

Abstract

McKenzie, Keely Madison: The Right Type: An Examination of Typography and Gender Stereotypes in Sports Advertising
(Under the direction of Spencer Barnes)

It has been proven by many studies that gender stereotyping exists in the sports industry, especially in the context of sports advertising. In order to understand these stereotypes in advertising it is necessary to look into design elements of ads, specifically typography. This study examined 164 ads from *Sports Illustrated*, a weekly sports magazine, and focused on elements of gender and font. This study found no detectable link between typography and gender and also found that women are underrepresented, yet valued by a wide range of audiences. Typography must be more thoroughly studied before it can be analyzed in the context of specific areas of advertising, however the results of this study found that it is worthwhile to feature women more prominently in sports advertisements.

Biography

I was born and raised in Charlotte, North Carolina. My mother is an artist, my father is an accountant, and I have one older brother who works in an art gallery in New York City. Playing soccer, riding horses, and taking art classes, I grew up with a strong interest in athletic and creative pursuits. I started at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in the fall of 2012. I formally entered into the School of Media and Journalism during the spring of my sophomore year. Since then, I have taken classes in design fundamentals, newspaper design, magazine design, infographic design, video production, and animation.

I am currently an intern in UNC's Athletic Department working in the Marketing and Promotions Department as a graphic designer. In this position I have worked on print and digital projects with a sports marketing perspective. After graduation, I plan to continue working in a design capacity within the sports industry.

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Introduction

The sports industry is huge worldwide, and because of this, sports advertising is also a large industry. Advertisements showcase individual players, teams, sports events, and merchandise. Companies in other areas also use professional athletes to endorse their products, indicating that athletes are highly valued and influential in today's society because of their ability to persuade the public to buy products (Cuneen & Spencer, 2003). Because of the common use of athletes as endorsers, it is important to understand the messages being conveyed through these advertisements. Gender is a deciding factor in how many messages are portrayed, and the gender of the athlete featured in the advertisement often affects the way the entire ad is structured (Cuneen & Spencer, 2003). Another crucial element for conveying any advertising message is the typography chosen for the advertisement. The purpose of this study is to explore any connection between the semantic value of the typeface and the gender of the athlete featured in various sports advertisements.

Typography is defined as the appearance and style of printed words — or a visible language — and it is a key element in any design, no matter the purpose. Many have recognized the importance of typography as critical to the communication process (Childers & Jass, 2002; Hagtvedt, 2011; McCarthy & Mothersbaugh, 2002; Thangaraj, 2004; Wehr & Wippich, 2004). Various typefaces have semantic associations that affect the way messages are conveyed, particularly in the area of advertising. Studies have examined the effect typography has on legibility and reading speed, which many researchers have found to be important aspects to consider when choosing typography for advertising copy (McCarthy & Mothersbaugh, 2002). According to McCarthy and Mothersbaugh (2002), typefaces control inferences of a brand and connotations between the typefaces and the meaning of the text. There have also been studies

that seek to understand the effect of a typeface on brand recognition and memory (Childers & Jass, 2002; Hagtvedt, 2011; Wehr & Wippich, 2004). However, while there have been some studies that link typography to brand perception, this research has not yet been applied to understanding how typefaces affect the area of sports and gender.

The area of gender equality in sports advertising has been thoroughly examined in the studies referenced here. It is a generally accepted fact that, in sports advertisements, women are portrayed as being more delicate and feminine, and are not shown as being capable of competing in a sport in the same way as men (Jones & Greer, 2011). Women are portrayed as weak and inexperienced in the world of sports, and it has been that these portrayals negatively affect the public's perception of the female gender, representing them merely as sexual objects and only worthwhile in the sports realm for their sexuality rather than their ability (Cuneen & Spencer, 2003; E-Sex-P-N, 2011; Grow, 2008; Hardin, Chance, Dodd, & Hardin, 2002; Sailors, Teetzal, & Weaving, 2012). These studies have examined the clothing worn by male and female athletes, the positions they are posed in, the context surrounding the way they are portrayed, and the messages associated with their pictures in advertising (Cuneen & Spencer, 2003). This thesis will seek to fill in the gaps mentioned earlier, as well as how the semantic value of typefaces convey information about male and female athletes.

Literature Review

Typography in Literature

The typefaces chosen to display in advertisements can affect the message that the brand portrays. It is understood that certain kinds of typefaces convey certain meanings, for example, script fonts are widely accepted as conveying elegance because of the cursive appearance of the letters. In their study, Childers and Jass (2002) cited Lewis and Walker (1989), who identified

three ways that semantic associations between typography and the meanings they represent are formed: (a) through consistent use in a certain situation, (b) through a direct relation with qualities of perception made by the visual pattern of the stimulus, and/or (c) through associations with abstract connotations. In addition, Hagtvedt (2011) state that incomplete typefaces — type with parts missing so the letters are not whole — convey innovation when used as brand logos. The logotype is equally important because it is the stylized typeface that the company uses in the logo to convey meaning to its consumers (Hagtvedt, 2011). Ferdinand de Saussure (1915) stated that ideas come before words, and words are merely ways to signify the underlying ideas. In the context of this study, the typography chosen is an example of de Saussure's linguistic signs, and the characteristic of the typography is the signifier, conveying the underlying idea of the word, or the signified (De Saussure, 1915). Thangaraj (2004) determined in his research that different typefaces can influence the legibility, impact, meaning, and applicability of the concepts the words represent. These findings show that typefaces send messages to consumers beyond the meaning of the words themselves.

Conversely, it has also been found that the effects of typeface on the consumer vary on an individual level. Individuals may find meaning in a typeface based on personal preference, reading speed, and even based on benefits they perceive in the advertisement's copy (Childers & Jass, 2002; Hagtvedt, 2011; McCarthy & Mothersbaugh, 2002). This demonstrates that there is still a large area of research that still needs to be done in regards to the effect that typography has on the individual consumer level. Due to a lack of research, no definitive conclusion can be drawn about the true meaning conveyed by typefaces.

Much of the research on typography focuses on how it can affect memory. Unusual typography or color and consistency are the characteristics that contribute most strongly to

making an advertisement memorable (Childers & Jass, 2002; Wehr & Wippich, 2004). Clearly consumers are paying attention to the choice of typography, which further shows its importance in the realm of advertising and achieving brand recognition among consumers. It is also important to note that study participants remember the information conveyed in ad copy more frequently when the semantic aspect of the typeface connects to the product, such as when an elegant script is used to advertise for a luxury car brand (Childers & Jass, 2002). There is an important link between message and the vehicle used to convey the message. Certain typefaces evoke certain qualities based on their semantic aspects, and consumers do pick up on that connection in advertising contexts. However, there is a lack of research in how this knowledge is achieved by the consumer because of individual differences and the push by typography proponents that their understandings of type are universal (Thangaraj, 2004).

Childers and Jass (2002) also found that the level of consumer involvement affects how well the messages in advertisements are perceived. They said that when there is low involvement, meaning that there is not a lot of information to process, such as an ad featuring only a company's logo, it is easier to influence the consumers with typographic elements. In contrast, high involvement situations, such as when there is a lot of ad copy to process, can negatively affect influence and memory. This also relates to information in the study done by McCarthy and Mothersbaugh (2002). In this study they found that typographic elements such as style, spacing, and legibility affected how consumers perceived the brand. Therefore, combining the two studies shows that the physical elements of typography combine with semantics to create unique interpretations of text.

Davies (2002) was able to uncover some research linking typography and gender connotations. In his studies, he found that the creative agency Attik had once specifically

developed a font with a form based on the female body in order to directly appeal to a feminine audience. The firm's creative director was cited as saying that it was difficult for him to define what made the font appear feminine, but that the qualities were there. This piece of evidence supports Thangaraj's (2004) claim that there is a lack of substantial scientific research confirming the effects font has on consumer perceptions. When connections are made between font and gender, they are often based on sexist stereotypes, even these characteristics may be crucial in order for the connection to exist at all (Davies, 2002). Individual designers and advertisers have their own opinions about what makes a font gendered or not, which makes research in this area difficult. These opinions are formed by both how a typeface is used in the context of an ad and by societal values about the differences between genders that an individual was raised on (Davies, 2002; Garfield, 2010).

There are many elements to consider typographically when designing an ad, including typeface, semantics, amount of text, and how it relates to other aspects of the ad like images (and audio in advertisements designed for screen rather than print). While further research needs to be done in regards to effects on consumers, it should be known that it is difficult to quantify this kind of information because of the personal level of involvement. This search for literature found that typography is clearly an important element to consider in advertising because of the additional meaning it adds to words that cannot be conveyed by the words themselves.

Gender and Sports in Literature

Professional women's sports have not been around as long as professional men's sports, mainly due to the timeframe of women's rights. Female athletes in today's society are still viewed as weaker than male athletes, and this trend is also evident in sports advertising (E-Sex-P-N, 2011; Grow, 2008; Hardin, Chance, Dodd, & Hardin, 2002). It has been found that women

are portrayed sexually more often than men (Cuneen & Spencer, 2003; E-Sex-P-N, 2011), and this is important because individuals in society identify with the celebrities they see in ads and try to emulate the way they behave, demonstrating the social learning theory, which states that gender roles are learned by example (Boyd & Shank, 2004; Cuneen & Spencer, 2003). Society depends so much on the images it sees in the media because the media frames society's perception of women's sports. Since the media has to appeal to a mass market, it focuses on characteristics it thinks the audience will prefer, for example focusing on personal and physical characteristics of female athletes rather than athletic ability (E-Sex-P-N, 2011; Hardin et al., 2002; Kim, Walkosz, & Iverson, 2006). It is clear that women are not portrayed equally compared to men in the media, and it is important to reduce this stereotyping to increase understanding of women in the athletic arena.

Female athletes are typically presented as fragile, inactive, or participating in individual sports, rather than the competitive team sports that men are shown playing, and are also underrepresented in sports advertising (Grau, Roselli, & Taylor, 2007). These aspects of female portrayal are traditionally feminine, while if they are shown playing traditionally men's sports, they are considered masculine (Cuneen & Spencer, 2003). A study completed by Jones and Greer (2011) showed that men prefer advertisements in which females conform to gender stereotypes, whereas women prefer to see more masculine or powerful female athletes (Grau, Roselli, & Taylor, 2007). These findings are important because they show the sex typing that consumers use to categorize the information they see in advertisements. Sex typing is when, in this case, consumers judge the athletes based on traditional perceptions of what is appropriate for each sex (Jones & Greer, 2011).

Sailors, Teetzel, and Weaving (2012) argue that these traditional perceptions for women are either sex object or mother, and women are typically portrayed as one or the other in advertisements. This study served to examine the sexualization of women's beach volleyball, and found that the female athletes are mainly used for sex appeal rather than athletic endeavor due to the alluring nature of the uniforms they are required to wear during competition (Sailors, Teetzel, & Weaving, 2012). If sex typing such as this continues to pervade today's society, traditional gender stereotypes in the area of sports advertising will continue to affect the way consumers view male and female athletes as it has in the past (Grau, Roselli, & Taylor, 2007; Jones & Greer, 2011).

Another aspect that has been studied in sports advertising is trustworthiness. Boyd and Shank (2004) found that consumers view endorsers of the same gender as more trustworthy. When combined with the findings from the study by Jones and Greer (2011) in regards to women preferring powerful female athletes, this creates a conflict. The issue these authors found is that women are seeing female athletes portrayed as delicate, and yet they still trust these images over the more powerful images they would rather see. According to research, women prefer to see female athletes portrayed as strong, but still trust ads that portray women in a weak sense. These findings serve to reinforce gender stereotypes in advertising.

Some research shows that women are making efforts to create equal advertisements in the sports area. Grow (2008) researched the advertising behind Nike's women's sub-brand, and found that women on the creative side of advertising are pushing to create more realistic portrayals of female athletes, which were different compared to Nike's ads before the sub-brand was formed. These innovative campaigns created by a team at Wieden+Kennedy also created a conflict with the branding for Nike as a parent company. The parent company (in other words the

men's side of Nike) felt threatened by the ads that were being produced for women, even though the women's advertisements were generating revenue for the company (Grow, 2008). Gender stereotypes are being perpetuated in the media, not only due to traditional methods of portraying the two genders, but also deliberately in some cases by male advertising executives.

Sports advertising is unique because it offers an opportunity for advertisers to change traditional gender notions. Since athletes are influential when used as endorsers and consumers identify with the way athletes are portrayed in ads, if advertisers eliminate gender stereotypes from their ads, they could change the way the public thinks about gender (Grau, Roselli, & Taylor, 2007). The link between the athlete and the message associated with him or her can serve to reinforce the themes of sexism that have been established historically in society (Cuneen & Spencer, 2003). According to Boyd and Shank (2004), regardless of the gender of the audience, a male athlete associated with a sports-related product is the most successful advertisement. Grau, Roselli, and Taylor (2007) found that athletes are effective product endorsers if they are successful in their athletic endeavors, and that young girls are more likely to be influenced by athletes in advertising, meaning that female athletes would make effective endorsers. However, due to traditional gender roles stereotyping women as inferior, women are not seen as experts, and are therefore not included in advertisements as often as men (Grau, Roselli, & Taylor, 2007). These examples prove that gender stereotyping exists because of the ads that are currently circulating in the media and through the opinions of consumers that have been gathered in various studies. The social learning theory says that gender roles are learned through modeling, and therefore consumers are more likely to be satisfied when they emulate the people they see in advertisements (Cuneen & Spencer, 2003). The current social order constrains female athletes because it promotes femininity over athleticism in addition to the underrepresentation of females

in advertisements in sports media (Grau, Roselli, & Taylor, 2007; Grow, 2008; Jones & Greer, 2011; Sailors, Teetzel, & Weaving, 2012).

Research shows that gender stereotyping exists in the media, and that these stereotypes are enforced by the way athletes are portrayed and the opinions that readers have when they view sports advertisements. The methods used in advertising today need to be examined because they affect the way individuals view themselves with respect to societal expectations.

Importance of Study

This search for literature uncovered a lack of data connecting typography to gender stereotyping in the concept of sports advertising. Typography has been studied in a relatively thorough way, although there is room to study it further with investigations into how the underlying meanings of typography affect how consumers perceive advertisements. However, sports advertising has only been analyzed in terms of the images of the athletes. The visual elements of advertising include far more elements than just pictures, and more information is needed not only with respect to typography, but color, shape, and other visual elements.

It is important to study this topic because of the information found in the literature that was covered. The semantic value of typography means that all fonts that are chosen in advertisements convey meaning, whether intentional or unintentional. In addition, the sexism that is present in sports advertising shows that gender stereotyping is still occurring even in modern society. The intent of this study is to analyze sports advertisements to find if the typography displayed in the ads contributes to the stereotyping that is already created by images, poses, and messages in advertising copy. This will only further emphasize the value of typography and the need for additional consideration on the part of advertisers to choose appropriate ways to display messages in regards to gender in sports advertisements.

Research Questions

This study will seek to find relationships between gender and headline fonts, appeal, intention, and profession in the context of sports advertisements. The researcher expects that the data will show that men are featured more prominently and more effectively in sports ads than women, and that this will come across in the use of certain design elements, such as typography or the use of graphic elements.

- RQ1: Does the gender of talent featured in an advertisement affect the color of the headline font used in the ad?
- RQ2: Is there a relationship between the appeal of an advertisement and the gender of the talent featured in the ad?
- RQ3: Is there a relationship between the occupation of the subjects of an advertisement and the ad's appeal?
- RQ4: Does the profession of an advertisement's subject affect the ad's intent?

Method

Sample

In order to test the typography in today's sports advertisements, I collected advertisements from *Sports Illustrated*, a weekly sports magazine that approximately three million people subscribe to (and is read by 23 million people total, of which 18 million are men), and performed a content analysis (Plunkett, 2006). To gather all of the resources, the University of North Carolina's library website was utilized for access to cataloged issues of *Sports Illustrated*. I looked at issues of the magazine from volumes 122 and 123, running from February 23, 2015, through December 28, 2015, totaling 43 issues. To find all of the advertisements in each issue, I downloaded the issues as .pdfs and compiled only the pages with advertisements

into a single .pdf document. After I had collected all of the advertisements from the three volumes I looked through all of the advertisements and only included those that featured athletes, sporting events, or sporting products. Portrait ads (ads that take up one single page of a magazine), partial ads (ads that take up less than one full page of a magazine), and broadsheets (ads that take up two full pages, or a spread, in a magazine) were all used in this study. I limited the advertisements to this kind of content because my study focused on typography and gender in the concept of sports advertisements, so including any other types of products or promotions would have skewed the results of the content analysis. I also included only one copy of each advertisement, because advertisements were repeated multiple times across issues of *Sports Illustrated*. In total there were 164 advertisements to be analyzed.

Coding Process

Once all of the advertisements were compiled into a .pdf, I had two coders who analyzed each advertisement using a coding method that I developed. I had one female and one male coder to cancel out any gender bias that may have existed initially so as not to skew the results of the study. The analysis took a total time of three hours to look through the 164 advertisements that had been collected from volumes 122-123 of *Sports Illustrated*. The advertisements were displayed to the coders on a 13-inch MacBook Pro laptop using Adobe Acrobat. I operated the laptop and waited until each coder was finished answering all of the questions before moving to the next advertisement. The coders recorded their findings on coding sheets that I printed, and each coder kept track of the advertisement they were analyzing by writing the pre-determined number of the ad in the section of the coding sheet labeled “Ad Number.”

The coding sheet was one piece of letter sized paper cut into equal fourths and each fourth had a table on it. In the table each question was bolded and each response was in the same

row as the question. The coders circled each answer as they looked at each advertisement. When the coding process was complete, I collected all of the sheets for every advertisement that each coder filled out. All of the responses were entered into a single spreadsheet. The female coder was labeled as “rater one” and the male coder was labeled as “rater two.” Each response was given a number 1-6 depending on how many responses were available for each question and each question got a separate column in the spreadsheet. These numbers were then entered into the statistical analysis program SPSS to analyze the data.

I was limited in my content analysis by the resources that were available to my disposal. The University of North Carolina’s library database did not have a large collection of sports related magazines that I could use to collect advertisements, but overall this may have been beneficial to my study. Since I ended up with 164 advertisements to analyze over the time period of 11 months, any more advertisements collected would have taken the coders a long time to analyze, and the number of advertisements from this period was large enough to generate patterns that could be detected about the characteristics of the advertisements.

I limited myself to advertisements that contained an athlete or athletes, a sporting event, or a sporting product in order to keep my analysis in line with the sporting genre that my study focused on. The advertisements that included athletes featured a wide variety of products that were not related to sports, but I included those because the athletes featured may have impacted the typography that the designer chose to use in the advertisement. In this category I also included the option for sporting personalities, meaning individuals who are related to the sports world but may not play sports themselves, such as coaches or announcers who are well known to the general public. The sporting events category referred to games or matches that were advertised in *Sports Illustrated* such as the Super Bowl or a tennis tournament, for example.

These were included to look for any differences between men's sporting events and women's sporting events, if those differences existed. The sporting product category referred to any advertisement selling a product that could be used in any sporting activity.

The coders only analyzed the main font or titular font of each advertisement and not the body copy. The title font is described as the heading of the advertisement. The body copy is any large paragraph of information relating to the product or event being sold in the advertisement. The reason this distinction was made is because the title font is mainly where I expected gendering to occur in advertisements, because the body copy in most advertisements is either a derivative or a similar font to the title or is a standard serif or sans serif font that is usually gender-neutral. The title font is the aspect of the advertisement that draws in a viewer or informs the viewer of what the purpose of the advertisement is, and it is deemed as the most important typographical element of the advertisement.

I did not limit the advertisements based on what sports were featured because I did not want to limit the size of the advertisement collection any more than was necessary. I originally sought to focus on sports that were played professionally by both genders, but the advertisements that I found in *Sports Illustrated* during the time period in which I gather advertisements generally included sports that both sexes play, with the exception of ice hockey. I wanted this limitation initially because I wanted to be able to compare the differences in the typography of the advertisements between the men's and women's advertisements, but instead I decided to focus more on a general pattern of all advertisements rather than those between the two genders in a specific sport.

I included questions such as the color of the font and the overall color temperature of the advertisement to see if the font type was gendered by the color of the font. However, there have

already been studies done based on color and gender stereotyping in advertising and that is why I chose to focus only on the color of the typography rather than the color of the entire advertisement (Boyd & Shank, 2004; Cuneen & Spencer, 2003; Jones & Greer, 2011). This study focuses solely on typography and gender and I did not want any other design elements to be addressed in the analysis of the advertisements. If any other elements were found, they will be addressed in a further study and not in this study.

Results

The content analysis discussed in the following section was conducted on a collection of advertisements gathered from a 11 months of *Sports Illustrated* issues running from February 23, 2015 through December 28, 2015. In total, the researcher gathered a total of 164 sports-related advertisements from 43 issues of the magazine. On average, there were 17 ads per issue of the magazine and 7 sports-related ads per issue. There were also 1 partial ad per issue and 2 broadsheets per issue. Partial advertisements are defined for this study as ads that take up less than one magazine page, and broadsheet ads in this study refer to advertisements that take up two pages, or one spread, of a magazine.

Only six variables were maintained for the purpose of this study: Who, Headline, Layout, Gender, Appeal, Font Color, and Purpose (each variable is defined in Table 1). According to Cunningham and Wallraven (2012, p. 315) “reliability refers to the degree with which the raters provide the same ordering of item properties” and that agreement between coders is defined as “how well raters agree in the values of their ratings of the item properties” (In this study the researcher refers to item properties as variables). The difference between these two aspects of coding is that “reliability is of interest whenever only the *relative* consistency of ratings is important, whereas agreement compares the *absolute* values” (Cunningham & Wallraven, 2012,

p. 315). The authors list the values of agreement less than 0.0 as “poor,” from 0.00-0.20 as “slight,” from 0.21-0.40 as “fair,” from 0.41-0.60 as “moderate,” from 0.61-0.80 as “substantial,” and above 0.81 as “almost perfect.” Based on these reliabilities, certain variables were eliminated from this study because the inter-coder reliability was not at a high enough degree to obtain meaningful data. Any variable with an agreement value less than the threshold of .450 indicated a lack of consensus between raters on what each ad was depicting as far as the assigned variables were concerned.

Table 1.
Protocol Information and Reliability

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Options</u>	<u>Observed Agreement</u>	<u>κ</u>
Who	Refers to the occupation of the person(s), or talent, featured in an advertisement	athlete, model, event or product	69.7%	.481
Headline	Refers to the kind of font used for the headline or main font of each advertisement	sans serif, script, serif	90.9%	.692
Centric	Refers to whether the main focus of an ad was around images or text	image, text	72.7%	.092
Layout	Refers to what portion of a standard magazine page the advertisement occupied	portrait, broadsheet, partial	97.0%	.913
Gender	Refers to the gender of the person(s) or object(s) featured in each advertisement, and how many people of that gender there were	male, female, both, males, females, neither	84.8%	.801
Appeal	Refers to which gender the raters thought the advertisement was intended to appeal to	men, women, everyone	87.9%	.637
Temp	Refers to the overall color temperature	warm, cool, black and white	72.7%	.353
Font Color	Refers to the color of the headline font	color, black and white	78.8%	.571
Font Gender	Refers to how the raters interpreted the gender of the headline font	masculine, feminine, neutral	57.6%	.157
Purpose	Refers to the intention of the advertisement	selling a product, advertising an event	93.9%	.637
Employ	Refers to what creative devices were used in each advertisement	photos, graphic elements, both	72.7%	.401

For this study, even though the level of reliability for the variable labeled “Font gender” was determined to only have slight agreement, the researcher chose to include the data from both raters in the results of the findings because this particular attribute was crucial to the purpose of this study and will be thoroughly discussed in the following section. For the majority of the data,

the researcher judged Rater 2 to be the more consistent coder, therefore the results of Rater 2’s analysis will be shown in this section.

Ad Characteristics

The researcher found that the most common advertisements used in this study either featured one male or neither a male nor female. These two occurrences accounted for the majority (59.1%) of advertisements in the study (see Figure 1). Advertisements featuring a professional athlete or sports persona almost accounted for a majority of the ads used in this study, making up 48.8% of the total (see Figure 2). Out of the total 164 ads in this study only 26 were made with the purpose of advertising a sporting event (see Figure 3).

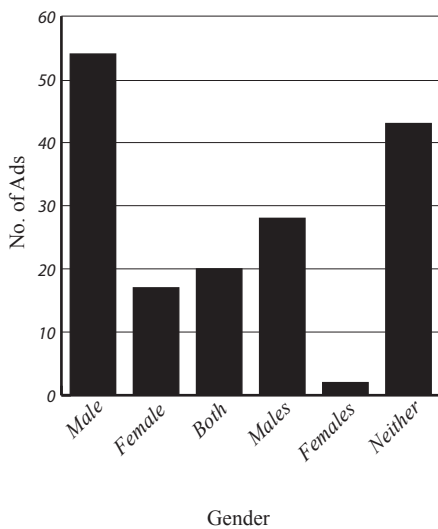


Figure 1. Frequency of gender in the studied advertisements.

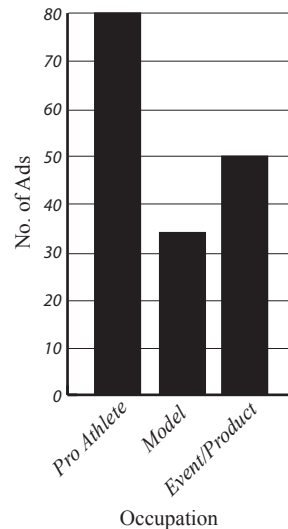


Figure 2. Frequency of occupations in the studied advertisements.

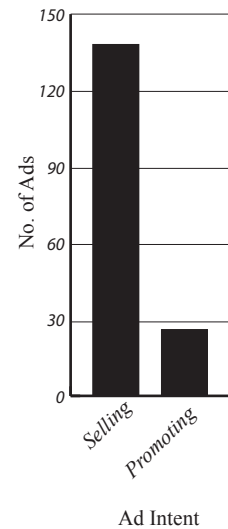


Figure 3. Frequency of purpose in the studied advertisements.

Forty-seven ads (28.7%) utilized colored headline fonts while 117 ads (71.3%) had black or white headline fonts. The data also showed that the majority of the ads, 112 ads (68.3%), appealed exclusively to men, while 6 ads (3.7%) appealed solely to women and 46 ads (28.0%) appealed to both genders. One hundred and twenty-eight (78.0%) used a sans serif headline font, 11 (6.7%) had a script headline font, and 25 (15.2%) had a serif headline font. In terms of layout

of the advertisements, 129 ads (78.7%) were portrait, 23 ads (14.0%) were broadsheets, and 12 (7.3%) were partials. Finally, for the variable of font gender 83 ads (50.6%) had a masculine headline font, 11 ads (6.7%) had a feminine headline font, and 70 ads (42.7%) had a neutral headline font. (For Rater 1, the data showed that 150 ads (91.5%) had a masculine headline font, 3 ads (1.8%) had a feminine headline font, and 11 ads (6.7%) had a neutral headline font.)

Talent of the Advertisements

The subjects of the advertisements, or the talent featured in the ads, require a further breakdown into the gender frequency between the variables of professional athletes and models. Out of the 80 total ads that featured a professional athlete or sports persona, 35 (43.8%) featured one male and 22 (27.5%) featured multiples males (see Figure 4). Of the 34 ads that used a model to portray an athlete or perform an athletic activity, 17 (50%) featured one male and 8 (23.5%) featured both genders (see Figure 5).

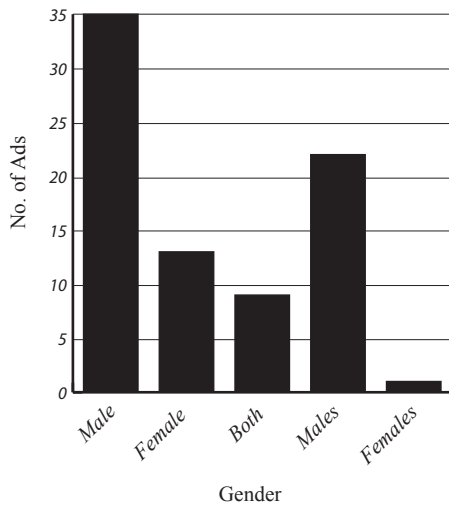


Figure 4. Frequency of gender in advertisements featuring a professional athlete.

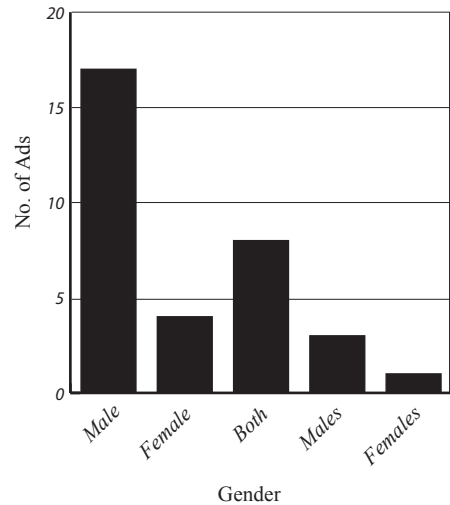


Figure 5. Frequency of gender in advertisements featuring a model portraying an athlete.

Effect of Featured Genders on Headline Font Color

The first research question this study considered is the relationship between gender and font color in the studied advertisements. The researcher sought to find how the gender of the

subjects featured in the advertisements affected whether or not colored font or black and white font was used in the advertisement. The goal of this first question was to determine whether or not an association existed between the gender of the talent in a given ad and the font color in the same advertisement. To determine whether or not the font was gendered by color or black and white. The results of the test were $\chi^2(5, N = 164) = 5.124, p = .401, \varphi = .177$, meaning that there was no association between gender and font color.

Effect of Featured Genders on Overall Ad Appeal

RQ2 had the goal of determining whether or not there was an association in a given advertisement between who the ad appealed to based on the subject matter, or talent, shown in the same advertisement. The results of the statistical test were $\chi^2(10, N = 164) = 52.684, p < .0001, \varphi = .567$, showing that there is a strong association between the talent and the design intent. Standardized residuals revealed that if the ad was intended to appeal to everyone, then the gender of the talent employed was more than likely female. The female gender drove the appeal to everyone, showing that if the ad employs a female subject it reached a wider range of the audience. Also, if the ad employed both men and women in the same ad, that ad would typically appeal to everyone.

Effect of Featured Profession on Overall Ad Appeal

The third research question sought to determine if an association existed between the profession of the talent displayed in the advertisement and who the ad appealed to. The statistical test showed $\chi^2(4, N = 164) = 9.113, p = .058, \varphi = .236$. There was marginal significance between the talent employed and the occupation of the talent. Standardized residuals showed that if the talent employed was a professional athlete, the composition appealed primarily to women.

Another influential factor between the association was that if models were used in an advertisement, the appeal was also typically for women.

Out of all of the advertisements, a total of 52 ads used male talent, and of those ads 35 (67.3%) were professional athletes and 17 (32.7%) were male models. Female talent comprised 17 advertisements, and of those 13 (76.5%) were professional athletes and 4 (23.5%) were models. Advertisements featuring both genders accounted for 17 ads in total, and 9 (52.9%) ads used professional athletes while 8 (47.1%) used models. The 25 advertisements that featured multiple males were made up of 22 (88.0%) ads with professional athletes and 3 (12.0%) ads with models. Multiple females were featured in 2 ads, with 1 (50%) professional athlete and 1 (50%) model. Forty-two ads had neither gender.

Effect of Featured Profession on Ad Intent

The final research question considered whether the talent featured in the ad affected the purpose of the ad. The results showed a significant association between the profession of the talent in the advertisement and whether the ad was selling a product or advertising an event. The results were $\chi^2(2, N = 164) = 6.322, p = .042, \phi = .196$. The test was significant because p was less than .05, meaning that the occupation was utilized effectively when the ad was selling a product versus publicizing an event. Conversely, if the purpose was to advertise an event there was no individual to advertise it, the advertisement just showcased a picture of the event.

Discussion

Given the findings listed in the previous section, the researcher was able to draw the following conclusions. The first research question was designed to determine if a relationship existed between the headline font color of a given advertisement and the gender of the people featured in that same advertisement. Since the findings of the statistical analysis were not

significant, this seems to show that in current advertisements, gender is not a determining factor in choosing a colored headline font or a black and white headline font. This would show considerable growth from advertising in the past, which contained more sexist associations (Jones & Greer, 2011).

Cuneen and Spencer (2003) found that the gender of a person featured in an advertisement affected how the rest of the ad is put together and that ads typically show traditional gender roles according to how they are currently perceived in society (Boyd & Shank, 2004). Since physical elements of typography often affect how an individual creates his or her interpretation of the meaning of the text (McCarthy & Mothersbaugh, 2002), this data could show a level of growth away from sex typing within society as a whole. Studies have found that men usually prefer advertisements in which females conform to gender norms while women like to see more powerful portrayals (Jones & Greer, 2011; Grau, Roselli, & Taylor, 2007), and this could be the start of a strong feminist movement in sports advertising. The findings show that font color in sports advertisements is not related to gender within the confines of this study, although this study only considered color and black and white as the categories distinguished between. Although the findings suggest that it could be worthwhile to pursue research into the relationship between gender and the specific color of the typography in sports advertisements, this study is consistent with previous research that the context of the advertisement can also affect individual perceptions of stereotypes (Cuneen & Spencer, 2003), which means that the way a gender is portrayed in an advertisement should also be taken into consideration when researching the potential bias of a color.

The second question examined whether or not a given advertisement appealed more to men or women based on the gender of the talent featured in the composition. If the ad featured

either females or both genders, it was highly likely to appeal to everyone, and if both genders were featured in an ad, it stands to reason that both genders should be attracted to that ad.

However, the first result is much more interesting. Boyd and Shank (2004) found that the most successful ads were those that featured a male athlete with a sports-related product. The study done by this researcher indicated that females were more widely marketable because ads featuring women appealed to a larger audience. Research does indicate that males prefer to see women in advertisements who conform to traditional stereotypes (Grau, Roselli, & Taylor, 2007), so perhaps this is because the advertisements used in this study only portrayed women stereotypically. A different analysis and coding method would have to be employed to examine this for the advertisements used in this case, one that could include questions about the roles females take in the advertisements they are featured in.

These findings both support and contradict the ideas that women in sports advertising are underrepresented and portrayed unequally (Grau, Roselli, & Taylor, 2007). Although this study did find that less than 20 advertisements out of the total 164 featured individual women (10.4%), these advertisements were accepted equally by both genders. This shows a disparity on the part of advertising creatives who choose not to include women in ads as frequently as they include men. The findings in this study show that it would be worthwhile for advertisements to feature more women because these advertisements would attract just as much attention from male audiences as female audiences. Again, more research would have to be done on this specific set of data to determine why the appeal to men was so strong in this particular case in order to determine that the typical sex typing is not at work. Since it has been found that women are more often portrayed sexually than men (Cuneen & Spencer, 2003; E-Sex-P-N, 2011), this may be the reason why the appeal among men was judged to be so high especially since people tend to view

those of the same gender as more trustworthy (Boyd & Shank, 2004). However, it is important to note that including more women in sports advertisements would not harm the level of attention a publication receives.

The third research question concerned the relationship between the profession of the talent featured in a given ad and the ad's appeal. This study judged that the appeal for women was higher when there was a person or persons featured in an ad, and since males were the most common gender in the majority of the ads, this supports the idea that using a male is the most successful advertising technique in the sports industry (Boyd & Shank, 2004). Combined with the previous results, however, this creates a conflict. Men and women were both attracted to females used in advertisements, but women were more generally attracted to the use of people in advertisements. This perhaps has to do with the fact that, in general, women are less interested in watching sports than men (E-Sex-P-N, 2011). The data supports this idea because women are perhaps more interested in the personal aspect of sports so they are more drawn to ads featuring people, while men are interested in the technical aspects of sports, so they are drawn to ads featuring events or products. The link between the levels of appeal based on people versus objects was not investigated in the research of this study, so it is more difficult to interpret.

Grau, Roselli, and Taylor (2007) argued that women are not viewed as experts in the sporting industry, which may suggest that advertisements featuring people appeal to a wider range of genders than advertisements that show events or products because men are more specifically interested in the more technical aspects of sport. This would support the idea that when women do appear in sports advertisements the focus tends to not be on female athletic ability (E-Sex-P-N, 2011; Hardin et al., 2002; Kim, Walkosz, & Iverson, 2006), showing that there is the idea that women connect to sports on a more personal level than on a technical level.

Since women identified more with people in the context of this study, this result could be indicative that a wide range of females are not as interested in the specifics of sport as men.

The fourth question this study examined the effect of the profession of the advertised individual on the purpose of that ad. Professional athletes were associated more often with selling a product while pictures of events were shown when an event was being promoted. When selling a product, it is more effective to use an athlete who has had athletic success in his or her respective sport in order to market the good (Grau, Roselli, & Taylor, 2007; Jones & Greer, 2011). Therefore, these *Sports Illustrated* ads employed a good marketing strategy for the issues presented in this study. The problem comes with the fact that men were overwhelmingly featured as the professional athletes or models used to sell a product. Sailors, Teetzel, and Weaving (2012) found that women are more often viewed as sex objects or mothers than as athletes, and this leads to increased stereotyping among viewers if more women are not included in advertisements.

There was a link between profession and marketing, and the connection that consumers appear to make could open up a great area of opportunity for female athletes if it is utilized by advertising creatives. There is the chance for women to be seen as having equal athletic ability as men if they are used to advertise products more often. In this study, the researcher noted that many of the advertisements featuring single women were of Serena Williams, a highly influential sportswoman in 2015. Most of the ads featuring Williams showed her playing tennis, advertising a product, or celebrating her achievements. If advertisers would employ more successful female athletes into their campaigns, then they could decrease the sexism that is connected to athletes when they are not used to send the proper message in advertisements (Cuneen & Spencer, 2003).

This study also found data to support Thangaraj's (2004) argument that there is no scientific way to determine the gender of a font. For the variable of font gender, the coders had one of the lowest levels of agreement and as such the variable was eliminated from the analysis. However, it is important to discuss this aspect of the study with respect to the purpose of the study. This study was designed to focus on typography in sports advertisements. Unfortunately, the data did not show any evidence supporting a strong relationship between font and gender. The raters did not agree on the gender of font, and, as the research has suggested, this aspect of typography is based almost purely on opinion and sexual stereotyping that an individual has been taught (Davies, 2002; Garfield, 2010).

Garfield (2010) wrote that "heavy bold jagged fonts are mostly male, and whimsical, lighter curly fonts are mostly female" and argued that humans are conditioned from birth to understand gender associations, but the adjectives that are used to describe the fonts in examples such as the above quotation are subjective, and it is inherently illogical to try to prove that a subjective word is a fact. Therefore, the researcher can draw no definitive conclusion about the gender of typography and can not connect it to stereotyping as strongly as other elements that were studied. This conclusion does create an element of freedom on the part of the designer, however. If a designer chooses to use a specific font, he or she would not have to be concerned about whether or not the font will isolate certain genders because of the subjective nature of typography. However, designers should still be cautious and stay away from deliberately stereotypical fonts unless it fits the purpose of their advertisement.

This study overall supported many of the underlying aspects of advertising that reference stereotyping in accordance to gender, such as underrepresentation of females, the successful use of celebrity endorsers, and the relationship between the gender of the person in the advertisement

and the consumer. The data shows signs that stereotyping is at a lower level than it was in the previous decade when most of the studied literature was written. The data largely supports the idea that using more women in advertisements would be beneficial and would still appeal to the same audiences to which *Sports Illustrated* currently appeals, and this increased exposure to female athletes could reduce the idea that women are fragile and not as capable as men.

Limitations

This study had a few limitations that, could the researcher perform the content analysis again, might provide more insightful results for future study. The author thought of more possible connections to analyze in terms of the specific question of typography in sports advertisements. For example, it is widely accepted that pink is a color for girls and blue is a color for boys. To improve this study, the researcher would add an element of color temperature of the typography in order to determine if more warm temperature fonts equate to a more feminine appeal to the advertisement and if a cool temperature font would appeal more to men.

In addition, it would have been more helpful to have a larger range of advertisements over a longer period of time, even though that would have taken much more time to code. It would have benefitted the study greatly to have used advertisements from more than one publication, although the researcher in this case was limited by the resources available. It would also have helped the study to use more than two coders, perhaps six, three of each gender, would have given a more concrete set of data in regards to how the two genders judged the variables in the analysis. Using one rater of each gender did not provide enough data to be able to draw substantial conclusions from. The coders who analyzed the advertisement were not familiar with design elements, and there were some inconsistencies in answers to categories that should have been consistent, such as the use of serif and sans serif fonts. Therefore, it would have been

beneficial to have coders who understood basic concepts and are better able to apply critical thinking to the analysis. All of these suggestions could be utilized if further research is made into this subject matter.

Conclusion

It is clear that sport plays a large role in modern society, and as gender has become a more pressing issue today it is even more important that stereotypes be eliminated in one of the world's largest industries. How athletes are portrayed in advertisements affects how they are viewed as representatives of their gender. Athletes receive some of the highest levels of exposure, at a level equal to celebrities, and are judged with equal harshness. If more research is made into the effects of sports advertising on stereotyping, and if it can be determined that typography plays an influential role in this stereotyping, those conclusions could help to break down pre-conceived conclusions about male and female capabilities. This author would first recommend more research be done concerning typefaces and fonts before applying the research to advertisements as this study attempted to do. A stronger foundation must be made before the research is applied to more important areas. Since a lack of research exists in this area, it is important to start at the beginning and build knowledge on this base. Gender stereotypes do exist, as shown in this study and research, and if additional research is to be done and applied to sports advertising in the future, it could be crucial to changing how society perceives gender.

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Appendix

Coding Protocol

Rater _____ Ad _____

Do the ads?	Pro athlete/ sports persona	Model portraying an athlete	Reference a sporting event/ activity/ product
Headline fonts?	Sans Serif	Script	Serif
Is the ad?	Image- centric	Text- centric	
Is the ad?	Portrait	Landscape	Partial
Who is it?	Male	Female	Both
	Males	Females	Neither
Appeal?	Men	Women	Everyone
Color temperature?	Warm	Cool	Black & White
Font color?	Color	Black & White	
Is the font?	Masculine	Feminine	Neutral
Is the ad?	Selling a product	Advertising an event	
Does the ad use?	Photos	Graphic elements	Both

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