma Roster Management article, while reporting on women's basketball recruit signings, also provides details about multiple Oklahoma women's basketball players being from families with professional male athletes such as Ben Roethlisberger (NFL quarterback), Bubba Paris (former NFL player), and Hakeem Olajuwon (former NBA player). In men's basketball, articles reporting on players joining teams included high school recruits similar to women's basketball but also included articles reporting on what teams transferred players joined. For example, the transfer of Tennessee's Marques Johnson was announced in late-December and in mid-January an article titled "Tennessee reserve Johnson transfers to NC State" ("Tennessee Reserve," 2007) reported Johnson had joined a new team. Thus, the complete journey for Johnson, from transfer to joining a new team, was reported. Regarding high school commitments in men's basketball, one (1) article was published. In the article, titled "High school

freshman decides to play at Wazzu" ("High School," 2007), the 14 year old player, his high school coach, and his parents commented on this young athlete's decision to join the Washington State men's basketball team at the conclusion of his interscholastic career.

Athlete Health

The higher order theme, Athlete Health, represented non-game reporting articles focused primarily on injuries and sicknesses of women's and men's basketball players. Analyzing the headline articles of women's and men's basketball collectively, including new and repetitive articles, 175 of the 1,481 (11.82%) articles focused on Athlete Health. Specifically for men's basketball, injuries and sicknesses were the focus of 119 out of 678 (17.55%) articles. In contrast, women's basketball player injuries and sicknesses were the focus of 56 of 803 (6.97%) headline articles. This relationship between sex of athlete and the likelihood of the headline article focusing on player injuries and sicknesses was statistically significant, as injuries and sickness of men's basketball players were reported significantly more often than injuries and sickness of women's basketball players, χ (1, N=1481) = 39.48, p=.00. This finding represents the reproduction of hegemonic masculinity in new media since the over-representation of articles reporting men's basketball injuries communicates men's basketball injuries are more worthy of media coverage compared to women's basketball injuries.

Throughout the 2006-07 season the majority of the Athlete Health articles in men's basketball focused on player injuries with a secondary focus on player sicknesses. Women's basketball articles focusing on Athlete Health included only articles reporting player injuries. No articles reporting player sicknesses were present in women's basketball. The Athlete Health articles focusing on player injuries were similar for

women's and men's basketball included reporting of injuries such as pulled quadriceps muscles, foot fractures, sprained ankles, bruised ribs, dislocated elbows, torn anterior cruciate ligaments (ACL), broken noses, etc. Athlete Health articles focusing on player sicknesses were present only in men's basketball and reported on mononucleosis, upper respiratory infections, and strep throat. The common article format for Athlete Health articles included identifying the injury/sickness, reporting the player's statistics, and expectations/speculation about the timeline for the player to return to play.

Athlete Health articles reporting player injuries for women's and men's basketball were similar as they both reported injuries common for the sport of basketball. However, men's basketball received a larger quantity of player injury and player sickness articles. Regarding player injury articles, men's basketball received 61 articles representing 41 player injuries compared to women's basketball receiving 56 articles representing 11 women's basketball player injuries. A similar pattern persisted for articles reporting player sicknesses as four (4) men's basketball player sicknesses were reported and repeated in 14 articles compared to zero (0) women's basketball player sicknesses published. In addition, the reporting style of providing an initial injury announcement article followed by a rehabilitation progress article or/and a confirmation/implication of injury article was present only in men's basketball.

Injuries of men's basketball players were accounted for more often than women's basketball players and the significance of men's injuries was communicated by the articles through (1) announcing the injury, and (2) tracking the progress of men's basketball player injuries. For example, on December 14, 2007, a high ankle sprain was announced for Florida Gator men's basketball player, Al Horford ("Florida's Horford,"

2007). Six days later, an article titled "Injured Horford to miss at least one more game" ("Injured Horford," 2007) announced "Horford will miss a second consecutive game Wednesday with a high ankle sprain and could be sidelined when the Gators host No.3 Ohio State on Saturday." Two days later an article titled "Injury to sideline Horford vs. Ohio State" ("Injury to Sideline," 2007) reported Horford's anticipated game time status and updated readers on Horford's rehabilitation and workout drills: "Horford spent a week wearing a protective boot on his left foot. He has started running and going through drills, but Donovan said his workouts have been solely conditioning drills." One day later, an article ("Horford Practices," 2007) reported "Horford was ruled out for Saturday's showdown in Gainesville on Thursday. But then on Friday, according to the university, the 6-foot-10 Horford practiced for the first time since suffering the injury Dec. 11. He participated in contact drills and his status for Saturday's game against No. 3 Ohio State will be evaluated after Saturday morning's shootaround."

Comparatively, in women's basketball seven of the 11 player injuries reported were season ending injuries. The remaining four player injuries were non-season-ending injuries or surgeries; however, follow-up articles documenting rehabilitation timelines or announcements of players returning to play were nonexistent for women's basketball players. For example, on December 3rd, an article titled "Foot fracture sidelines Texas A&M's Atunrase" ("Foot Fracture," 2007) reported "Texas A&M's Morenike Atunrase will miss at least four to six weeks and possibly as many as six after suffering a foot fracture." Indeed, Atunrase was one of the best women's basketball players in the country as the leading scorer for the highly ranked Texas A&M team and a top 30 candidate for the John R. Wooden Award; however, no article mentioning Atunrase's injury, her

rehabilitation progress, or her return to competition was published during the duration of the season.

Frequencies of Athlete Health articles reporting player sicknesses for women's and men's basketball were dissimilar as 14 player sickness articles accounted for sicknesses of four (4) men's basketball players whereas player sickness articles were nonexistent in women's basketball headline articles. The four men's basketball sicknesses reported were an upper respiratory infection, mononucleosis, strep throat, and blood clots in lungs. An example of a player sickness article was an article titled "Brewer out with mono, Noah to be tested" ("Brewer Out," 2006). This article announced University of Florida forward Corey Brewer's sickness and was followed by articles providing updates on his health titled "Brewer still battling mono, but feeling better" ("Brewer Still Battling," 2006) and "Florida's Brewer kicking mono, ready to return to court" (Katz, 2006). Both articles documenting Brewer's recovery and anticipated date of return to play were re-published three days each. During Brewer's battle with mononucleosis, his Florida teammate and roommate Joakim Noah was suspected to have mononucleosis as well. However, another player sickness article titled "Noah upper respiratory infection, not mono" ("Noah Upper," 2006) clarified the sickness of Noah. Another player sickness example was published in late March during the NCAA tournament. In articles titled "North Carolina senior Terry diagnosed with strep throat" ("North Carolina Senior," 2007) and "Terry's status uncertain for regional semi vs. USC" ("Terry's Status," 2007), the sickness of Reyshawn Terry was announced and was followed by an article speculating on his status for the East Regional Semifinal.

Rule Breakers

The higher order theme, Rule Breakers, represented non-game reporting articles focused primarily on the lower order themes, Bad Player and Bad Coach. These articles reported players and coaches in women's and men's basketball breaking U.S. law, NCAA rules, conference rules, or team rules. Analyzing the headline articles of women's and men's basketball collectively, including new and repetitive articles, 108 of the 1,481 articles (7.29%) focused on Rule Breakers. Specifically for men's basketball, 89 of 678 (13.13%) articles featured Rule Breakers. In contrast, in women's basketball 19 of 803 (2.37%) headline articles accounted for Rule Breakers. This relationship between sex of athlete and the likelihood of the headline article focusing on Ruler Breakers was statistically significant. Articles reporting rule breaking by players and coaches in men's basketball were published significantly more often than articles describing rule breaking players and coaches in women's basketball, χ (1, *N*=1481) = 62.96, *p*=.00.

Bad Player

Within the higher order theme Rule Breakers, the lower order theme, Bad Player, included articles representative of allegations or confirmation of a player violating a U.S. law, NCAA rule, Conference rule, or team rule(s). A larger percentage of Bad Player articles appeared in men's basketball articles, 65 of the 678 articles (9.59%), compared to women's basketball articles, 15 of the 803 (1.87%). For men's basketball 33 new Bad Player articles were re-published to total 65 impressions whereas, in women's basketball three new articles were re-published to account for 15 Bad Player article impressions, an average of five days per article.

During the 2006-07 basketball season, Bad Player articles were first published in November and continued until the end of March. Thus, Bad Player articles were published during the entire season. Bad Player articles for men's basketball reported players breaking U.S. laws and/or violating NCAA, conference, and team rules. For example, articles reporting men's basketball players breaking U.S. laws reported current players involvement in assault, drug possession, and driving under the influence. Bad Player articles for men's basketball reported players violated NCAA rules by accepting cash and playing on a professional international team. Reports of breaking conference rules in men's basketball involved aggressive elbows, head butting, and fighting. Articles were published concerning men's basketball players breaking team rules; however, the reports never identified what team rule was broken.

Bad Player articles for women's basketball reported players involved two incidents, breaking a U.S. law and a conference rule. Concerning breaking U.S. laws, women's basketball articles reported current players were involved in reckless endangerment, a misdemeanor; the conference rule violation involved aggressive elbows resulting in a game suspension.

Players Breaking United States' Laws

    Assault.

Two assault incidents were reported during the 2006-07 men's basketball season. The first occurrence was documented in an article titled "UTEP basketball player accused of assaulting girlfriend" ("UTEP Men's," 2006), and reported a UTEP men's basketball player was arrested after an argument between he and his girlfriend became physical.

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The second incident involved two Niagara University men's basketball players charged with misdemeanor assault. These charges resulted from the two basketball players joining a group of Niagara athletes that physically assaulted a Niagara baseball pitcher. This incident was reported in an article titled "Two Niagara players reach plea deal" ("Two Niagara," 2007).

Drug possession.

The cases of three men's basketball players charged with drug possession were announced followed by updates on school punishments, court dates, and final sentences. Kyle McAlarney of the University of Notre Dame and Theo Davis of Gonzaga University were charged with possession of marijuana and Josh Heytvelt was charged with possession of mushrooms. The drug possessions were reported in articles titled "Notre Dame's McAlarney suspended after arrest" ("Notre Dame's," 2006) and "Gonzaga players suspended following drug arrest" ("Gonzaga Players," 2007). The trial progressions of the players possessing drugs were accounted for in articles titled "Gonzaga's Davis charged with possession of marijuana" ("Gonzaga's Davis," 2007), "McAlarney plans to return to school, basketball" ("McAlarney Plans," 2007), and "Heytvelt pleads not guilty, requests diversion program" ("Heytvelt Pleads," 2007).

Driving under the influence.

Five (5) men's basketball players were charged with driving under the influence (DUI) throughout the season. The first DUI incident was reported in early January as Brigham Young University basketball player Rashaun Broadus was arrested on the suspicion of drunken driving. In the article titled "Broadus arrested, suspended after best

game of season" ("Broadus Arrested," 2007) it was reported that "Broadus failed sobriety tests and refused a breath test."

The second incident was reported in an article titled "Missouri reserve guard Anderson arrested for DUI" ("Missouri Reserve," 2007). In this case, the University of Missouri's head coach's son was driving under the influence and was arrested by campus police.

The third and fourth incidents involved two men's basketball players from the University of Illinois in unrelated incidents. In the first case, Jamar Smith was charged with drunk driving and leaving the scene of an accident in an article titled "Smith faces felony DUI, other charges" ("Smith Faces," 2007). Smith was driving his car while intoxicated in heavy snow, struck a tree injuring his passenger, who was a teammate, drove away from the scene of the crime, and parked the damaged car containing his injured teammate in their apartment parking lot. In an unrelated incident, another teammate of Smith's, Rich McBride, was reportedly convicted of a DUI in an article titled "McBride pleads guilty for driving under the influence" ("McBride Pleads," 2007).

The fifth and final DUI incident involved a reserve guard from the University of Arizona. In an article titled "Arizona's Dillon won't play in first-round game" ("Arizona's Dillon," 2007) it was reported that Daniel Dillon was arrested on suspicion of speeding and driving under the influence. He was suspended once this arrest became public.

Reckless Endangerment

The sole women's basketball case involving players breaking a U.S. law involved four players charged with one count of reckless endangerment, a misdemeanor. Four

players on Colorado State University's women's basketball team ignited a chemical bomb outside the apartment of a teammate as a prank. The reckless endangerment incident was reported in an article titled "Prank gone bad brings suspensions for four Rams" ("Prank Gone," 2007). The players were suspended; two of the four suspended players were reinstated two weeks later ("Players Reinstated," 2007) and the remaining two players left the team ("Players Leave," 2007).

Players Breaking NCAA Rules

Concerning breaking NCAA rules, men's basketball articles reported current players received cash from boosters, eligibility issues concerning maintaining amateur status despite playing on a professional team, and academic progress. No reports of women's basketball players breaking NCAA rules were published on ESPN.com during the 2006-07 season.

In one incident, a University of Memphis men's basketball player, Shawnie Williams, was accused of receiving almost $50,000 in cash and benefits from an attorney, Carl C. La Mondue. An article titled "Va. Tech, Memphis look into claims players were paid" ("Va. Tech, Memphis," 2006) documented the accusations. Per NCAA rules, "The NCAA prohibits athletes and their relatives from receiving non permissible awards, extra benefits, or excessive or improper expenses not authorized by NCAA legislation" ("Va. Tech, Memphis," 2006).

The second NCAA rules violation was reported in an article titled, "Hrycaniuk forced to sit for playing with Polish team" ("Hrycaniuk Forced," 2006). A University of Cincinnati men's basketball player was required to sit out the 2006-07 season due to amateurism issues involved with international competition: "Individuals on the team on

which Hrycaniuk competed as an amateur were paid above normal expenses, triggering the NCAA's definition of a professional team and violation of rule 12.2.3.2" ("Hrycaniuk Forced," 2006).

Players Breaking Conference Rules

Instances of players breaking conference rules were reported in women's and men's basketball articles. The reported incidents involved behavior violating conference sportsmanship rules such as aggressively throwing elbows, head butting, or fighting. One incident of aggressively throwing elbows was reported for each women's and men's basketball. One incident of head butting and two fighting incidents were published concerning men's basketball.

Aggressive elbows.

Both reports of aggressive elbow throwing for women's and men's basketball occurred in Big 12 conference games. A men's basketball article titled "Longar suspended for elbowing Texas Tech's Rizvic" ("Longar Suspended," 2007) reported Longar's elbow fractured the eye socket of a Texas Tech player: "Big 12 commissioner Kevin Weiberg ruled that Longar's move violated the conference's principles and standards of sportsmanship" ("Longar Suspended," 2007). Similarly, a women's article titled "Colorado's Putnina suspended one game for elbow" ("Colorado's Putnina," 2007) reported Putnina was ejected from the game and suspended for one game for throwing an elbow to the face of a Kansas player. The Big 12 Commissioner made similar comments as in the men's basketball incident: "Although Ms. Putnina may not have intended to strike her opponent, the swinging of her elbow was dangerous and led to excessive

contact that caused injury. We will continue to penalize this type of conduct and convey

the message that it is unacceptable" ("Colorado's Putnina," 2007).

Players Breaking Team Rules

Three reports of men's basketball players breaking team rules were published.

Accounts of women's basketball players breaking team rules were nonexistent. All

articles reporting men's basketball players breaking team rules did not provide details as

to what team rules were violated. For example, in the article titled "St. John's suspends

senior center Spears" ("St. John's Suspends," 2006) the only information provided

concerning the violation was "Senior center Aaron Spears was suspended Wednesday

from the St. John's basketball team for a violation of team rules." Similarly, in an article

titled "Arizona benches top scorer Williams for rules violation" ("Arizona Benches,"

2007) the reason for suspension was vague again, citing "…for a violation of team rules."

Bad Coach

Within the higher order theme Rule Breakers, the lower order theme, Bad Coach,

included articles representative of allegations or confirmation of a coach violating a U.S.

law, NCAA rule, conference rule, or team rule(s). A larger percentage of Bad Coach

articles appeared in men's basketball articles, 24 of the 678 articles (3.54%), compared to

women's basketball articles, four (4) of the 803 (0.50%). For men's basketball, 13 new

Bad Coach articles were re-published to total 24 impressions whereas in women's

basketball three new articles were re-published to account for four Bad Coach article

impressions.

During the 2006-07 basketball season, Bad Coach articles were published

throughout the entire season. Bad Coach articles for men's basketball reported coaches

breaking U.S. laws, and/or violating NCAA and conference rules. Concerning breaking

U.S. laws, men's basketball articles reported current coaches, similar to men's basketball

players, were involved in assault and driving under the influence. Bad Coach articles for

men's basketball reported coaches violated NCAA rules by placing impermissible phone

calls to recruits. The majority of articles reporting on coaches breaking conference rules

in men's basketball involved publicly criticizing referees.

Bad Coach articles for women's basketball reported on one coach involved in

breaking a school/team rule. This school/team rule violation involved one head coach,

Pokey Chatman of Louisiana State University, accused of being in a sexual relationship

with a player. This was one incident that was reported in four different articles over the

course of three weeks during the NCAA tournament.

Coaches Breaking United States' Laws

Two men's basketball articles reported coaches were breaking U.S. laws. These

two articles were re-published collectively six times. One article titled "Source: Bozeman

denies grabbing restaurant employee" ("Source: Boseman," 2007) reported the head

coach of Morgan State was "charged with misdemeanor assault after a verbal exchange

allegedly led to the coach shaking a female assistant manager. An incorrect to-go order

after a loss was stated as the cause of the altercation. Coach Bozeman denied the charges;

however, he did turn himself into authorities" ("Bozeman In Court," 2007). His

preliminary hearing was set for April 24th, therefore the final results of his case were not

available for this study as the hearing occurred post-data collection.

In the second incident, an article reported current legal issues concerning the

drunk-driving accident that happened a year prior to the former Oklahoma State men's

basketball coach. An article titled "Woman hurt in Sutton crash files claim" ("Woman

Hurt," 2007) reported the woman injured in the Sutton DUI accident was seeking

$125,000 in a legal claim. In the initial case, Sutton "pleaded no contest to charges of

aggravated DUI, speeding and driving on the wrong side of the road and received a one-

year deferred sentence and was ordered to pay a fine" ("Woman Hurt," 2007).

Articles reporting on women's basketball coaches breaking U.S. laws were

nonexistent on ESPN.com.

Coaches Breaking NCAA Rules

Two men's basketball articles reported coaches were breaking NCAA rules. Both

articles, "Calls by basketball coach violated NCAA rules" ("Call By Basketball," 2006)

and "NCAA upholds sanctions imposed against Lopes" ("NCAA Upholds Sanctions,"

2007), reported on men's basketball coaches making impermissible recruiting calls and

were re-published collectively four days. The first article recounted the 577

impermissible recruiting calls made by Kelvin Sampson while he was the head coach of

Oklahoma men's basketball and discussed the new measures Oklahoma implemented

designed to prevent recruiting call violations ("Call By Basketball," 2006). The second

article reported the NCAA was upholding the penalty of a three-year "show cause"

penalty imposed upon former Fresno State men's basketball coach, Ray Lopes. This

penalty prohibits NCAA schools from hiring Ray Lopes for three years. Coach Lopes and

members of his Fresno State staff made 457 impermissible recruiting calls. Prior to his

stint at Fresno State he made 165 of nearly 600 impermissible phone calls while working

with Oklahoma men's basketball.

Coaches Breaking Conference Rules

Eleven (11) men's basketball articles reported on five coaches breaking a conference rule, criticizing referees publicly. Men's coaches were disciplined for criticizing referees throughout the entire season. Articles reporting women's basketball coaches breaking conference rules were nonexistent.

For example, during the non-conference portion of the season in November, an article titled "A-10 reprimands Martelli for criticizing official" ("A-10 Reprimands," 2006) announced a men's basketball coach criticized a referee. "St. Joseph's coach Phil Martelli was reprimanded by the Atlantic 10 on Monday for criticizing a call in the final seconds of the Hawks' 65-61 loss to Penn State. The coach apologized for his conduct. The reprimand does not carry a penalty, but an additional conduct violation will be subject to more severe punishment," ("A-10 Reprimands," 2006) said the Atlantic-10 league.

In another example under similar circumstances, after a close game resulting in a conference loss, Nevada men's basketball coach Mark Fox confronted the game officials. The article titled "Conference looking into incident with Nevada's Fox" ("Conference Looking," 2007) reported "the Western Athletic Conference will conduct an investigation into an alleged confrontation between Nevada coach Mark Fox and a police officer and game officials after the Wolf Pack's loss at last week's conference tournament." The athletic director of Nevada, Cary Goth, said in a statement: "We were in very confined quarters, and in the heat of the moment, Coach Fox made inappropriate comments to the game officials when leaving the floor. He knows he shouldn't have made those comments

and by doing so violated the WAC's sportsmanship policy" ("Conference Looking," 2007).

These two examples of men's basketball coaches involved coaches from the Atlantic 10 and Western Athletic Conferences; however, additional examples of coaches criticizing officials were reported for coaches in the Big Sky Conference, Big 12 Conference, and an additional coach in the Mountain West Conference.

Coaches Breaking Team Rules

Four women's basketball articles reported on one coach breaking a team/school rule and being sexually involved with a player. Articles reporting men's basketball coaches breaking team rules were nonexistent.

In women's basketball, the lead headline article reported that the coach from Louisiana State University (LSU), Pokey Chatman, resigned amid allegations that she had an alleged sexual relationship with a former player while that player was still on the team (Wright, 2007). As the head coach, a sexual relationship with a player would be considered inappropriate conduct. Articles titled "Chatman's assistant told LSU about relationship" (Wright, 2007), "LSU, Fowles prepare for tourney without Chatman" ("LSU, Fowles Prepare," 2007), and "Chatman won't owe LSU $400,000 for leaving early" ("Chatman Won't," 2007) announced the inappropriate conduct investigated by LSU and continued to report the status of the investigation.

Other

The higher order theme, Other, represented non-game reporting articles focused on a wide range of newsworthy topics not represented by the higher order themes: Coach is King, Syndicated Lists, Professional Leagues, Roster Management, Athlete Health, and

Rule Breakers. Analyzing the headline articles of women's and men's basketball collectively, including new and repetitive articles, 399 of the 1,481 (26.95%) articles focused on Other. Specifically, for women's basketball 226 of 803 (28.14%) articles featured Other compared to 173 of 678 (25.81%) in men's basketball headline Other articles. This relationship between sex of athlete and the likelihood of the headline article focusing on Other was not statistically significant. Articles reporting Other in men's basketball were published as often as articles describing Other in women's basketball, χ (1, N=1481) = 1.29, p=.26. Similar themes within the Other category were reported for women's and men's basketball such as game scheduling, administration updates, retired jerseys, and record-breaking basketball performances. Women's and men's basketball articles focusing on game scheduling primarily reported on games cancelled or postponed due to weather or tragedy, and WNIT/NIT game schedules. Administration update articles reported on athletic department hiring plans, resignation of an athletic director, and the results of a study reporting on the racial and gender composition of employees in college sports. Retired jersey articles focused on schools recognizing accomplished women's and men's basketball players by displaying their jerseys in their respective basketball arenas. Articles reporting on record-breaking basketball performances focused on teams scoring record-breaking point totals, winning a record number of consecutive games, or playing a record number of overtime sessions.

Although similar Other themes were present in women's and men's basketball articles, themes only represented in women's or men's basketball existed. Only women's basketball articles reported on the United States' women's basketball team and

attendance figures for tournament games. Only men's basketball articles reported on the status of ex-college basketball players and current mascots of universities.

Results Summary

The quantitative and qualitative findings from this study benchmarked the online media coverage of women's and men's basketball on their respective home pages on ESPN.com. The secondary purpose of simultaneously supporting or rejecting the theory of hegemonic masculinity on the Internet was also accomplished. Ultimately, the results from this study confirmed progress toward equal representation of female and male athletes in the media yet rejected the notion that female and male athletes are represented equally, visually or textually, present-day. Therefore, overall the results of this study confirmed that patterns of under-representation and marginalization of female athletes observed in traditional media exist in new media, thereby reproducing hegemonic masculinity.

Quantitatively, both women's and men's basketball home pages published equal numbers of feature photograph impressions. However, throughout the season the photographs on the men's basketball home page were significantly more likely to be new photographs compared to the photographs on the women's basketball homepage. The content of the feature photographs for women's and men's basketball was more similar than different. Results indicate no statistically significant differences exist for uniform presence or court location as a function of sex of athlete across all time periods under consideration. Contrary to previous research findings, a statistically significant difference exists for pose presentation as a function of sex of athlete across all time periods as

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women's basketball players were significantly more likely to be portrayed in action compared to their male counterparts.

The quantitative content analysis of the headline articles revealed the women's basketball home page received more overall article impressions compared to men's basketball. However, upon further analysis, similar to the feature photograph findings, men's basketball received significantly more new headline articles compared to women's basketball. Secondly, the men's basketball home page published significantly more game reporting articles than did the women's basketball home page, further supporting hegemony in new media.

The qualitative analysis of the feature photographs further supported the quantitative findings as the top themes portrayed were True Athleticism, Celebration Time, and Coach is King. Again, contrary to previous research findings, yet supporting the quantitative finding of this study, a statistically significant difference exists for the theme True Athleticism as a function of sex of athlete across all time periods; women's basketball players were significantly more likely to be portrayed in uniform, on the court and in action compared to their male counterparts. This finding challenged hegemonic masculinity.

Upon quantitatively analyzing the headline articles results indicated headline articles portraying the article themes, Coach is King, Athlete Health, and Rule Breakers, were significantly over-represented on the men's basketball home page. Whereas, results indicated headline articles portraying the article themes, Syndicated Lists and Professional Leagues, were significantly over-represented on the women's basketball home page.

In conclusion, the findings of equal photograph impressions regardless of the sex of the athlete, more overall article impressions on the women's basketball home page, women's and men's basketball players equally likely to be presented in uniform and on the court, women's basketball players more likely to be shown in action, and more women's basketball photographs portraying True Athleticism compared to men's basketball, challenges male hegemony in sport. However, male hegemony in sport was reinforced by the findings that men's basketball received more new feature photographs and headline articles, more game reporting articles, and more articles focused on Coach is King, Athlete Health, and Rule Breakers compared to women's basketball. In addition, articles focused tangential topics represented by the article themes, Syndicated Lists and Professional Leagues, were over-represented in women's basketball articles.

CHAPTER 5:

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to benchmark quantitative and qualitative media coverage of women's and men's collegiate basketball—one of the most powerful and influential institutions in this country—on the Internet. A secondary purpose was to simultaneously support or reject the theory of hegemonic masculinity in this contemporary media channel. Ultimately, the results from this study confirmed some progress toward equal representation of female athletes but rejected the notion of female and male athletes represented equally, visually or textually, present-day. Therefore, the overall results of this study confirmed that patterns of under-representation and marginalization of female athletes observed in traditional media exist in new media, specifically the Internet.

At a macro level, after quantitatively analyzing the feature photographs and headline news articles, some progress concerning reporting on women's basketball on the Internet has been achieved but detailed analysis reveals online sport media supports the perpetuation of hegemony. From a 10,000 foot view one can view simply the existence of a women's college basketball Web page on ESPN.com as progress. In addition, when comparing the women's and men's college basketball home pages one could conclude the presentation or the structure of the Web pages is equivalent. For example, on each respective Web page above the fold is a feature photograph and a designated box for headline articles where typically 7 to 11 articles are published on a daily basis. Also, for both women's and men's basketball, the total quantity of feature photographs and headline news article impressions, including new and repeat photographs and articles, is

comparable. At first blush, all of the aforementioned quantitative points of parity between women's and men's basketball online media coverage challenged hegemonic masculinity but the reproduction of hegemonic masculinity is uncovered in the detailed analysis.

The reproduction of hegemonic masculinity in ESPN.com media coverage of women's basketball is revealed in the nuances of the quantitative analysis. For example, while the overall feature photograph and headline article impressions for women's and men's basketball are similar, upon deeper analysis, the results reveal significantly more new photographs and articles were published for men's basketball compared to women's basketball. Thus, since similar quantities of photographs and articles (including new and repeats) were published for women's and men's basketball yet men's basketball received significantly more new photographs and articles this resulted in more photographs and articles being repeated to account for total impressions for women's basketball. Indeed, women's basketball received similar total quantities of photographs and articles as men's basketball; however, the likelihood of visiting the women's basketball home page and viewing repeat or re-published information was greater compared to men's basketball. In addition, men's basketball received significantly more game reporting articles compared to women's basketball thus maintaining and reproducing hegemonic masculinity.

The qualitative results associated with the headline articles for women's and men's basketball prompt a firm reproduction of hegemonic masculinity conclusion. Overall, qualitatively hegemonic masculinity was maintained and reproduced in the articles for women's and men's basketball. Men's basketball articles were significantly more likely to represent the Coach is King, Rule Breakers, and Athlete Health higher order themes compared to women's basketball articles. Each of these themes directly

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focuses on the coaches and athletes thus communicating that the accomplishments, actions, and well-being of men's basketball players and coaches are more important and newsworthy compared to women's basketball players and coaches. The under-representation of women's basketball articles focused on Coach is King, Rule Breakers, and Athlete Health produces and reproduces symbolic annihilation, creating an illusion that women's basketball coaches and injured and deviant women's basketball players are nonexistent in the sporting world (Coakley, 2007; Kane & Greendorfer, 1994), ultimately perpetuating male hegemony. Women's basketball articles were significantly more likely to report on the higher order themes Syndicated Lists and Professional Leagues compared to men's basketball articles. The over-representation of women's basketball articles focused on Syndicated Lists and Professional Leagues marginalized women's basketball players because Syndicated Lists articles simply reported rankings of women's team and players absent context such as game reporting, player/coach quotes, etc. The Professional Leagues articles for women's basketball did not mention current collegiate women's basketball players in contrast to the men's basketball articles.

Ultimately, the complementary quantitative and qualitative results supported the theory of hegemonic masculinity in online sport media. The results suggest online sport media coverage of women's basketball is yet another "contested terrain" as the historical patterns of under-representation and marginalization of female athletes in traditional media still electronically manifest themselves on ESPN.com. These nuanced findings concerning feature photographs and headline articles of women's and men's basketball will be discussed in the following sections.

Feature Photographs

The quantitative and qualitative results concerning feature photographs on women's and men's basketball home pages suggest progress has been made toward equal media coverage of women's and men's basketball but overall findings confirmed hegemonic masculinity in online media. The famous saying asks, "Is the glass half empty or half full," and triangulation of the quantitative and qualitative findings regarding the photographs for women's and men's basketball revealed that at first the glass seems half full but after a second look the glass is truly half empty.

Sport media scholars have long studied and reported the disparate amounts of sport media coverage afforded female athletes in traditional media. Thus, simply the existence of a Web page on ESPN.com dedicated to women's college basketball provides a foundation for progress. In addition, when comparing the women's and men's basketball home pages the presentation of coverage for women's and men's basketball is equivalent. For example, on each respective home page above the fold there is a feature photograph and a designated box for headline articles where typically seven to eleven articles are published each day. This comparable online media presentation represents progress given the historically inequitable and marginalizing coverage of women's sports in traditional media.

Quantity of feature photographs minimally challenged hegemony

The next layer of investigation involved quantitative analysis of the feature photographs to answer RQ1 and RQ3, for women's and men's basketball: how many total feature photographs were published (including new and repeat photographs), how

many photographs were new, and how were the players portrayed (i.e., in/out of uniform, on/off court, active/passive poses)?

On the surface, during the first level of analysis, hegemonic masculinity was challenged as equal quantities of feature photographs were published on the women's and men's basketball home pages. Including new and repeat photographs, each home page, regardless of athlete sex, portrayed 168 feature photographs. The existence of a consistent visual representation of women's basketball players in online media challenges hegemonic masculinity, thus the findings from previous research in traditional media. Female athletes have historically been under-represented in traditional media photographs as they are presented in 8-10% of newspaper and magazine sport media (Fink & Kensicki, 2002). In addition, a recent study reported under-representation of female athletes existed in public online media as college baseball Web sites compared to softball sites were consistently allocated a larger quantity of coach and player photographs (Sagas et al., 2000).

The next level of investigation involved analyzing the quantity of new feature photographs for women's and men's basketball within the total impressions as to how many different photographs were published. Women's basketball players were under-represented concerning new feature photographs during the season overall and the non-conference portion of the season on ESPN.com. However, during the conference and post-season games similar percentages of new feature photographs were published for women's and men's basketball. Indeed, despite the hegemonic masculinity challenging presence of consistent feature photographs on the women's basketball home page, the reality was that the women's basketball photographs were less likely to be updated

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compared to men's basketball photographs. This disparate updating of photograph favors men's basketball and subordinates women's basketball, thus maintaining male hegemony.

The larger quantity of new feature photographs for men's basketball compared to women's basketball implicitly represents and reproduces the superiority of men's basketball players. Regular updates of men's basketball feature photographs compared to less-regular women's basketball updates communicates men's basketball is more valued, thus more newsworthy. It is interesting how this subtle preservation of male hegemony in sport media manifests itself. For example, imagine the online sport media experiences of two sport media consumers of basketball, a casual consumer and a regular consumer. In one example, a casual consumer might visit ESPN.com on a couple occasions per week to check women's and men's basketball scores and news. Given the casual consumer would not be aware of consecutive days of information from the sites, she might not realize the men's photographs are updated more often than women's. Thus, her reality is that the photographs are updated similarly. In another example, a regular consumer might visit ESPN.com daily to check women's and men's basketball scores and news. After viewing the women's and men's basketball home pages for a couple weeks, especially during non-conference games, she would soon recognize the men's basketball photographs are updated more frequently than the women's photographs. The message communicated to the basketball fan is that men's basketball is important enough to command updated photographs whereas women's basketball is not.

Men's basketball photographs updated significantly more often than women's basketball subtly maintains and reproduces male athletes as the universal norm and

female athletes as the marginalized "other" (Kane, 2007). Indeed, updating men's basketball photographs—the focal point of the home pages—more often than women's basketball photographs creates a hierarchy by gender in online sport media (Adams & Tuggle, 2004; Kane, 1998). This subtle reproduction of hegemonic masculinity potentially erodes the interest of sport consumers most interested in women's basketball, the consumers regularly reading the women's basketball home page on ESPN.com, by devaluing their sporting interest. Ultimately, the presence of stealth reproduction of hegemonic masculinity in the form of updating feature photographs of women's basketball less often than their male counterparts presents a "half empty" view. This finding is especially defeating or creates a sense of hopelessness for women's basketball fans since ESPN is a major sponsor of women's basketball yet they continue to dedicate unequal media attention to men's basketball.

Since results indicated that the women's basketball home page published an equal number of feature photograph impressions yet a significantly smaller percentage of these impressions were new photographs. The next question is: "How were women's and men's players portrayed in the photographs?"

Female Athletes Portrayed in Uniform, on the Court, and in Action

The vast majority of women's and men's basketball players were portrayed in uniform (overall, 97.01% and 95.12% respectively), on the court (overall, 98.50% and 95.90% respectively) during all portions of the season (i.e., the season overall, non-conference, conference, and post-season play). However, women's and men's basketball players were portrayed in action (executing a skill she/he would practice, e.g., shooting, passing) less often compared to in uniform or on the court. In addition, women's

basketball players were portrayed in action significantly more during the season overall and the conference portion of the season. This finding of over-representation of women's basketball players in action challenges hegemonic masculinity as female athletes were presented unapologetically as serious, competent athletes and confirms results in another medium—intercollegiate media guide covers—discovered by Kane and Buysse (2005).

This finding may prompt the question, "How were male athletes presented if they weren't in action?" Results indicate that while men's basketball players were shown in uniform and on the court as often as their female counterparts; they were more likely to be in uniform, on the court, and celebrating (e.g., surrounded by celebrating fans, embracing teammates, pumping their fist, chest bumping, etc.) during the conference portion of the season.

The individual quantitative findings of women's basketball players portrayed in uniform and on the court as often as men's basketball players, yet in action more often than their male counterparts in online sport media strongly challenges hegemonic masculinity and previous research findings in traditional sport media. Reproducing Kane and Buysse's (2005) quantitative results from their media guide study—equal opportunity of viewing a women's or men's basketball player in uniform and on the court—while analyzing online media, provides an optimistic outlook for representation of female athletes on the Internet in the future. Although the quantitative analysis of the photographs provided individual support for challenging hegemonic masculinity, it is imperative to analyze the photographs from a qualitative or holistic approach in order to triangulate the findings.

On-the-court Portrayals: Females in Action vs. Males Celebrating

Not surprisingly, the qualitative analysis of the feature photographs for women's and men's basketball confirmed the quantitative findings. Qualitatively women's basketball players were significantly more likely to be portrayed in True Athleticism compared to men's basketball players throughout the season. The photograph theme True Athleticism represented a basketball player in uniform, on the court and in action (executing a skill that would be practiced, e.g., shooting, passing). While analyzing the photographs qualitatively, an explanation for the quantitative finding of women basketball players portrayed in action more often than their male counterparts emerged. As previously reported, both women's and men's basketball players were shown in uniform and on the court equally but the difference was found in the nuances of what the athletes were *doing* on the court. Women's basketball photographs portrayed True Athleticism more often while men's basketball photographs focused on emotional activities such as celebrating or being disappointed. In a sense, the gender roles were reversed as women basketball players portrayed aggressiveness (masculinity) and the men's basketball players portrayed vulnerability (femininity). Not only does this qualitative finding confirm hegemonic masculinity is being challenged in online feature photographs but it also challenges the masculine definition of athlete.

In summary, the quantitative and qualitative results concerning feature photographs on women's and men's basketball home pages presents a picture of progress accompanied by resistance. Results indicate the existence of a women's basketball home page on ESPN.com and the photographic portrayal of female players as competent athletes challenges hegemonic masculinity. Simultaneously, hegemonic masculinity is

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maintained and reproduced in the nuances of more new photographs published for men's basketball compared to women's basketball. As with most progress, equality is rarely achieved in a "winner take all" moment. The results from the analysis of the online feature photographs for women's and men's basketball represent progress along the continuum from zero media representation for women's sports to the ultimate goal of equal representation of women's and men's sports.

Headline Articles

The quantitative and qualitative results concerning headline articles on women's and men's basketball home pages each provide findings that confirm the maintenance and reproduction of hegemonic masculinity textually on ESPN.com. Thus, triangulation of the quantitative and qualitative findings associated with headline articles revealed men's basketball is upheld as the standard and women's basketball is relegated to a position of inferiority and less newsworthiness.

Again, the recognition of simply the existence of a Web page on ESPN.com dedicated to women's college basketball provides representation for women's basketball on the most popular sports Web page in the world. Indeed, similar to the presence of feature photographs being recognized as progress, at first glance the presence of regularly published headline articles on the women's basketball home page challenges hegemonic masculinity. However, upon further analysis this perceived challenge of hegemonic masculinity is an illusion.

Men's Basketball Portrayed as More Newsworthy

The illusion of online media challenging the gender hierarchy was revealed during the quantitative analysis of the headline articles to answer RQ2, for women's and

men's basketball how many total headline articles were published (including new and articles), how many articles were new, and how were the players textually portrayed (game reporting, non-game reporting, etc.)? Next, the gender hierarchy was most apparent when qualitatively analyzing the representation of women's basketball players compared to men's basketball players in headline articles to answer RQ3.

Superficially, during the first level of analysis, hegemonic masculinity was challenged as significantly more headline articles (including new and repeated articles) were published on the women's basketball home page compared to the men's basketball home page. Historically, female athletes have been under-represented in traditional media thus; the quantity of article impressions for women's basketball eclipsing men's basketball in online media prompts optimism regarding future media representation of women's sports. If the analysis prematurely stopped at this point, with significantly more women's basketball headline articles published compared to men's basketball, the gender hierarchy of men as the standard and women as the other seems turned on its head, challenging hegemonic masculinity. Unfortunately, a deeper more layered analysis of the headline articles revealed the masculine hegemonic standard is without a doubt influencing the definition of newsworthiness.

Over-representation of New Articles Maintains Men's Basketball as Gold Standard

The next level of investigation involved analyzing the quantity of new headline articles for women's and men's basketball within the total impressions, how many different articles were published? Women's basketball players were under-represented concerning new headline articles as more new articles were published on the men's basketball home page during all portions of the 2006-07 basketball season (i.e., the

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season overall, non conference, conference, and post-season). Indeed, despite the consistent presence of headline articles on the women's basketball home page challenging hegemonic masculinity, the reality was these articles were less likely to be updated with new information compared to men's basketball articles. Thereby, there may have been more overall article impressions (new and repeated articles) for women's basketball but it was likely the articles were not current, re-published articles. The stagnant status of women's basketball articles and the current, relevant status of men's basketball articles implicitly form a hierarchy within online sport media. At first glance both women's and men's basketball presented similar quantities of headline articles challenging the sport standard of men's sports as the standard and women's sport as the inferior "other." Nevertheless, a second look revealed that while similar in quantity, the rate at which new information was posted as headline articles for women's basketball compared to men's basketball differed significantly. This differential reporting maintained and reproduced hegemonic masculinity during each portion of the basketball season.

The larger quantity of new headline articles for men's basketball compared to women's basketball implicitly represents and reproduces the superiority of men's basketball players. Similarly to the more regularly updated feature photographs, the more consistent updates of men's basketball headline articles compared to more infrequent updates of women's basketball articles communicates men's basketball is more valued thus, more newsworthy.

Since results indicated the women's basketball home page published significantly more headline article impressions yet a significantly smaller percentage of these

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impressions were new articles compared to men's basketball; the next question is, "How were women's and men's players textually portrayed in the articles?" The textual portrayal of both women's and men's basketball players was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively.

Women's Basketball Portrayed as "Anything but Basketball"

The content of women's and men's basketball headline articles was analyzed on a macro level by categorizing articles as game reporting or non-game reporting. Game reporting articles included performance related content commonly reporting the story of how the score of the game came to fruition. Non-game reporting articles included nonperformance related content and represented a wide range of tangential topics deemed adequately newsworthy for publishing. In comparing the women's basketball articles with the men's basketball articles, it was clear the coverage provided to women's players was decidedly different than coverage provided to men's players on their respective home pages. This quantitative analysis of the headline article content indicated a significantly larger percentage of women's basketball articles were non-game reporting articles compared to men's basketball articles. This finding reproduces similar findings from a previous study comparing the performance (sport) related articles for men in *Sports Illustrated* to women in *Sports Illustrated for Women* (Fink & Kensicki, 2002). Fink and Kensicki (2002) also found a greater proportion of men's articles in *Sports Illustrated* were sport related (86%) compared to women's articles in *Sports Illustrated for Women* (43%). Interestingly, in the current study and Fink and Kensicki's study, both women and men had sex-specific media (Web sites and magazines, respectively), yet the

performances of females were significantly less likely reported compared to their male counterparts.

Ultimately, mass media, including online media, emphasize certain events or persons, while omitting or trivializing other events or persons creating a hierarchy by gender in sport (Adams & Tuggle, 2004; Kane, 1998). The implicit superiority of men's basketball was represented and reproduced on ESPN.com by differential quantities of articles discussing women's and men's basketball player performances. Differential media coverage favoring game reporting of men's basketball sends a powerful message that women's basketball on-court activities are not interesting or valued enough to be published and maintains hegemony. The finding of significantly more women's basketball articles reporting nonperformance, non-game information is exponentially compounded when one considers the previous finding that women's articles are repeated significantly more often. Therefore, a non-game day article on the women's basketball home page not only maintains and reproduces hegemonic masculinity as a new article, but when re-published the article continues to reproduce hegemonic masculinity content-wise and due to the lack of updated information. Thus, the initial finding of significantly more articles published for women's basketball challenging hegemonic masculinity is an illusion or a mirage at best. From a distance the quantity or articles appear to pose as progress but the closer one gets to the content the faster one realizes the articles are more likely to discuss non-game related topics thus maintaining men's basketball as the serious athlete and women's basketball as counterfeit. If analyzing the articles from a macro, quantitative view supported hegemony or status quo reporting on women's basketball, what would a micro level, qualitative analysis indicate?

Reinforcing the quantitative content analysis results, the qualitative content analysis of the women's and men's headline articles indicated erasure of women as real athletes and coaches. Women were significantly under-represented in the qualitative themes most closely related to performance: Coach is King, Rule Breakers, and Athlete Health. These themes represented information implicitly linked to leadership capability and masculinity which are central attributes of what it means to be a "true athlete." The result: Women were significantly over-represented in the neutral articles most peripheral to performance, Syndicated Lists and Professional Leagues. These themes represented information that 1) was a listing of team and player statistics in rank order lacking any narration providing real world context, or 2) dismissed women's college basketball by reporting on the WNBA. A more detailed discussion of the meanings and implications of the emergent dominant themes follow.

Women's Basketball Coaches Under-represented in Articles

The Coach is King theme was aptly named and representative of articles discussing coach achievements, health updates and contract statuses as an alternative theme label of "Coach is Queen" would have been misrepresentation. In comparing men's basketball articles with women's basketball articles, it was apparent the coverage afforded women's basketball coaches was strikingly different than coverage given to men's basketball coaches. Significantly many more Coach is King articles featured men's basketball coaches resulting in a near erasure, denial, and marginalization of women's basketball coaches. This result maintains and reproduces hegemonic masculinity in college basketball by under-representing or erasing the existence of women's basketball coaches and their accomplishments.

First, the over-representation of men's basketball coaches within Coach is King articles misrepresents *who* is coaching women's and men's basketball. Despite 100% of men's basketball coaches being males, the majority of women's basketball coaches are female (Acosta & Carpenter, 2008). Thus, Coach is King articles featuring men's basketball coaches significantly more often not only favors men's basketball but perhaps most importantly favors males in general. Indeed, the under-representation of Coach is King articles in women's basketball textually erases the existence of women in leadership positions within college basketball. This representation simultaneously misrepresents the reality of women leading the majority of women's basketball teams and potentially discourages women from viewing coaching as a career option, perpetuating male hegemony in sport. Male hegemony is reproduced and accelerated by women subconsciously conceding women's basketball coaching positions to men because after repeated exposure to media presenting males as coaches, male head coaches become the cultural norm and female head coaches become an oddity which contradicts the history of women's basketball coaching positions being dominated by females (Acosta & Carpenter, 2008). Recent research indicates one of the single most influential external barriers to women is a lack of mentors (Kilty, 2006). In general, females are more likely to emulate and identify with female role models (Bandura, 1986; Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). Through identification with a role model, individuals can become inspired to pursue similar achievements; however, in the context of sport, girls and women have less access and exposure to female role models in positions of leadership compared to male role models for their male counterparts (Acosta & Carpenter, 2008; Vescio, Wilde, & Crosswhite, 2005). The under-representation of female basketball coaches in online

media decreases girls' exposure to women leading basketball teams and may decrease the likelihood of them considering coaching as a viable career option. While research indicates the success and visibility of other women may have a positive impact on the motivation and self-perceptions of girls and women (Lockwood, 2006), one must also consider the potentially harmful effects of invisible female women's basketball coaches. Since women's basketball coaches are significantly under-represented in headline articles overall than it's not surprising that speculation about the future career moves of women's basketball coaches was under-represented, as it was nonexistent.

Career Moves of Women's Basketball Coaches not Portrayed as Newsworthy

Throughout the 2006-07 season speculation concerning the coaching futures of multiple men's basketball coaches and speculation concerning a single women's basketball coach were discussed. The larger percentage of articles discussing men's basketball coaches' careers while failing to discuss possible career moves of women's basketball coaches implicitly values coaches of men's basketball more than coaches of women's basketball. Not only does the absence of discussion about women's basketball coaches reinforce male hegemony but when there is discussion of coaches' contracts the salaries stated explicitly construct a hierarchy favoring men's coaches. For example, the average salary for coaches at 58 of the 65 schools in the 2006 men's NCAA tournament was nearly $800,000 (Wieberg & Upton, 2007). Further analysis revealed the average salary for men's coaches in the six marquee conferences—the Atlantic Coast, Big East, Big Ten, Big 12, Pacific-10 and Southeastern—was $1.2 million (Wieberg & Upton, 2007). Comparatively, the two most decorated women's basketball coaches of all-time, including the all-time winningest basketball coach of women's or men's basketball, Pat

Summitt, earn roughly $1 million dollar salaries including base pay, media, shoe, and apparel contracts (Patrick, 2007; Wieberg & Upton, 2007). Interestingly, these women's basketball coaches' salaries were not reported on ESPN.com because rarely are the salaries of women's coaches mentioned as they lag well behind the men's coaches' salaries. While a select few of women's basketball coaches earn top dollar salaries, more women's coaches can relate to John Margaritis, the head women's coach for California-Riverside. Coach Margaritis took his team to the Women's NCAA tournament in 2006 and earned $65,000 (Wieberg & Upton, 2007).

The lack of discussion concerning women's basketball head coaches and their future careers, while dialoguing extensively about men's basketball coaches, communicates and maintains men's basketball has a higher level of importance in society. Male hegemony was maintained and reproduced during the 2006-07 season as the media repeatedly informed the public that men's basketball coaches were worth talking about and monetarily worth more than women's basketball coaches. Obviously, reporting the accomplishments of women's basketball coaches and paying exceptional coaches over a million dollars is a start but female coaches, coaches of women's basketball, and their accomplishments should not be anomalies. Both women's and men's basketball coaches lead the collective college basketball community, thus articles discussing women's basketball coaches should be as prevalent as articles discussing men's basketball coaches. The pattern of under-representation of women's basketball coaches and over-representation of men's basketball coaches in Coach is King articles persisted in the Rule Breaker articles.

"Bad Boys" vs. "Good Girls"

It is common for rule breaking, or on-or-off-the field deviance, by athletes to receive wide spread media attention as stories of deviance typically contain multiple elements increasing the newsworthiness of the story such as consequence and human interest (Tuchman, 1978). Overall, men's basketball players and coaches were over-represented in Rule Breakers articles. Articles reporting on players or coaches breaking United States' laws, NCAA rules, Conference rules or team rules were significantly more likely to feature males. Conversely, the near complete absence of articles reporting women's basketball players and coaches breaking laws or violating rules communicates all women associated with basketball are "rule followers." The current representation of women's and men's basketball programs within the Rule Breakers article theme reinforces socially constructed gender roles, "boys will be boys" and "girls are passive and follow rules." Indeed, breaking rules is equated with masculinity and masculinity is consistent with sport resulting in the constructed gender roles privileging masculinity. In sport, Jay Coakley associated males performing masculinity as positive deviance defined as "behaviors, ideas, or characteristics that fall outside a normally accepted range, because they involve extreme cases of overconformity or extreme cases of underconformity" (2007, p.144). The rule violations associated with men's basketball players during the 2006-07 season, assault, driving under the influence, and drug possession, can be described as men's basketball players performing their masculinity or deviance off the field (Coakley, 2007).

Historically, theory has linked the gender identities of males to criminal activity as a mechanism for accomplishing quite a variety of different forms of masculinity

(Morash, 2006). Indeed, fighting or physical violence has long been associated with masculinity. Violence on the court has been explained as deviant overconformity to the norms of the sport ethic (Coakley, 2007). The self-worth and identities of high performance athletes are often connected to their last performance and their status within the team, therefore, many athletes resort to violence as a way to prove themselves to their teammates (Coakley, 2007). For example, a player engaging in a brawl with the opponent because the opponent delivered a hard foul to his teammate might be proving his allegiance to his team while performing his masculinity. Sociologist Mike Messner explains: "Despite the fact that few males truly enjoy hitting and being hit, and that one has to be socialized into participating in much of the violence commonplace in sport, males often view aggression, within the rule-bound structure of sport, as legitimate and "natural" (1992, p.67). Sometimes males are socialized into fighting as a means of living up to an image of a successful man thereby accomplishing a particular form of masculinity (Morash, 2006). In some families, boys were raised to view fighting as a meaningful mechanism for constructing masculinity or "real men" acting with power and control as a means to solve problems (Messerschmidt, 2000; Morash, 2006). The pressure for men to act masculine is intense as this: "men must not cry, men must be big and powerful, men must fight, men must be conscious of their physical stature, men must protect women, men must engage in heavy drinking, and many men think that they are different from their peers" (Carlson, 2008, p.6). However, unlike their male counterparts, females "do not link violence to their definitions of what it means to be a woman in society" (Coakley, 2007, p. 185).

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The female identity emphasizes femininity, passivity, subservience, caring for others, and the activities of wife and mother. All of these associations with females are incongruent with aggressive lawbreaking (Morash, 2006). Despite this incongruence, women basketball players breaking laws and violating rules does occur; however, only two accounts were reported during the 2006-07 season: 1) a bomb prank, and 2) an aggressive elbow incident on the court. Perhaps the incongruence extends beyond simply femininity and rule breaking. For example, if women's basketball players break rules, and they are associated with masculinity more than femininity, this association of women's basketball players with masculinity moves them uncomfortably close to men's basketball players on the continuum from "other" athlete to serious athlete as masculinity is synonymous with "real athlete" (Kane, 1995). Ultimately, online media seemed to address this inconsistency between females and rule breaking by erasing or denying the existence of rule breaking women's basketball players. This denial or erasure maintained and reinforced hegemonic masculinity as significantly more reports of men performing masculinity through rule breaking were published. Similar selective reporting by athlete sex was associated with injury reports.

Injuries in Women's Basketball Under-reported

The analysis of women's and men's headline articles indicated significantly more articles reported the injuries and sicknesses, Athlete Health articles, of men's basketball players compared to women's basketball players. The over-representation of Athlete Health articles in men's basketball is representative of the intertwined relationship between sport ethic and masculinity. The sport ethic is a group of norms that many involved in power and performance sports use to define what it means to be an athlete,

such as making sacrifices for the love of the game, accepting risks and playing through pain, and accepting no limits in pursuit of possibilities (Coakley, 2007). Many equate the sport ethic with masculinity as one needs to be "tough" to play through pain. Thus, over-representing males in articles reporting injuries simultaneously exalts men's basketball players for playing through pain while implicitly denying women's basketball players could play aggressively enough to become injured. Reporting on men's injuries more often than women's injuries reinforces the assumption that men are more aggressive than women. This "common sense" assumption is disproved by athletic training literature. A 16-year study, covering the 1988-89 through 2003-04 season of women's and men's basketball player injuries, indicated the rate of injury for women's and men's basketball players was similar, 7.68 (women) vs. 9.99 (men) per 1,000 athlete-exposures to games and 3.99 (women) vs. 4.3 (men) per 1000 athlete-exposures for practice (Agel, Olson, Dick, Arendt, Marshall, & Sikka, 2007; Dick, Hertel, Agel, Grossman, & Marshall, 2007).

Interestingly, an overwhelming majority of the Athlete Health articles in women's basketball reported season-ending injuries compared to reports of injuries the female athlete would rehabilitate and return to play. Despite the literature indicating the percentage of severe injuries, injuries requiring over 10 days without practicing or playing in games were similar for women's and men's basketball players at 18% and 25%, respectively (Agel et al., 2007; Dick et al., 2007). The over-representation in online reporting of season-ending injuries for women's basketball players is problematic for two primary reasons: (a) the implications of non-season ending injuries for women's basketball players are not important enough to report; and (b) without reporting non-

season ending injuries, women's basketball players are not provided the opportunity to exhibit the sport ethic. Both implications of under-representation reinforce hegemonic masculinity theoretically as females' injuries and opportunities to be equally tough as their male counterparts are erased. However, perhaps a more concrete rationale for the under-representation of women's injuries is found by "following the money" of college basketball fans.

While March Madness for many fans involves completing tournament brackets in hopes of earning office bragging rights for guessing the winners of every game, others are simply concerned with the financial gain associated with assessing point spreads and correctly placing bets. During the 2006-07 college basketball season, an estimated $90 million legally and $2.5 billion illegally was wagered across the country on men's NCAA tournament games compared to an estimated $5 million legally wagered on women's NCAA tournament games (Auman, 2007). With billions of dollars wagered on men's basketball, one could explain the discrepancy in frequencies of Athlete Health articles between women's and men's basketball in economic terms. Hegemonic masculinity in sport has created and maintained men's basketball games as important, thus worthy of a gambling culture centered on gathering information to place informed bets. The nonexistent point spreads for women's basketball in the majority of media outlets is indicative of the gendered hierarchy in basketball. Information commonly reported in the media, such as injuries and illnesses, is reported significantly more often for men's basketball thereby potentially influencing point spreads and wagers. Thus, it is not a far leap to consider that the over-representation of Athlete Health articles in men's basketball is linked to the need for gamblers to have current, up-to-date status reports on

men's basketball players' injuries and illnesses to inform their bets. Indeed, the gamblers who gather the most information via traditional media, online media, and even sources within college athletic departments may have an advantage over other gamblers (Dare, Gandar, Zuber, & Pavlik, 2005). In contrast, since fewer gamblers place bets on women's basketball, fewer articles announcing injuries and the rehabilitation processes of women's basketball players are published.

The frequency difference in published Athlete Health articles for women's and men's basketball can be explained as direct maintenance of a gender-based power structure or indirect maintenance through the capitalistic nature of sports prioritizing males. The net result of either explanation is men's sport maintained as the basketball standard. Ultimately, any men's basketball player injury announcement or status update is more newsworthy than an injury announcement or status update of a women's basketball player because it could influence the amount of money in the wallets of fans. If one doubts the link between injury reports, gambling, and media coverage, and one could imagine the implication of fans predominantly betting on women's basketball and a minority of fans betting on men's basketball, how would this change media representation of female athletes and who/what is valued in our sporting culture? Indeed, it may seem a slippery slope to say women's basketball must attract equal gambling interest as their male counterparts to receive equal media attention but there is a reason women's sport has historically received less media space then racing horses and dogs (Bishop, 2003). Horse racing has existed in the West for over 3,000 years and records indicate it was popular in the East in Chinese dynasties existing before Christ (Huggins, 2000). Betting on horse races has taken place for centuries longer than women have had

access to sport participation opportunities. Betting on horses (or basketball) has been linked to "excitement, sociability and the prospect of becoming temporarily better off" (Huggins, 2007, p.285). However, when people or horses are wagered upon they become commodities. The fundamental question is this: Is a rise in gambling on women's basketball a sign of progress? Former president of the Women's Basketball Coaches Association and head women's basketball coach at DePaul University Doug Bruno believes increasing gambling on women's basketball increases the overall fan base (Auman, 2007). "If you're interested in growing the sport, the sell is going to have to include all aspects of fans," Bruno said. "Vegas is an aspect of that sell." Ultimately, leaders of women's basketball will need to decide if any potential benefits of the commoditization of women's basketball outweigh the potential challenges of being a commodity.

While the under-representation of women's basketball articles focused on Coach is King, Rule Breakers, and Athlete Health simultaneously produces and reproduces symbolic annihilation and male hegemony (Coakley, 2007; Kane & Greendorfer, 1994), the same result of marginalization occurs with over-representation of women's basketball articles focused on Syndicated Lists and Professional Leagues.

Syndicated Lists vs. Game-day Reporting

Syndicated Lists articles reporting team rankings and award candidates were over-represented in women's basketball articles. These rankings are the results of sports reporter and coach polls and do not require resources—e.g., a reporter from ESPN.com—to write the article. The Syndicated Lists articles indirectly report on game-day activities as athletes are represented by their name and statistics and teams are represented by their

win-loss records. However, these articles represent glorified box scores lacking a narrative component concerning sport performance. Syndicated List articles "silence" women's basketball players and coaches because the opportunity for player and coach quotes are nonexistent. The results from this study align with previous studies analyzing the representation of female athletes on ESPN *Sportscenter*—the television counterpart to ESPN.com—as no stories about women involved a reporter and only one of the articles reported "hard news" (Adams & Tuggle, 2004; Tuggle, 1997). Since 1997, the voice of female athletes has become increasingly elusive in ESPN reporting. *Sportscenter* transmitted fewer sound bites of women in 2002 compared to 1997 (Adams & Tuggle, 2004; Tuggle, 1997) and in the current 2007 study the over-representation of Syndicated Lists articles for women's basketball also fails to give them a voice. Overall, this finding suggests symbolic annihilation of women's basketball and that, when recognized, women's basketball is of secondary importance compared to men's basketball. The dearth of ESPN.com resources allocated to reporting on women's basketball game-day action compared to Syndicated Lists reinforces male supremacy in collegiate athletics and in online sports media. Although indirectly reporting, Syndicated List articles still reported on collegiate women's basketball and the over-representation of Professional Leagues articles dismissed collegiate women's basketball by simply reporting on another level and league entirely.

Professional Women's Basketball Players vs. College Players

Women's basketball articles were significantly more likely to represent Professional Leagues by reporting on the WNBA compared to men's basketball articles reporting on the NBA. When considering the timing of major college and professional

spectator sport seasons, the women's and men's college basketball seasons overlap with the following men's sport seasons: the National Football League (NFL), NCAA football, the National Hockey League (NHL), and the NBA. In contrast, the WNBA season does not overlap with the college basketball season as it takes place during the summer months. Interestingly, across the homepage of ESPN.com each of these men's sports leagues has a hyperlink corresponding with dedicated Web sites providing league-specific news, photographs, etc., whereas the WNBA link is a secondary link buried within the women's college basketball hyperlink. Since the majority of men's professional leagues received dedicated links, the mere subordination of the WNBA Web site reinforces male hegemony. The presence of Professional Leagues articles reporting on WNBA news irrelevant to women's college basketball within the women's college basketball home page is problematic. Articles reporting on the WNBA on the women's basketball home page decreases the number of articles published on women's college basketball thereby communicating that women's college basketball is not newsworthy. Not only does the over-representation of WNBA articles in women's basketball compared to NBA articles in men's basketball marginalize women's college basketball, this finding also begs the question as to why there are more WNBA articles compared to NBA articles published within the respective college basketball home pages. The lack of NBA articles published on the men's basketball home page could be the result of the NBA receiving coverage on the ESPN.com home page, the NBA having a dedicated home page on ESPN.com, and perhaps men's college basketball wanting to distance itself from the NBA. One could speculate that ESPN attempts to separate NCAA men's basketball and the NBA to minimize the negative associations linked to men leaving

college early for the NBA. The cost of early departures has been decreasing graduation rates for men's college basketball players. As a result, the ever-present, simmering conversation concerning the professionalization and commercialization of college athletics ignites. The over-representation of WNBA articles published on the women's basketball home page primarily suggests the WNBA is more newsworthy compared to women's college basketball. Since the inception of the WNBA, NCAA women's basketball and the WNBA have been closely associated. For example, the seasons do not overlap, thus there is a built-in continuity of seasons. In addition, the WNBA now conducts its draft with the NCAA Women's Final Four. Fans of NCAA women's basketball are encouraged to follow their favorite college players' progress in the WNBA. One could also speculate that since women's college basketball players are unable to play in the WNBA before the age of 22-years-old—unlike men's college basketball—the WNBA poses less of a threat to women's college basketball graduation rates. Economically speaking, given the significant salary discrepancy between NBA and WNBA contracts, with the average NBA salary dwarfing the average WNBA salary, leaving college early for the professional league is potentially less enticing for women's basketball players. Currently, the minimum age requirement for the WNBA makes the economic rationale a moot point; however, as women's sport progresses this could be a point of contention in the near future.

Mixed Method Conclusion

    This study began by asking, "How are women's and men's college basketball portrayed comparatively on online media compared to traditional media?" In many ways patterns of inequality of media representation persist and hegemony is reproduced in new

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media. However, in a few ways women's basketball media coverage on the Internet is challenging hegemony.

In the wake of Title IX, the most successful mainstream women's sport capturing a national television audience and consistent attendance is women's college basketball. Since the first women's national tournament through the 2006-07 season women's basketball attendance increased by over 500% as a record 10,878,322 fans passed through arena gates during this season. ESPN as an organization has also been attracted to women's collegiate basketball. In 2003, ESPN and the NCAA reached two multi-million dollar deals guaranteeing, in part, that all women's NCAA basketball tournament games and additional coverage of regular season women's basketball games would be broadcasted by the ESPN networks (ESPN, 2006; ESPN, 2007; Horrow, 2005). The combination of fan interest and the financial investment of ESPN in women's college basketball prompted the researcher to believe that if women's basketball were to receive representative media coverage anywhere it would be on ESPN.com, the online representation of ESPN. Unfortunately, despite their investment, ESPN's reporting behavior reinforced male hegemony in sport by favoring men's college basketball and marginalizing women's college basketball. What message does this send the public at-large and, more importantly, women's basketball fans? It is one issue for traditional media, with little economic interest in women's sport, to minimally cover women's sport in their media channels. It is another issue when ESPN fails to provide equal media coverage to women's basketball despite their economic investment in the sport. Ultimately, by sponsoring all NCAA tournament television coverage of women's collegiate basketball without providing media coverage support, they are controlling and

in some ways sabotaging the growth of women's basketball. This could be perceived as the strongest way to reproduce and maintain hegemonic masculinity.

At first glance the "glass is half full" seems to appropriately characterize the representation of women's basketball compared to 1) how traditional media has historically represented female athletes, and 2) men's basketball on ESPN.com. However, after taking a second, more detailed look at the glass, or media coverage of women's basketball, by triangulating the quantitative and qualitative results for the feature photographs and headline articles, the "glass is half empty" and hegemonic masculinity is simply being reproduced in new media. ESPN.com's representation of women's basketball portrayed ambivalence, visually and textually. While the feature photographs of women's basketball predominantly portrayed the female athletes as serious athletes (in uniform, on the court, and in action), in direct opposition to this the headline articles were dominated by non-game reporting articles. The ambivalence is portrayed by the conflicting messages published as the photographs communicate women's basketball players are serious athletes yet the articles communicate that women's basketball game activity is not newsworthy. Online media coverage of women's basketball indicates progress as women's basketball players are being visually portrayed more often as serious athletes. However, more progress is still needed for textual media representation of female athletes and the rate their sports information is updated to equal that of their male counterparts.

While it is true it has taken men's college basketball 43 years to reach its current level of March Madness and the women's tournament has only existed for 26 years (Adelson, 2008), the information—explicit and implicit—that the media communicates to

the public can support or hinder the growth of women's college basketball.

Representation of women's college basketball as minimized or trivialized in photographs or articles is reproduced in the media via differential quantities of media coverage of women's and men's sports in addition to the content of the coverage, *how* the athletes are portrayed or their performances are discussed, visually or textually, reproduces the implicit superiority of male athletes (Hardin & Shain, 2005). This reproduction of male hegemony in sport media reinforces the implicit superiority of male athletes thus stunting, or possibly negating, any growth of women's college basketball (Duncan & Messner, 2000; Prinen, 1997; Vincent, 2004).

The image of women's sports is constantly being challenged, formed, and reinforced through media images and text. These images and texts are not meaningless, whether found in traditional media or on the Internet, as they shape society's opinions of what is valued and important. Given the ever increasing participation rates of women in sport, it is increasingly important that traditional and new media continue to evolve alongside the evolution of women's sport. In the past, women were not afforded equal opportunity to participate in sport and thus lagging sport media coverage was expected. However, sport media coverage should be representative of the women and men participating and competing. The findings from this study, coupled with the staggering statistics of increased participation in women's sport and fans attending women's collegiate basketball games, beg the question, "How should women's basketball be covered by new media?"

Online sports media should provide regularly updated photographs and articles primarily on game activity for women's collegiate basketball. In a perfectly ideal and fair

world, local and national news outlets would staff women's basketball games with the same number of reporters and photographers provided for men's basketball. However, there are more cost-efficient ways to go about this: ESPN.com can, for instance, update their women's basketball home page as an intermediate step to full equality and toward the dissolution of male hegemony on their site. For example, given the high traffic of sport fans visiting ESPN.com, ESPN could simply be a central aggregator of women's college basketball information and photographs by collaborating with university sports information departments. Many university sports information departments post photographs and game summaries on their Web sites to update their local fans. If ESPN collaborated with these sports information departments, ESPN could post updated photographs and articles reporting on game activity for women's basketball without allocating additional ESPN resources.

Regardless of how ESPN and other new media sources choose to cover women's sports in the future, sport media scholars must keep pace with media technology and continue to document the media coverage of women's sports in traditional media and new media. The implications of females not seeing other females in sport media extend beyond sport and are too profound to ignore. This was best articulated by Billie Jean King when she stated, "You have to see it to be it. If a girl sees a woman succeed at something new, the sky truly is the limit" (Roberts, 2008).

CHAPTER 6:

DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The purpose of this study was to benchmark quantitative and qualitative media

coverage of women's and men's collegiate basketball on the Internet, while

simultaneously supporting or rejecting the theory of hegemonic masculinity in the

contemporary media channel. Despite the purpose of this study being fulfilled and

subsequently the corresponding body of literature increasing in volume, sport media can

be analyzed and interpreted while researching online coverage of various sports using a

variety of sources and sampling techniques.

First, in subsequent studies scholars should consider analyzing and interpreting

online media coverage of other comparable women's and men's collegiate sports such as

hockey, tennis, and soccer. While individual home pages for these sports are not currently

available on ESPN.com, thus inhibiting replication studies, the confirmation or refutation

of hegemonic masculinity in additional online sports media studies would contribute to

the body of sports media literature.

Secondly, researchers could replicate this study on alternate online sport media

sites such as SI.com and FOXSPORTS.com. ESPN.com was the source for the current

study, thus the findings are not generalizeable to all online sport media sites. Replication

of the current study on additional online sport media sites may confirm or challenge the

findings of the current study.

Lastly, future online sport media studies should consider collecting data multiple

times throughout each day for their sample. The current study followed standard data

collection processes for online media by collecting data during the same time frame each

day. However, collecting data at multiple times might provide a deeper understanding of the perceived newsworthiness of women's and men's basketball. For example, anecdotally, the researcher in the current study noticed the men's basketball home page was updated multiple times throughout the day, while the women's basketball home page was not. Unfortunately, the research design of the current study failed to capture this newsworthy nuance. This newsworthy nuance was outside the scope of the current investigation.

Online sport media research is clearly in its nascent stage. Additional research concerning a variety of sports, information sources, and sampling techniques will continue to build the online sport media body of knowledge. As traditional media morphs into new media, it is imperative that rigorous academic research keep pace by documenting the content and its implications.

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APPENDIX A:

EXAMPLE OF WEB SITE UNITS OF ANALYSIS

The yellow box above on the left outlines the feature photograph and the yellow box above on the right side outlines the headline articles.

APPENDIX B:

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

For the purposes of this study, the following terms and definitions will be used:

Feature photograph: Photograph in a prominent position, above the fold, and the largest photograph in size on the home page of a Web site.

Headline article: A news article featured in a section of featured articles in a prominent position, above the fold, on the home page of a Web site.

In-action: An athlete/coach is shown executing a movement expected in practice or competition.

In- uniform: An athlete/coach is shown in clothing commonly worn in a competitive or practice setting (e.g., uniform during a game, practice jersey/t-shirt and shorts during practice, etc.).

Off the field: An athlete/coach is shown outside of their typical sporting context (i.e., a basketball player not shown on a basketball court).

On the field: An athlete/coach is shown in their typical sporting context (e.g., a basketball player shown on a basketball court).

Out of uniform: An athlete/coach is shown in clothing not routinely worn in a competitive or practice setting (e.g., a basketball player in a dress/suit, a basketball coach in a tuxedo, etc.).

Passive pose: An athlete/coach is shown in a posed position not in the context of a live practice or competition.

Action pose: An athlete/coach is shown in a position in the context of a live practice or competition, not posed.

WOMEN'S AND MEN'S BASKETBALL

ONLINE MEDIA STUDY CODE BOOK

Heather Maxwell

For the purposes of this study all, new and repeat, ESPN.com feature photographs and headline articles on the women's and men's basketball Web sites within ESPN.com will be content analyzed. New is defined as a feature photograph or headline article published for the first time on ESPN.com during the 2006-2007 basketball season. Repeat is defined as a previously published feature photograph or headline article published on ESPN.com during the 2006-2007 basketball season.

SECTION A: FEATURE PHOTOGRAPH

A-1 PUBLICATION DATE: Enter the month, day and year the feature photograph was published. Please enter 0 before any single digit months or days. For example: (01) =January, (02) =February, etc. For the days please enter (01) =first, (02) =second, (03) =third, etc. for double digit days simply enter both digits (ex. (12) for the twelfth of the month). For the years please enter (06) =2006 or (07) =2007.

A-2 SEX OF BASKETBALL WEB SITE: Enter the number which corresponds with the sex: (1) for women's basketball Web site on ESPN.com and (2) for men's basketball Web site on ESPN.com.

A-3 SEASON TIME PERIOD: Enter the number which corresponds with the portion of the basketball season this feature photograph was published: (1) non-conference (women's: 10/18/06-01/06/07; men's: 10/18/06-01/06/07), (2) conference (women's: 01/07/07-03/03/07; men's: 01/07/07-03/07/07), and (3) post-season (women's: 03/04/07-04/04/07; men's 03/08/07-04/04/07).

A-4 PHOTOGRAPH STATUS: Enter the number which corresponds with the status of the feature photographs: (1) for a new photograph (published for the first time during the 2006-2007 season) and (2) for a repeat photograph (previously published during the 2006-2007 season).

A-5 FOCUS OF THE PHOTOGRAPH: Please enter the number indicating the focus of the feature photographs: (1) athlete(s) only, (2) head coach, (3) combination of athlete(s) and head coach, (4) other.

A-6 COURT LOCATION: Concerning only feature photographs focusing on athlete(s), thus coded (1) in question A-4, the athlete court location should be coded. Enter the number which corresponds with the location of the athlete: (1) on the basketball court and (2) off the basketball court, (3) unsure of athlete's location, (4) N/A (cartoon of athlete, etc.)

A-7 UNIFORM PRESENCE: Concerning only feature photographs focusing on athlete(s), thus coded (1) in question A-4, the presence of a uniform on the athlete should be coded. Enter the number which corresponds with uniform presence on the athlete: (1) game uniform worn by athlete(s) and (2) game uniform not worn by athlete(s). (3) unsure if athlete is wearing a game uniform.

A-8 POSE PRESENTATION: Concerning only feature photographs focusing on athlete(s), thus coded (1) in question A-4, the pose presentation of the athlete should be coded. Enter the number which corresponds with the athlete(s) pose: (1) athlete(s) exhibiting an active skill he/she might exhibit during an organized basketball practice (i.e., shooting, passing, running, etc.) and (2) athlete(s) exhibiting a passive activity he/she would not practice in an organized basketball practice (i.e., clapping, celebrating, crying, etc.).

SECTION B: HEADLINE ARTICLES

B-1 PUBLICATION DATE: Enter the month, day and year the headline article was published. Please enter 0 before any single digit months or days. For example: (01) =January, (02) =February, etc. For the days please enter (01) =first, (02) =second, (03) =third, etc. for double digit days simply enter both digits (ex. (12) for the twelfth of the month). For the years please enter (06) =2006 or (07) =2007.

B-2 SEX OF BASKETBALL WEB SITE: Enter the number which corresponds with the sex: (1) for women's basketball Web site on ESPN.com and (2) for men's basketball Web site on ESPN.com.

B-3 SEASON TIME PERIOD: Enter the number which corresponds with the portion of the basketball season this headline article was published: (1) non-conference (women's: 10/18/06-01/06/07; men's: 10/18/06-01/06/07), (2) conference (women's: 01/07/07-03/03/07; men's: 01/07/07-03/07/07), and (3) post-season (women's: 03/04/07- 04/04/07; men's 03/08/07-04/04/07).

B-4 ARTICLE STATUS: Enter the number which corresponds with the status of the headline articles: (1) for a new article (published for the first time during the 2006-2007 season) and (2) for a repeat article (previously published during the 2006-2007 season).

B-5 ARTICLE MEGA THEME: Enter the number which corresponds with the overarching theme of the headline articles: (1) game reporting- the main focus of the headline article is reporting on events that occurred during a game and (2) non-game

reporting, a headline article focusing on non-game reporting topics (coaching contracts, suspensions, etc.) deemed newsworthy for publishing on ESPN.com.

B-6 NON-GAME REPORTING THEME: Concerning only headline articles focusing on non-game reporting, thus coded (2) in question B-5, the non-game reporting theme should be coded. Enter the number which corresponds with non-game reporting theme: (1) team polls/rankings, (2) athlete injury/sickness, (3) coach achievement, (4) coach illness/tragedy, (5) coach contracts, (6) player suspension, (7) player transfers/leaves team, (8) other, (9) player rankings/award candidates, (10) recruits/player signings, (11) NBA/WNBA, (12) player violates NCAA rules or United States' law, and (13) coach violates NCAA rules or United States' law.

SECTION A: FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHS

A-1) Publication Date: _____/_____/2006   2007

A-2) Sex of Athlete: 1 – Female / 2- Male

A-3) Season Time Period: 1- non-Conference/ 2 – conference/ 3 – post-season

A-4) Photograph Status: 1 – new / 2- repeat

A-5) Focus of the Photograph:
1- athlete(s)/ 2- head coach/ 3- combination athlete(s) and coach/ 4- other

A-6) Court Location:
1- on basketball court/ 2- off basketball court/ 3-unsure/ 4-N/A

A-7) Uniform Presence: 1- uniform worn/ 2- uniform not worn/ 3-unsure

A-8) Pose Presentation: 1 – active/ 2 – passive

SECTION B: HEADLINE ARTICLES

B-1) Publication Date: _____/_____/2006   2007

B-2) Sex of Athlete: 1 – female / 2- male

B-3) Season Time Period: 1- non-Conference/ 2 – conference/ 3 – post-season

B-4) Article Status: 1 – new/ 2- repeat

B-5) Article Mega Theme: 1- game reporting / 2- non game-reporting

B-6) Non-Game Reporting Theme: 1- team polls/rankings/ 2- athlete injury/sickness/ 3- coach achievement/ 4- coach illness/tragedy/ 5- coach contracts/ 6- player suspension/ 7- player transfers/leaves team/ 8- other/ 9- player rankings/award candidates/ 10- recruits/player signings/ 11- NBA/WNBA/ 12- player violates NCAA rules or United States' law/ 13- coach violates NCAA rules or United States' law.