



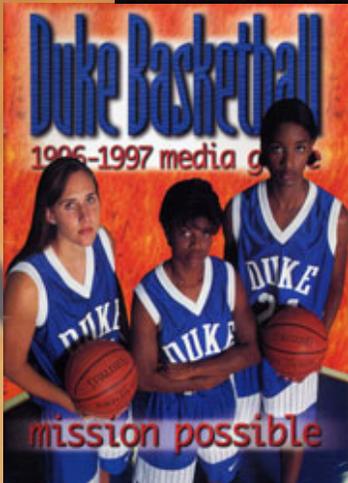
2003-2004



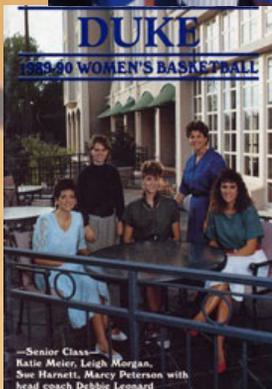
2009-2010



2016-2017



1996-1997



1989-1990

A 26-year Longitudinal Analysis of Intercollegiate Division I Media Guides in a Changing Sports Media Landscape

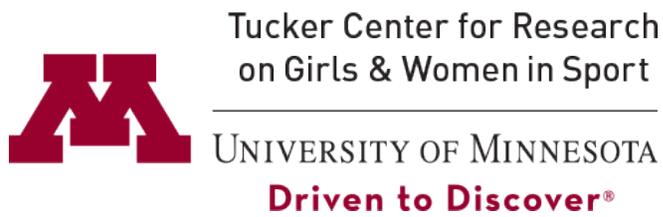
Dr. Jo Ann M. Buysse and Dr. Sarah M. Wolter



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Acknowledgments:

Thank you to the following individuals for their role in this report: Nicole M. LaVoi, Courtney Boucher and Jonathan Sweet.

Buysse, J. M. & Wolter, S. M. (2019, August). A 26-year Longitudinal Analysis of Intercollegiate Division I Media Guides in a Changing Sports Media Landscape, 1989-2017. Minneapolis: The Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sport.

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A 26-YEAR LONGITUDINAL ANALYSIS OF INTERCOLLEGIATE DIVISION I MEDIA GUIDES IN A CHANGING SPORTS MEDIA LANDSCAPE

1989-2017

BY DR. JO ANN M. BUYSSE AND DR. SARAH M. WOLTER

College sports is a \$13 billion per year industry (Novy-Williams, 2017), with a record 31 universities earning over \$100 million in revenue in the 2016-17 fiscal year (“NCAA 2016-17 Finances,” n.d.). The NCAA alone brought in over a billion dollars in revenue in 2017, mostly from television and marketing rights fees (\$817.5 million), and profited about \$103 million (Kirschner, 2018). The success of college sports is dependent on many variables, and one of the most influential is media content and distribution. Media guides are university-produced and distributed publications whose role has changed as the college sports media landscape has changed

Flashback to 1989. Media personnel picking up the University of Mississippi Lady Rebels basketball media guide saw a cover with the team decked out in formal attire, surrounding a limousine in front of a mansion. The head coach wore a tuxedo and sat in the driver’s seat, above the caption “Rolling into the ‘90s with Class.” In contrast, the men’s basketball media guide for that year showcased Gerald Glass, All-American player, dominating an opponent on the court with all the excitement of an intense game going on the background. The two covers show significant gender differences at that time, something that was not an anomaly.

Fast forward to 2016. The tulle faded into less overt but still relevant differences for representations of athletes on media guide covers. The University of South Carolina women’s basketball cover shows a montage of 16 black and white photos of players fixing their hair, making candid faces at the camera, or looking off into the distance and laughing, reminiscent of social media posts. The men’s basketball cover also shows 16 players, but each exhibits an action that would take place in a basketball game. The University of Georgia women’s golf cover is a large photo of the bulldog mascot Uga X as opposed to the men’s golf cover of four players in action on the course.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to investigate representations of athletes on media guide covers over a 26-year period. Researcher(s) conducted quantitative analyses of over 1,600 covers spanning the ACC, SEC, Big 10, Big 12, and PAC 12 conferences (see list of schools in Appendix A) over five time periods: 1990, 1997, 2004, 2010, and 2016. In the early years of the study, media guide covers were one of the only means by which institutions themselves could distribute information about athletes. Even though the sports media landscape has

evolved, sports information departments set perimeters for how to conceptualize athletes by the covers they create for these publications.

Description of the Study

A media guide is a version of a press kit, which is a package of information put together by an organization to provide media personnel with resources for creating press about the organization (Metzler, 2013). Media guides for intercollegiate athletics are press kits designed to provide media personnel with information about sports teams and players such as, “records, biographies, game and season summaries, schedule information and general media information, such as how to arrange interviews, apply for game-day credentials” (Stofer, Schaffer, & Rosenthal, 2010, p. 85). They are also often used by business professionals as a public relations tool for potential investors because the organizations write and present the content themselves using strategic choices for what information is most important (Gerber, 2018; Lawless, 2017).

This study is a 26-year longitudinal analysis of the cultural narrative of intercollegiate media guide covers. Media guides are important to analyze because they are produced by NCAA Division I institutions, and sports information departments make strategic choices about how to present programs and athletes in these publications (Nicholson, Kerr & Sherwood, 2015). Additionally, guides are often the gateway by which information about players and programs are shared with a larger public, both locally and nationally. Specifically, the covers are the first glimpse that media personnel get about a team and send messages about how to conceptualize athletes.

TRAJECTORY OF INTERCOLLEGIATE MEDIA GUIDES

The purpose of Division I intercollegiate media guides has changed throughout the duration of this study, largely influenced by the larger arms race in intercollegiate athletics (Gaul, 2015). In the context of the 1990 data set, the purpose of the guides was largely informational and guides were published in print form because the Internet was not widely used. Guides served as 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” (Kane & Buysse, 2005, p. 219).

As the study progressed, an arms race driven by consumer demand among Division I sports programs swelled (Goff, 2014), illustrated by examples like Clemson University’s \$55 million football complex that included amenities such as a miniature golf course, sand volleyball courts, laser tag, a movie theater, bowling lanes, and a barber shop (Hobson & Rich, 2015). In this context, intercollegiate media guides evolved to serve a dual purpose: information for media personnel as well as recruiting tools for prospective student athletes, donors, and community leaders (Stofer, Schaffer, & Rosenthal, 2010). Recruiting in the midst of an arms race put pressure on institutions to one-up each other on design of their guides, such as Missouri’s 2004 hardcover football guide at 614 pages and 2.2 pounds. As media guides

have gone from informational tools for media personnel to vehicles for recruiting, NCAA legislation has dictated regulations to ensure equal opportunity and access for schools producing guides.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) responded to extravagance in media guides by amending bylaws to adapt to changing technology. In 2005, NCAA Bylaw 13.4 restricted guides to 208 pages, one color inside the cover, and 8 1/2 x 11-inch size (Cherner, Kushlis, Rupp, O'Toole, & Bennett, 2005). In 2010, the NCAA restricted institutions to distributing a recruiting brochure or a media guide for prospective athletes, parents, and coaches, and the recruiting guide could be on a digital storage device (NCAA, 2010). Currently, NCAA Rule 13.4.1.1 dictates that printed materials distributed to recruits are restricted to questionnaires, camp information, NCAA materials, and nonathletic publications (NCAA, 2016). Institutions can only send media guides to prospective student athletes via electronic mail attachments or hyperlinks (NCAA, 2011) but guides cannot be personalized to recruits as dictated by NCAA Bylaw 13.4.1.2 (NCAA, n.d.).

Method

This study is a 26-year longitudinal analysis of the cultural narrative of intercollegiate media guide covers. While entire guides are important to study, covers of those guides offer a summative assessment of the theme of the publications and a manageable sample for analysis. The cultural codes of gender that institutions use to frame athletes on covers dictate how viewers attribute meaning to the images (Goffman, 1974/1986).

Quantitative content analysis was most appropriate for this study because it assesses representation of athletes on covers according to variables previously tested in verified sport research. Quantitative content analysis is defined as categorizing, recording, and coding a data set to discover how a set of texts (re)presents phenomenon (Coe & Scacco, 2017; Rose, Spinks, & Canhoto, 2015). The research design, method, and procedures researchers used for this study were uniform throughout the five time periods of analysis.

Researchers chose variables for the initial study to provide a thorough assessment of how athletes are presented on media guide covers. These variables were derived from previous published sport research to assure verifiability and replicability. Researchers coded sixteen variables for each time period: conference, conference location, sport, sport sex, availability of guide, athlete uniform, athlete presentation (in action, not in action, etc.), court presentation (on court, off court, etc.), head coach location presentation (center front, side front, etc.), thematic presentation: true athleticism (in uniform, on court, in action), thematic presentation: posed athleticism, thematic presentation: traditional femininity/masculinity, thematic presentation: sexual suggestiveness, thematic presentation: popular culture, thematic presentation: student-athlete, and thematic presentation: other (e.g., no athletes on cover). Researchers were ultimately investigating the degree to which covers show athletes exhibiting true athleticism, which means they were in uniform, on the court, and in action.

The 26 years of analysis includes five time periods: 1990, 1997, 2004, 2010, and 2016. For each time period, the Principal Researcher trained two student coders on how to use the coding matrix. The student coders then coded 20% of the sample for each study and met with the Principal Researcher to clarify codes and eliminate discrepancies before coding the rest of the sample. Afterward, the Principal Researcher worked through discrepancies with the coders to come up with a final assessment of each guide. The Principal Researcher used the most recent version of SPSS to calculate statistics and co-authors of analyses for each segment worked together to interpret results.

SAMPLE

The sample size for the entire analysis is 1,630 media guides: 307 in 1990, 314 in 1997, 427 in 2004, 367 in 2010, and 215 in 2016. To maintain uniformity in the research method, the sample consists of all schools that remained consistent in the ACC, SEC, Big 10, Big 12, and PAC 12 conferences during the time periods of data gathering. Twenty-five schools (thirteen from the Big East and twelve from other conferences) were eliminated from the sample because of conference realignment throughout the years of the study.

Description of Findings

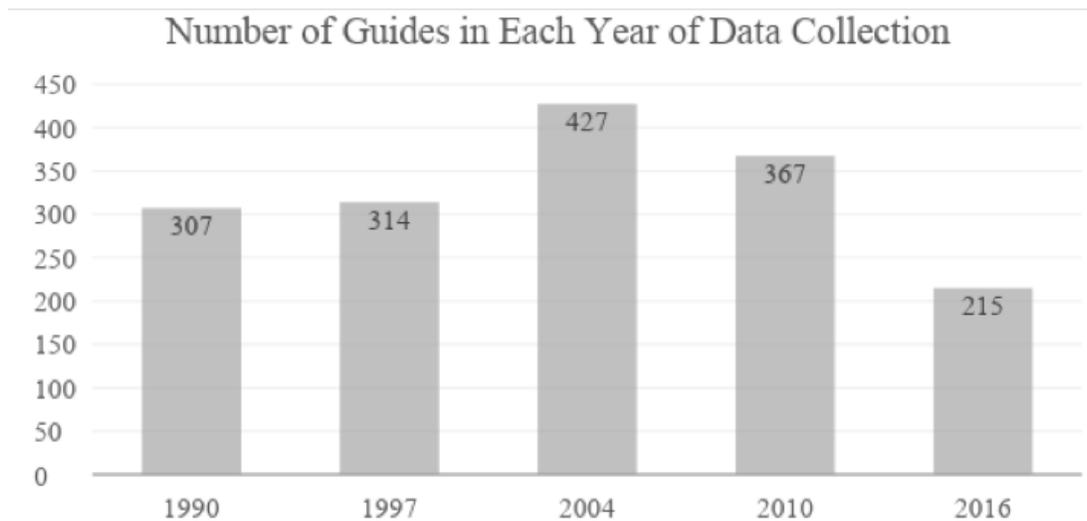
The cultural narrative of intercollegiate media guide covers over the 26 years of this study shows mixed results on presenting athletes as competent sportspeople. The number of covers was close to equal for male and female athletes, although the number available for all sports dwindled to about 40% by the 2016 data set. The good news is that both male and female athletes were most often portrayed in uniform. However, males were portrayed more often as competent athletes compared to females based on the variables of court presentation and pose presentation.

“THIS IS IT!” ONLINE TECHNOLOGY PUSHES OUT TRADITIONAL GUIDE FORMAT

Over the 26 years of the study, the number of media guides in a printed format with covers fluctuated (see Table 1). In 1990 and 1997, institutions produced guides that had covers for almost three quarters of sports offered in their athletic departments. This percentage gradually decreased over the 26 years of the study and by 2016 plummeted to 48.3%. In the early years of this study, researchers solicited printed versions of guides from athletic departments via postal mail because that was the only format available. In later studies, most of the time the only format available was an online guide. Now, many guides presented online are either .html or .pdf format and do not include covers. This is the final report of media guide covers for this analysis because of the declining availability of data.

TABLE 1. NUMBER OF GUIDES AVAILABLE FOR ALL SPORTS AT ALL SCHOOLS

YEAR OF STUDY	NUMBER OF GUIDES	NUMBER OF GUIDES AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POSSIBLE
1990	307	307/540 = 56.9%
1997	314	307/540 = 56.9%
2004	427	427/540 = 79.1%
2010	367	367/540 = 68.0%
2016	215	215/540 = 39.8%



The last few years have lessened the need for media guides because universities distribute their own information through websites and social media. Before the widespread use of the Internet, media gatekeepers such as newspaper sports reporters published most information about college sports teams (Sherman, 2015). Now, most universities capitalize on digital trends in sports media consumption by engaging in journalistic activities and distributing exclusive content through their websites and social media, often bypassing traditional media outlets (Dittmore, 2016; Pedersen, 2014). Importantly, monetizing information distribution is lucrative for universities but does not necessarily guarantee that the institutions are following journalistic standards (Dittmore, 2016).

Universities who distribute their own content rely less on traditional media outlets and therefore rely less on media guides. In addition to safeguarding athletes, controlling information distribution helps deter fraudulent activity connected to gambling, match-fixing activities, and violating broadcast contracts (Dittmore, 2016; Reed & Czarnecki, 2017). Many universities give their sports information departments exclusive access to practice, players, and coaches. This is especially common among bigger, more powerful programs so they can monetize access and distribution in an era where fans expect to have direct access to players

and coaches through sites like Twitter (Chan-Olmsted, 2017; Sherman, 2015)

“YES, SHE CAN!”: SIGNIFICANT SHIFT OVER THE FIRST 14 YEARS TO GREATER EQUITY

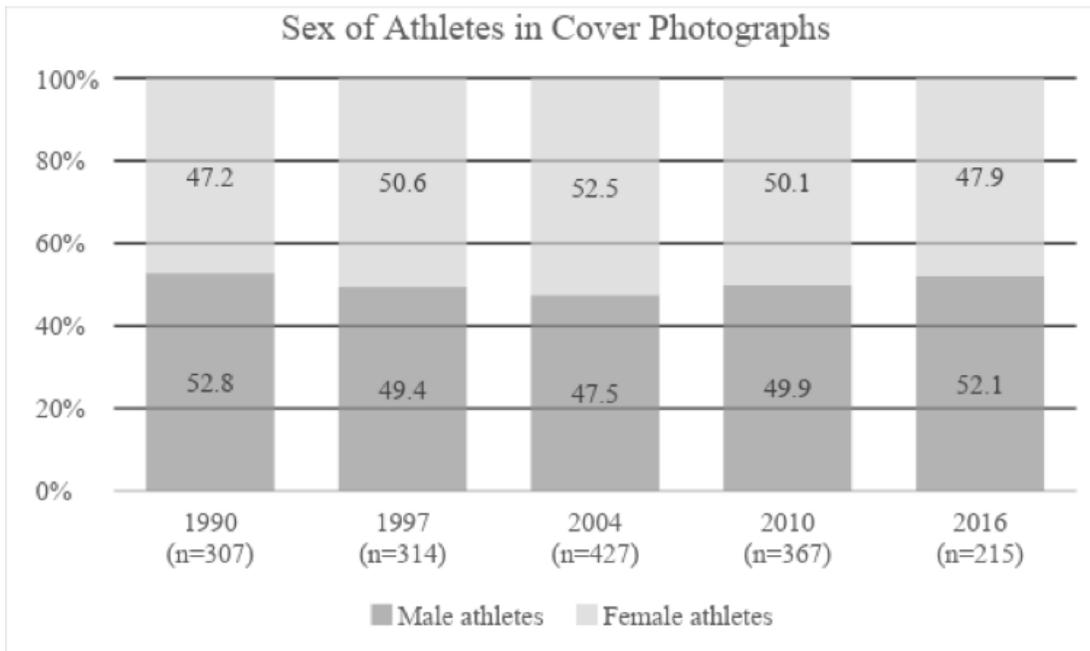
The sex of athletes in photographs on media guide covers and the number of athletes presented in uniform, on the court, and in action show a positive shift in presentation of females as competent athletes over the first 14 years of the media guide study. The 2016 results show a sharp decline in the presentation of all athletes.

SEX OF ATHLETE IN COVER PHOTOGRAPHS.

The sex of athlete in cover photographs on media guides is one way to measure equity in presentation and was close to parity for the 26 years of the study. There were more guides for male athletes in 1990 and 2016, though with only a 5.6% and 4.2% difference, respectively. Other years showed even smaller differences in percentages.

TABLE 2. SEX OF ATHLETES IN COVER PHOTOGRAPHS

YEAR OF STUDY	MALE TOTAL/TOTAL NUMBER OF GUIDES	FEMALE TOTAL/TOTAL NUMBER OF GUIDES
1990	162/307 (52.8)	145/307 (47.2)
1997	155/314 (49.4)	159/314 (50.6)
2004	203/427 (47.5)	224/427 (52.5)
2010	183/367 (49.9)	184/367 (50.1)
2016	112/215 (52.1)	103/215 (47.9)



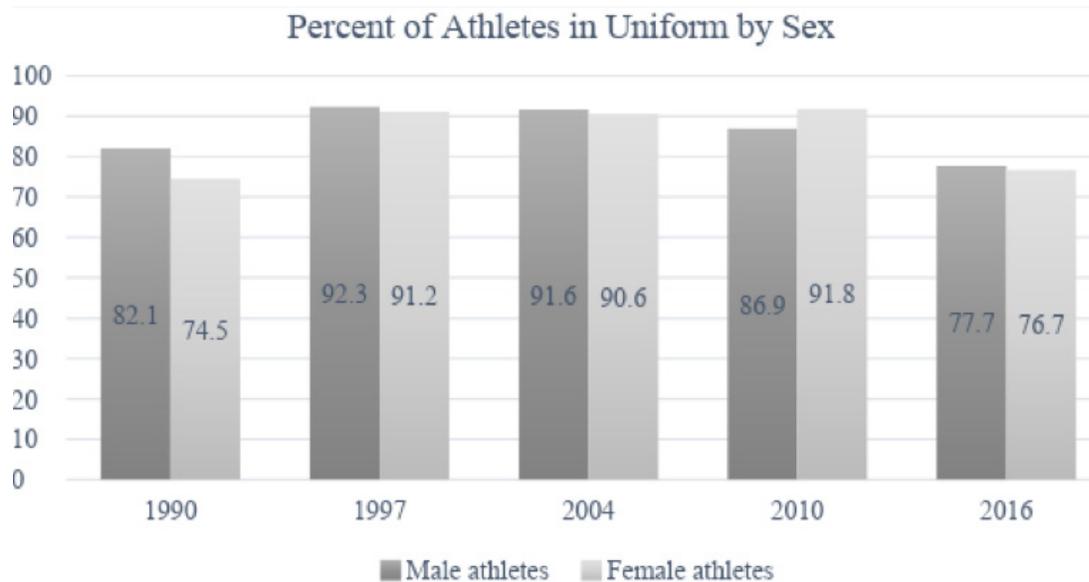
ATHLETES IN UNIFORM.

Presenting athletes in uniform is another way to measure athletic competency. Percentages of athletes in uniform overall were high throughout the 26 years of the study, with female athletes in uniform ranging from a low of 74.5% (1990) to a high of 91.8% (2010) and male athletes in uniform ranging from a low of 77.7% (2016) to a high of 92.3% (1997). Male athletes had higher percentages of players in uniform compared to female players every year except 2010, with difference ranges from 1.0% (2004 and 2016) to 7.6% (1990). Presentation of athletes in uniform increased significantly for both men and women from 1990 to 1997 (10.2% and 16.7%, respectively) and notably decreased from 2010 to 2016 (9.2% and 15.1%, respectively). This could have been because there was a 152-guide decrease in guides from 2010 to 2016.

TABLE 3. ATHLETES IN UNIFORM BY SEX

YEAR OF STUDY	MALES IN UNIFORM	FEMALES IN UNIFORM
1990	133/162 (82.1)	108/145 (74.5)
1997	143/155 (92.3)	145/159 (91.2)
2004	186/203 (91.6)	203/224 (90.6)
2010	159/183 (86.9)	169/184 (91.8)
2016	87/112 (77.7)	79/103 (76.7)

Note: “In uniform” coded images are athletes only shown in uniform for their sports. “Both in and out of uniform” coded images are covers with athletes both in uniform and out of uniform (e.g. in a photo collage) and are not included in the above data.



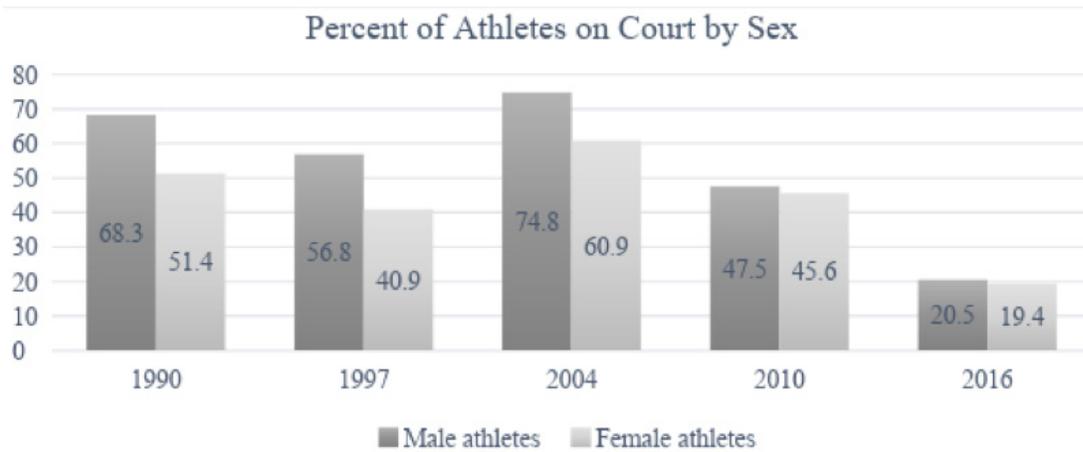
ATHLETES ON COURT.

Showcasing athletes on the playing surface on which their sport is played is another measure of competent athleticism. The total number of on-court portrayals has varied by year but significantly decreased from a high of female athletes at 60.9% (2004) and male athletes at 74.8% (2004) to a low of female athletes at 19.4% (2016) and male athletes at 20.5% (2016). This could have partly been because 2016 trended toward collage cover designs where guides presented athletes both on and off the court, and coders did not count “both on and off court” as a part of this variable. Male athletes outnumbered female athletes on the court throughout the 26 years of the study, which is concerning because they could be interpreted as more serious athletes than females as a result.

TABLE 4. ATHLETES ON COURT BY SEX

YEAR OF STUDY	MALES ON COURT	FEMALES ON COURT
1990	110/161 (68.3)	74/144 (51.4)
1997	88/155 (56.8)	65/159 (40.9)
2004	152/203 (74.8)	161/224 (60.9)
2010	87/183 (47.5)	84/184 (45.6)
2016	23/112 (20.5)	20/103 (19.4)

Note: “On court” coded images are athletes only shown on the playing surface for their sports. “Both on and off court” coded images are covers with athletes both on the playing surface for their sports and in other locations and are not included in the above data.



POSE PRESENTATION.

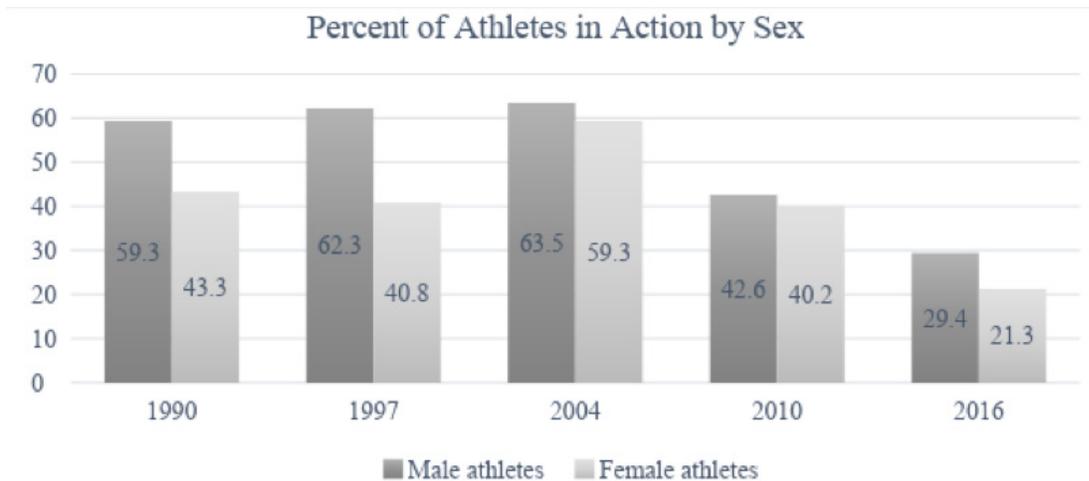
An additional variable that researchers used to measure athletic competence was pose presentation. Percentage of athletes in action for their respective sports varied by year, with female athletes fluctuating more drastically than male athletes. Both male and female athletes in action has decreased since its highest in 2004 (63.5% and 59.3%, respectively) to its lowest in 2016 (29.4% and 21.3%, respectively). The data for 2016 does not include covers where

both “in action” and “not in action” photographs appear in a year where trends in covers showed a lot of collages, which could partially explain the significant drop. Male athletes in action outnumbered female athletes in action throughout the 26 years of the study. If performing sport is an indicator of athletic competence, male athletes are better represented than female athletes in this category.

TABLE 5. POSE PRESENTATION OF ATHLETES BY SEX

YEAR OF STUDY	MALE ATHLETES IN ACTION	FEMALES ATHLETES IN ACTION
1990	83/140 (59.3)	55/127 (43.3)
1997	81/130 (62.3)	53/130 (40.8)
2004	129/203 (63.5)	133/224 (59.3)
2010	78/183 (42.6)	74/184 (40.2)
2016	33/112 (29.4)	22/103 (21.3)

Note: “In action” coded images are athletes only shown performing actions they would in a game/match for their sports. “Both in action and not in action” coded images are covers with athletes both in action and not in action (e.g. in a photo collage) and are not included in the above data.



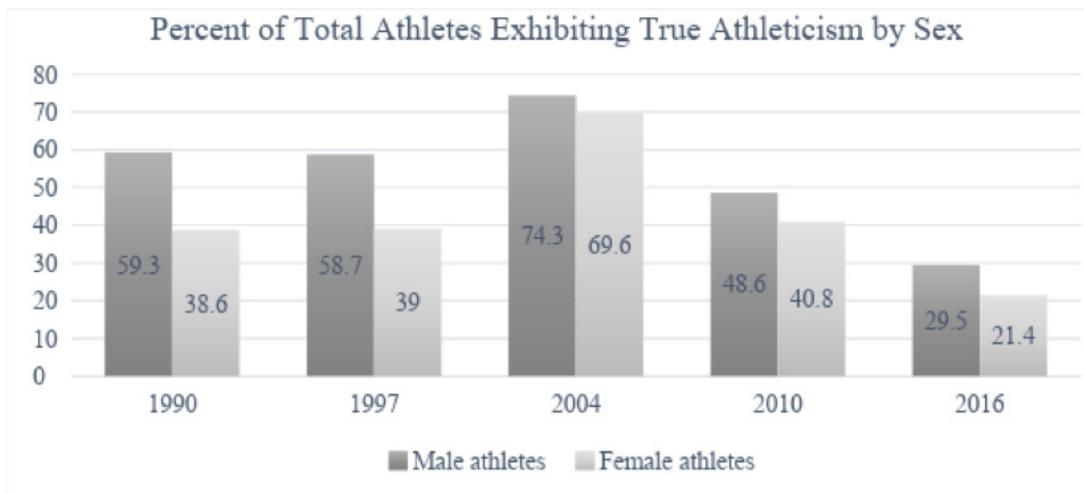
TRUE ATHLETICISM.

True athleticism is a combination of athletes in uniform, on the court, and in action for their respective sports and is a culmination of variables researchers used to measure whether or not athletes were presented as competent athletes on media guide covers. True athleticism was at its highest in 2004 (74.3% for males and 69.6% for females) and decreased significantly between 2010 and 2016 (males 48.6% to 29.5%, females 40.8% to 21.4%). Over the 26 years of the study, true athleticism was always higher for men than for women, again sending the message that male athletes are more athletic than female athletes.

TABLE 6. TRUE ATHLETICISM BY SEX

YEAR OF STUDY	MALE ATHLETES TRUE ATHLETICISM	FEMALE ATHLETES TRUE ATHLETICISM
1990	85/162 (59.3)	56/145 (38.6)
1997	91/155 (58.7)	62/159 (39.0)
2004	151/203 (74.3)	156/224 (69.6)
2010	89/183 (48.6)	75/184 (40.8)
2016	33/112 (29.5)	22/103 (21.4)

Note: "True athleticism" was coded as present if any image on the cover showcased athletes as in uniform, on the court, and in action.



“THE SAME BUT DIFFERENT”: DOWNWARD TREND FOR FEMALE ATHLETES IN 2010 AND 2016

The first 14 years of media guides show a significant shift in positive portrayals of female athletes. Female athletes in uniform increased from 74.5% in 1990 to 90.6% in 2004. On-court portrayals increased from 51.4% to 60.9% over the same time period. Similarly, female athletes in action increased from 43.3% in 1990 to 59.3% in 2004. Although female athletes were portrayed positively, male athletes still registered higher percentages and lower declines for most variables throughout the first 14 years of the study.

The data from the final media guide study was less positive. While female athletes in uniform was at a high of 91.8% in 2010, it plummeted to 76.7% in 2016, a 15.1% decrease. On-court portrayals of female athletes went from 45.6% in 2010, which was already a 15.3% decline from 2004, to 19.4% in 2016, a 26.2% decrease. In-action pose presentation for female athletes went from 40.2% in 2010, already a 19.1% decline from 2004, to 21.3% in 2016, an 18.9% decrease. True athleticism reflects these trends, measuring 40.8% in 2010, a 28.8% decline from 2004, and 21.4% in 2016, a 19.4% decrease. Representations of male athletes reflected similar decreases to female athletes in court and true athleticism from 2010 to 2016 (27% and 19.1%, respectively), though they fared better in decreases in uniform and in-action portrayals (9.2% and 13.2%, respectively).

TABLE 7. ELEMENTS OF TRUE ATHLETICISM BY SEX

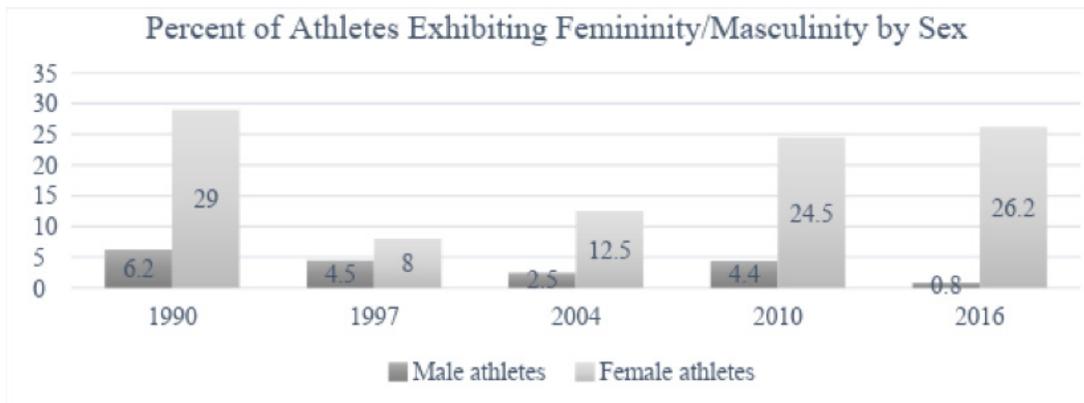
ATHLETES	2004				2010				2016			
	IN UNF.	ON COURT	IN ACT.	TRUE ATH.	IN UNF.	ON COURT	IN ACT.	TRUE ATH.	IN UNF.	ON COURT	IN ACT.	TRUE ATH.
MALE	91.6	74.8	63.5	74.3	86.9	47.5	42.6	48.6	77.7	20.5	29.4	29.5
FEMALE	90.6	60.9	59.3	69.6	91.8	45.6	40.2	40.8	76.7	19.4	21.3	21.4

FEMININITY IN FEMALE ATHLETES.

Despite female athletes and male athletes presented on about the same amount of media guide covers, the percentage of covers that showed female athletes exhibiting femininity based on traditional markers (dress, make-up, hair) was much higher than those that showed male athletes exhibiting masculinity based on traditional markers (dress, i.e., wearing suits) throughout the 26 years of the study. The lowest difference between female athletes and male athletes in this category was 3.5% in 1997 and the highest was 25.4% in 2016. Presenting female athletes as traditionally feminine could deter readers from considering them athletically competent in a publication meant to highlight their sports careers.

TABLE 8. FEMININITY/MASCULINITY OF ATHLETES BY SEX

YEAR OF STUDY	MALE ATHLETES MASCULINITY	FEMALE ATHLETES FEMININITY
1990	10/162 (6.2)	29/145 (29.0)
1997	7/155 (4.5)	18/159 (8.0)
2004	5/199 (2.5)	25/199 (12.5)
2010	8/183 (4.4)	45/184 (24.5)
2016	1/112 (0.8)	27/103 (26.2)

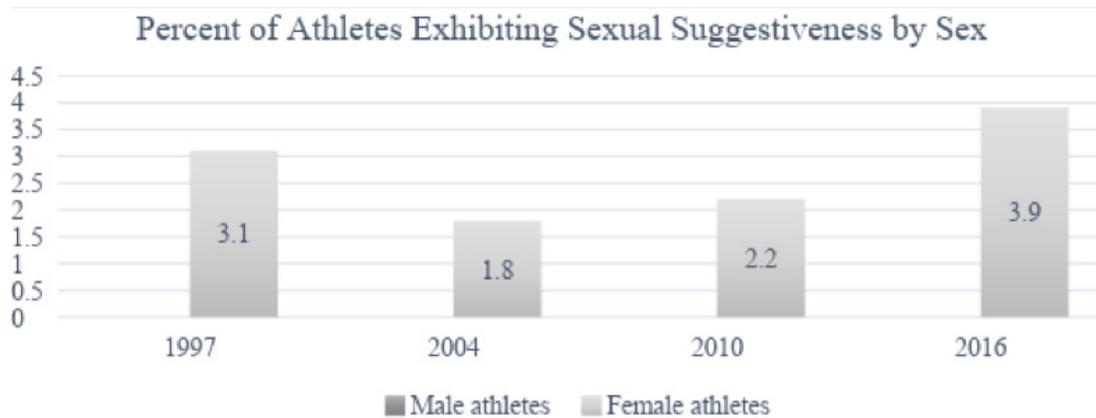


SEXUAL SUGGESTIVENESS.

Additionally, sexual suggestiveness, operationally defined as any sexually provocative pose, theme, and/or fashion, favored female athletes over male athletes. Media guide covers of male athletes did not present them in sexualized ways at all over the 26 years of the study. In contrast, female athletes were presented in sexualized ways on an average of 2-4% of covers throughout the 26 years of the study. While this percentage is minimal, no athlete should be presented sexually because the media guide is a publication about athletes’ sporting lives.

TABLE 9. SEXUAL SUGGESTIVENESS OF ATHLETES BY SEX

YEAR OF STUDY	MALE ATHLETES	FEMALE ATHLETES
1990	N/A	N/A
1997	0/155 (0.0)	5/159 (3.1)
2004	0/203 (0.0)	4/220 (1.8)
2010	0/175 (0.0)	4/184 (2.2)
2016	0/112 (0.0)	4/103 (3.9)



Interpretation of Findings

Findings of this study reflect the context of the sport media landscape during the time period of data gathering, whether it be marketing trends or larger debates like using athletes’ likenesses. Historical events like Title IX likely had an impact in more parity in representations, but trends in decreased and sexualized media coverage as reflection of hegemonic masculinity may have deterred more positive portrayals.

MARKETING TRENDS DICTATE RESULTS

The number of athletes on the court and in action dipped significantly in 2016, likely because many of the covers were collage images that included a variety of photos of athletes both on and off the court as well as both in action and not in action. These collage images were coded as “both on and off the court” and “both in action and not action” and were not included in the statistics for on court and in action because they were not purely on the court and not

purely in action. Graphic designers categorized collage images as a “trend” in 2016 (College of Arts & Technology, 2017; Hemphill, n.d.; “The graphic and print,” 2017), and sports information departments across the country utilized the design in many of their covers that year. While this may have drawn people in to consume the covers, it did not represent athletes as competent athletes in the way that purely on court and in action images do.

Marketing trends at colleges and universities also inevitably affected the number of covers of media guides available. When the Internet was not as widely used, media guides offered one of the only opportunities for connecting with student athletes. Now, marketing departments use data, insight, and a more nuanced understanding of consumer habits to recruit students (Zinkan, 2018). The shift from demographics to psychographics (Selingo, 2017) and multichannel marketing and communications strategies designed by external marketing consultants (Hanover Research, 2015) makes recruiting student athletes much more targeted than it has been in the past. In this context, media guides are more informational because other marketing materials are designed to show off programs with flashier technology.

The heightened debate on whether or not athletes should be able to profit off their likeness and image (for example, Solomon, 2018; Zema, 2018) also affected the format and number of guides available for this study. For example, J.D. Campbell (personal communication, April 10, 2017), senior assistant communications director for men’s basketball at Indiana University, said that the University prohibited their Sports Information department to use student athletes on media guide covers in 2017 because guides contained advertisements, instead opting to use cover photos of inanimate objects. In 2018, they continued this trend:

“Because of likeness issues, we have moved away from highlighting student athletes on a cover of any printed materials that have advertising on them. We still print media guides for football and men’s basketball but have chosen to also utilize a team neutral image for those” (Campbell, personal communication, October 4, 2018).

Other schools were affected by the debate about profiting off of college athletes’ likeness and image as well and could have taken a more cautious approach by eliminating covers for the 2016 study.

TITLE IX

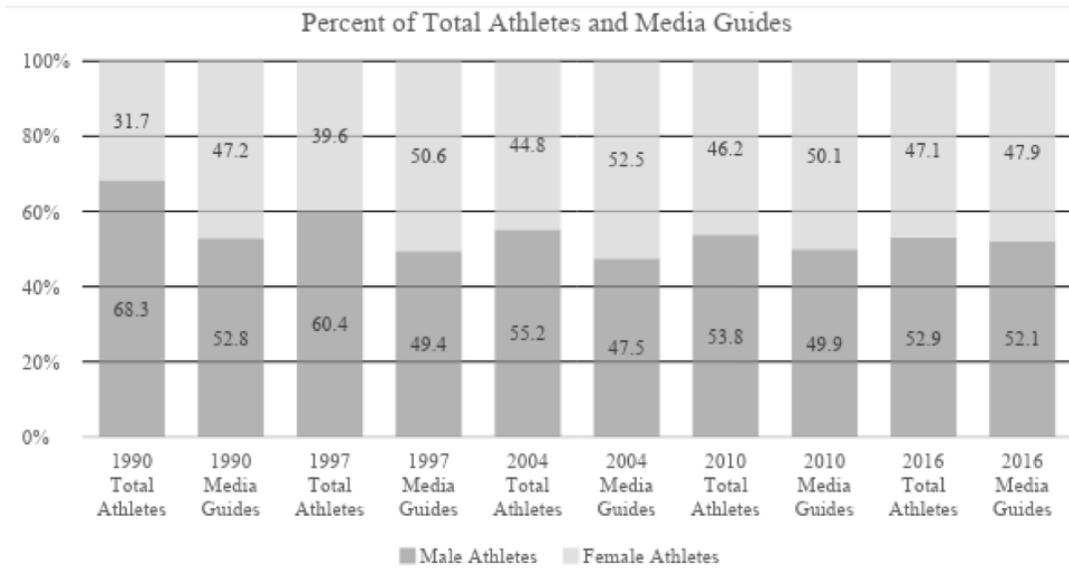
The difference in number of guides for male and female athletes ranged between 0.2% (2010) and 5.6% (1990) throughout the 26 years of this study, with female athlete representation higher in three of the five data collection periods. Comparing these numbers to participation statistics for each of the years shows that representation of athletes in media guides outnumbered the ratios of male to female participation in sports (see Table 10). For example, in 1990-91, Division I male student athletes made up 68.3% of total athletes and female student athletes made up 31.7% of the total. This same year shows a 52.8% male and 47.2% female split in media guides, so male athletes were represented less than the total percentage

of participants and female athletes were represented more than they were participants. Media guides showed a more even portrayal of athletes than participation numbers did. The difference between participation percentage and guide percentage shrinks as participation numbers get closer to parity.

TABLE 10 . PERCENT OF TOTAL PARTICIPANTS AND PERCENT OF MEDIA GUIDES

YEAR OF STUDY	PERCENT OF MALE ATHLETES	PERCENT OF MEDIA GUIDES - MALE ATHLETES	PERCENT OF FEMALE ATHLETES	PERCENT OF MEDIA GUIDES - FEMALE ATHLETES
1990	68.3 (81,276/119,037)	52.8 (162/307)	31.7 (37,761/119,037)	47.2 (145/307)
1997	60.4 (83,266/137,947)	49.4 (155/314)	39.6 (54,681/137,947)	50.6 (159/314)
2004	55.2 (86,378/156,420)	47.5 (203/427)	44.8 (70,042/156,420)	52.5 (224/427)
2010	53.8 (91,013/169,037)	49.9 (183/367)	46.2 (78,024/169,037)	50.1 (184/367)
2016	52.9 (94,682/179,150)	52.1 (112/215)	47.1 (84,468/179,150)	47.9 (103/215)

Note: All statistics from NCAA, 2017.



Parity in representation between male and female athletes is likely because of compliance with Title IX. “Component Three: General Benefits & Services” of the law requires institutions to provide equal opportunities for male and female athletes in 11 different areas such as equipment and supplies, scheduling of games and practice times, and coaches and compensation. One of those areas is not discriminating on the basis of sex in publicity and in

guiding applicants for admission (U.S. Department of Education, 2015), which likely prompted institutions to provide media guides for both male and female teams despite differing participation numbers. While Title IX legally took effect in the late 1970s (Women’s Sports Foundation, n.d.), it took until the late 1980s for its impact to truly be felt because of litigation throughout the 1980s and 90s (Staurowsky, 2003). The media guide time period collection followed the growth of women’s sports under Title IX.

DISCRIMINATION THROUGH THE YEARS

The biggest differences between male and female athletes in athletic competence variables of uniform presence, court presence, and pose presentation were in the early years of this study: 1990 and 1997 (see Table 11). The later years - 2004, 2010, and 2016 - were closer to parity.

TABLE 11. PERCENT OF ATHLETES EXHIBITING ATHLETIC COMPETENCY AND DIFFERENCES FAVORING MALE ATHLETES

YEAR OF STUDY	MALE ATHLETES	FEMALE ATHLETES	DIFFERENCE IN FAVOR OF MALE ATHLETES
1990 UNIFORM	82.1	74.5	7.6
1990 COURT LOCATION	68.3	51.4	16.9
1990 POSE PRESENTATION	59.3	43.3	16.0
1997 UNIFORM	92.3	91.2	1.1
1997 COURT LOCATION	56.8	40.9	15.9
1997 POSE PRESENTATION	62.3	40.8	21.5
2004 UNIFORM	91.6	90.6	1.0
2004 COURT LOCATION	74.8	60.9	13.9
2004 POSE PRESENTATION	63.5	59.3	4.2
2010 UNIFORM	86.9	91.8	-4.9
2010 COURT LOCATION	47.5	45.6	1.9
2010 POSE PRESENTATION	42.6	40.2	2.4
2016 UNIFORM	77.7	76.7	1.0
2016 COURT LOCATION	20.5	19.4	1.1
2016 POSE PRESENTATION	29.4	21.3	8.1

The starker differences in representation in the 1990s could have been because of the changing nature of women’s sport. On the one hand, female professional athletes and leagues were growing at rates they had not experienced before, mostly on the coattails of Title IX, seeing increases in sponsorship, endorsements, media coverage, and participation rates (Spencer & McClung, 2001). On the other hand, these changes brought backlash through substantially less media coverage than men, coverage that focused more on women’s sex appeal than on their sports, the “image problem” of sexuality, and pushback against Title IX (Oxoby, 2003; Spencer & McClung, 2001). Additionally, while Title IX gave women at publicly-funded institutions protection, the wider world of sport was slower to recognize and support the diversity of women who played (Olson, 1990). Title IX fueled progress for women in sport, but hegemonic masculinity consistently infiltrated the institution, to the demise of women.

Another way hegemonic masculinity played out in all 26 years of this study is that female athletes as more likely to be portrayed in feminine and sexualized ways than male athletes. The differences in percentages for female athletes exhibiting femininity and male athletes exhibiting masculinity were 22.8 (1990), 3.5 (1997), 10 (2004), 20.8 (2010), and 25.3 (2016), with women always more feminine than men were masculine. Presenting female athletes in more feminine and sexualized ways is a way to ensure male privilege in sport (Fink, 2013) and does not belong in a publication focused on athletic backgrounds.

IMPACT

The purpose of press kits is to provide media personnel with easy-to-access facts, figures, images, and videos to write about a company so authors can tell an interesting story about a business (Menaker, 2018). Intercollegiate media guides are press kits where the “product” is athletes and athletic programs. College sports information and marketing departments use media guides as persuasive communications, and part of that persuasion is compelling covers. While the purpose of media guides has changed throughout the years of this study corresponding to elements like the arms race in intercollegiate athletics or changing trends in digital reporting, their potential for impact because they come from the institutions themselves remains constant.

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