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# Urban and rural high school students' perceptions of women in competition

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URBAN AND RURAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS'  
PERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN IN COMPETITION

by

Karen J. Morris

An Abstract

of a Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Science in the School of  
Health, Physical Education and  
Recreation at Ithaca College

August 1975

Research Project Advisor: Dr. A. Craig Fisher

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess whether locale and/or sex differences exist in high school students' perceptions of the ideal female versus women participating in competitive athletics. A secondary purpose was to discover if certain activities in which women compete were more acceptable to the high school athletes.

Fifteen slides showing women in competition were rated on a scale from 1 to 10 to indicate whether or not the female depicted was perceived by 320 randomly selected urban and rural students as an ideal female. Reasons for the ratings given by the subjects were used in analyzing the results of the data.

An analysis of variance for factorial design revealed significant within group differences ( $p < .05$ ) between slides and sex and between slides and locale. The mean scores revealed that female athletes and rural athletes rated the women competitors as more ideal females than did the male athletes and the urban athletes, respectively.

An analysis of variance for mean simple main effects revealed that significant differences ( $p < .05$ ) occurred on 10 of the slides in the analysis of slides by sex and on 10 of the slides in the analysis of slides by locale. Males scored significantly higher (less ideal ratings) on nine slides, females scored higher on one slide, and urban athletes scored higher on 10 slides.

A comparison of all pairs of means for each group revealed that the javelin slide was rated significantly higher ( $p < .05$ ) than all other slides by all groups. Basketball, piggyback, and archery were rated lowest by most groups.

As the mean scores for each group were less than five (more ideal), the investigator concluded that competitive athletics are being accepted by the high school students as proper roles for females. Of the sports depicted, the most acceptable activities for females appeared to be a show of emotion (piggyback), archery, basketball, and sprinting. Least acceptable were the javelin throw, long jump, and shot put.

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Ithaca College  
School of Health, Physical Education and Recreation  
Ithaca, New York

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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M. S. RESEARCH PROJECT

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This is to certify that the Research Project of  
Karen J. Morris

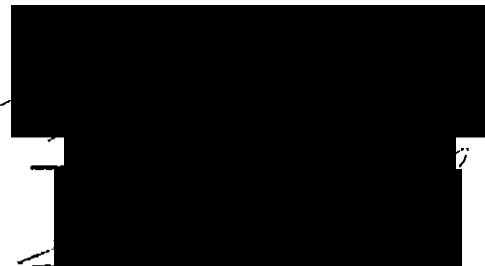
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Science in the School of  
Health, Physical Education, and Recreation at Ithaca  
College has been approved.

Research Project Advisor:

Candidate:

Director of Graduate  
Studies:

Date:



July 30, 1975

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The author wishes to thank Mrs. Jeanne Stewart at Bloomfield Central School and Miss Doreen Anderson at Honeoye Central School for their assistance in obtaining subjects for this study. Their efforts in each of their schools made it possible for this investigator to administer the study to 13 sections of social studies and English classes. Thanks are also extended to each of the teachers at Bloomfield and Honeoye who allowed time from their classes for the administration of this study.

A special thank you is extended to the author's advisor, Dr. A. Craig Fisher. His patience, understanding of extenuating circumstances, and confidence in the author's abilities made completion of this study possible.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS . . . . .	iii
LIST OF TABLES . . . . .	vi
LIST OF FIGURES . . . . .	vii
 Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
Scope of Problem . . . . .	2
Statement of Problem . . . . .	3
Hypotheses . . . . .	3
Assumptions <sup>of Study</sup> . . . . .	4
Definition of Terms . . . . .	4
Delimitations of the Study . . . . .	5
Limitations of the Study . . . . .	5
2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE . . . . .	7
Society and the Female . . . . .	7
Sport and the Female . . . . .	10
Perception of the Female Athlete . . . . .	14
Locale Differences . . . . .	16
Summary . . . . .	17
3. METHODS AND PROCEDURES . . . . .	20
Selection of Subjects . . . . .	20
Testing Instrument . . . . .	21



Chapter	Page
Methods of Data Collection . . . . .	22
Scoring of Data . . . . .	23
Treatment of Data . . . . .	24
Summary . . . . .	25
4. <u>ANALYSIS OF DATA</u> . . . . .	26
Perception Differences by Slides and Sex . . . . .	26
Perception Differences by Slides and Locale . . . . .	30
Slide Differences by Sex . . . . .	30
Slide Differences by Locale . . . . .	32
Comparisons of Slide Means for Location of Within Group Variation . . . . .	35
Subjective Analysis of Comments on the 15 Slides . . . . .	39
Summary . . . . .	45
5. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS . . . . .	47
Perception Differences by Slides and Sex . . . . .	47
Perception Differences by Slides and Locale . . . . .	48
Slide Differences by Sex . . . . .	50
Slide Differences by Locale . . . . .	51
Comparisons of Slide Means for Location of Within Group Variation . . . . .	53
Summary . . . . .	55
6. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS . . . . .	57
Summary . . . . .	57
Conclusions . . . . .	58
Recommendations . . . . .	59

	Page
APPENDIXES	
A. SURVEY-RESPONSE SHEET . . . . .	62
B. STANDARDIZED INSTRUCTIONS . . . . .	64
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	65

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Means for Urban Females and Males and Rural Females and Males of Rating Scale Responses on 15 Slides of Women in Competition (N=80) . . . . .	27
2. Matrix of Means by Sex and Locale (N=80) . . . . .	28
3. Analysis of Variance for Factorial Design of Means for Sex and Locale Perception Differences Between Slides, Sexes, and Locale . . . . .	29
4. ANOVA of Mean Simple Main Effects of Perception Differences Between Slides, Sexes, and Locale . . . . .	31
5. Rank Order of Slides by Mean Scores for Each Group . . . . .	36

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Female-Male Interactions of Mean Scores by Slides . . . . .	33
2. Urban-Rural Interactions of Mean Scores by Slides . . . . .	34

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

Women's sports have had their ups and downs throughout history. Whenever there was an upsurge, immediate steps were taken to put a halt to the activities which were presumed to be masculinizing to females and harmful to their health (primarily their ability to carry out their female "role" of bearing children).

The trend over the last ten years has been upward once again, and modern studies (29,38) are showing that sports participation is not physically harmful but actually beneficial. Both physicians and educators are beginning to support increased programs for girls in athletics.

The latest surge of participation has come at a time when the liberation of women in all aspects of life is being fought for and publicized more than ever. Equality for women and humanistic attitudes toward all people is the current concern in many quarters across the country.

Has this humanistic attitude reached the high school population? From all appearances, it has. There are now more girls participating on more teams and in more sports than at any other time in American history. According to the 1974 participation survey by the National Federation of State High School Associations (19), the girls in New York State have the largest variety of opportunities for sports participation with 18 interscholastic activities offered.

Cratty (6) described the effect of sociocultural influences on one's perception and the individual's eventual decision to participate. As the traditional cultural attitudes toward female and sport have been in conflict (3,7), can physical educators and coaches now say that the social reaction to female competition is favorable?

It is not the intention of this study to determine whether the increase in participation by females was enhanced by social acceptance of such activity or visa versa, but it is the intention to look at the current high school perceptions of an ideal female and sports participation by females. It could be that there still remains a social stigma, as described by Hart (14), attached to a girl's sport participation, especially if she is involved in intensive competition.

#### Scope of Problem

Understanding that sociocultural attitudes affect the actions of individuals within the society, the traditional taboos against women competing in athletic activities appear to be lifting. As indicated earlier, girls and women are now competing in sports on a much larger scale.

The scope of this study is, therefore, the investigation into the phenomena regarding increased participation by women and its approval by both males and females in urban and rural high schools. Fifteen slides showing women in competition were rated on a scale from one to 10 to indicate whether or not the female depicted was perceived by 320 urban and rural students as an ideal female.

### Statement of Problem

The purpose of this study was to assess whether locale and/or sex differences exist in high school students' perceptions of the ideal female versus women participating in competitive athletics.

A secondary purpose was to discover if certain competitive activities in which women participate were more acceptable to the high school students.

### Hypotheses

$H_1$ : Female athletes will rate women competitors as more ideal females than will the male athletes.

$H_0$ : There will be no significant difference between male and female athletes in their perceptions of women in competition.

$H_2$ : Urban athletes will rate women competitors as more ideal females than will the rural athletes.

$H_0$ : There will be no significant difference between urban and rural athletes in their perceptions of women in competition.

$H_3$ : There will be significant differences on one or more of the 15 slides between male and female athletes in their perception of women in competition.

$H_0$ : Differences in slides will not affect differences in ratings by female and male athletes of women in competition.

$H_4$ : There will be significant differences on one or more of the 15 slides between urban and rural athletes in their perception of women in competition.

$H_0$ : Differences in slides will not affect differences in ratings by urban and rural athletes of women in competition.

#### Assumptions

1. Each subject recorded his or her honest reaction to the best of his or her ability within the range of the rating scale.

2. Each subject responded individually without the aid or influence of other subjects.

3. All subjects were exposed to the same conditions and instructions for collection of the data.

4. The random sample of urban and rural school athletes in intact groups was representative of all urban and rural high school athletes in upstate New York.

5. The rating scores revealed by the test instrument would be one indication of an individual's perceptions regarding women in competition.

#### Definition of Terms

1. Athletes. Those pupils who have competed in varsity, junior varsity, or freshman competition, intramural sports, or any outside voluntary physical activity.

2. Ideal female. The characteristics of a female which enable an individual to perceive her as the most acceptable representative of her sex.

3. Locale. A general term to refer to the socio-geographic setting in which an individual resides, such as an urban locale or a



rural locale.

4. Perception. An individual process of attaching meaning to life situations or objects; a process which is influenced by the individual's sociocultural environment.

5. Rural school. A socio-geographic school setting in which most of its students reside outside village limits, the high school population is less than 400 pupils, and the nearest city of over 100,000 is at a distance greater than 30 miles.

6. Urban school. A socio-geographic school setting in which most of its students reside within village or city limits, the high school population is greater than 2000 pupils, and the nearest city of over 100,000 is within a 10-mile radius.

#### Delimitations of the Study

1. Only high school student athletes in grades 9-12 were used in this study.

2. A random selection of student athletes registered in 27 intact groups in three New York State high schools was the method used to obtain subjects for this study.

3. Visual perception of still pictures (slides) of female athletes was the only measure of the individual's acceptance of women in competition.

#### Limitations

1. Results do not apply to non-athletes.

2. The results may not apply to students registered in other

high schools in New York State.

3. The findings can only apply to the measurement of perception as used in this study.

## Chapter 2

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The review of the literature for the purposes of this study had as its focus the following areas: (1) society and the female; (2) sport and the female; (3) perception of the female athlete; (4) locale differences; and (5) summary.

#### Society and the Female

The social condition of women in American society needs some interpretation if one is to understand how perceptions of members of the society affect what women do. Women have continually been reminded of their inferior status due to a male-fabricated standard of femininity which has stemmed from the Victorian era. In a family-based society such as ours, the male became the breadwinner because of his strength while the female was restricted to the home for care of the family and bearing of children. These biologically-based differences have formed the foundation for cultural restrictions of women. Metheny (17) explained that these restrictions are important because they describe what females may be or do without impairing their opportunities for finding a mate.

Appropriate sex-role behavior is learned by the girl from birth through interaction with the opposite sex and through social feedback from parents, peers, the community, and the nation. Mussen (18) discussed early sex-role development through social learning that

involved not only imitation of the same-sex parent, but all interactions experienced by the child. Self-acceptance and confidence are attained by those individuals who have conformed to acceptable role behavior. Weitzman (23) described three facts which the well-socialized American girl learns concerning her life.

First, the feminine characteristics which she must demonstrate include being sweet, expressive, passive, pretty, cooperative, nurturing, and not too intelligent. This Victorian concept of femininity has been defined in much of the modern social literature. Additional adjectives to describe women were presented by Coffey (28) which included being genteel, modest, shy, fragile, conventional, and subordinate to the opposite sex. These characteristics which females must display do not coincide with success, competition, or aggressiveness.

Second, the female must be aware of her status in life, that of being less capable and less important than men. Freeman (9) felt that this was a sexist attitude which embodies two core concepts of sexism: (1) men do the important work in the world and work done by men is what is important, and (2) women's identities and social value are determined by that of the men to whom they are related. Women who do gain success often do not receive the full recognition they deserve. The average woman has been portrayed as more dependent and less achievement-oriented because she has been socialized to regard personal success as difficult or undesirable.

The third fact of life described by Weitzman is that the American girl knows she will be a wife and mother. She becomes aware

that her only goal in life is to attract a male who will marry her and support her. It is the social process of attracting a male which makes the other "facts of life" so important for the female to learn.

Steinhaus (37:6) helped to define the current viewpoint regarding this third fact of life:

True femininity must never be judged by the absence of strength, of the desire to compete, or of aggressiveness but rather by the presence of a deep-seated willingness to be outranked in any or all of these qualities by the male of the species.

It appears that the female is faced with a conflict between attaining success as an individual and winning a man. The females who become "well-socialized" are supposed to be satisfied with their own lives if they have a successful mate. The modern feminist movement is demonstrating that females are not satisfied with their designated roles and seek to find more out of life than the culture currently expects.

The recent literature on women in society points out the past restrictions on women in its desire to indicate how unfair and inhuman these restrictions have been. Femininity and success have not been synonymous in the past, and those females that do succeed are accused of having masculine traits. Thus, as Hart (33) has stated, being female in this society does not necessarily mean that one is perceived as being feminine.

Small (36) argued the case for dropping the femininity issue as she felt that anything a woman does is feminine because it is done by a female. White, in Harris (13:312), phrased this viewpoint slightly different by adding a qualification: "If a girl is feminine,

anything she does is feminine." Apparently there is some conflict regarding the issue of femininity and acceptable role behavior of females even among feminists.

There are some who see a change in the societal attitudes toward the female role. Williams (24) discussed a change in the social position of women as a shift of expected and accepted feminine behavior in the masculine direction. This has caused a blurring of the roles for both males and females. Bardwick (1) referred to this sociological change as humanistic with the new goals being happiness, creativity, fulfillment, expansion, and personal growth for all human beings. Freeman (9) felt that the current social "institutions" which oppress women can be altered to make a more humane existence for all.

#### Sport and the Female

While the female has been oppressed in society, it is rather expected that she has also been suppressed in the field of sports. Since society's definition of the female role does not include competition, aggressiveness, or strength, those attributes necessary for sport have conflicted with acceptable behavior for women. Hart (14,33) discussed this conflict noting that ". . . women in sport do not fit our particular concept of femininity and those who persist in sport may suffer for it" (33:64). Bowen (26) also noted this conflict between achievement by the female athlete and the social rejection she faces unless she is involved in an area of athletics with status as acceptable for girls and women.

Ten years ago, Metheny (17) defined the dimensions of sport that were acceptable for women. They include those that were aesthetically pleasing (gymnastics, diving, etc.), those that maintain a spatial barrier preventing contact (volleyball, tennis, etc.), and those that involve projection of a light object (golf, archery, etc.). These same types of activities were the most acceptable to a general population sample reported by Snyder, Kivlin, and Spreitzer (49) in 1975. Society's acceptance of these limited activities was shown by Slatton (48) in a review of advertising depicting women in sport. This study of magazine advertising between 1900 and 1968 revealed the acceptance of women's casual participation in individual and dual sports rather than their athletic competence. Thus, the sports which require culturally masculine traits may still remain "off-limits" to females in the eyes of much of modern society. In addition, competence which is gained through intensity in competition may continue to be unacceptable for females.

Beisser (2) pointed out that not all of the characteristics of being male or female are biologically determined; some are determined by culture. "In our culture athletics are considered the most masculine of activities" (2:214). With the mechanization of our society, males have found sport as one of the only remaining proving grounds of their superior strength and, consequently, their masculinity (2,3).

Since strength and aggressiveness are needed for success in sports and neither of these have been perceived by society as ideal traits for females, Cheska (27) asserted that intense competition in athletics by females in our culture is almost incongruous with

femininity. Edwards (7:232) contended that in our society, "females are not perceived to be legitimate recipients of sports' claimed benefits" because of traditional attitudes toward the female role. To clarify, the role of the female defined earlier which does not accept anything done by the female as important enough to receive recognition would help to explain why females should not gain the benefits of sports success, and the social limitations of accepted feminine traits add to this conjecture.

Concern over the females' physical well-being (and her ultimate reason for existing--that of bearing children) was explained by Boslooper and Hayes (3), Edwards (7), and Sage (20). There is currently an attempt to reverse that perpetuated myth regarding possible physical injury to females in sport by physicians such as Corbitt, et al. (29) and Thornton, et al. (38). It may be some time before these changes in attitude reach the general public.

There has been a recent trend--more of an explosion--to allow increased competitive opportunities for women. As the status of women in other spheres of life becomes equal to men (20), the range of activities acceptable for women will increase. Gerber (31) observed that this has already occurred, as has Coffey (28:50) who believes that the young sportswoman's ". . . opportunities are unlimited. She is completely free to choose the extent of her participation in physical activity."

The attitudes of the members of the society toward female competition have been the topic of several studies. Almost 20 years ago, McGee (35) found that administrators' and teachers' attitudes



toward intensive competition for high school girls was much less favorable than those held by parents and coaches. It is probable that the attitudes of the school personnel were strongly influenced by the women physical educators of that period who were opposed to athletics for girls.

Harres (32) recently found that student attitudes indicated that opportunities for athletic competition for girls and women should be provided for those who desire such activity. There was no significant difference between the attitudes of male and female athletes concerning the desirability of athletic competition for women, and it was concluded that the trend is toward acceptance of such competition.

A study by Radford and Gowan (45) revealed that both males and females have more negative feelings about activities that require, encourage, or reward overt aggressiveness and highly competitive behavior than about activities that are low in those characteristics. Since the males were not quite as negative in their findings, the investigators concluded that the results provided additional support for the "theories" concerning sex-role standards which state that males are more likely to demonstrate competitiveness and aggressiveness than females.

More recently, Richardson (47) found that females seem to be becoming increasingly less passive in athletic pursuits for both fitness and social reasons. The influence of society on female socialization into sport was studied by Greendorfer (42). She found that peers and family were the greatest influence in childhood, peers

and school during adolescence, and peers during adulthood. Male role models were the dominant influence at all levels when the variable was narrowed to athletes only.

#### Perception of the Female Athlete

Schilder (21) spoke of how one's perception of her self-image is based upon the perception of others in the society. Beauty and ugliness are social phenomena of the utmost importance and are perceived differently within different cultures.

Harris (13:311) contended that "whether or not a particular sport is considered feminine depends mostly on the point of view of the beholder." However, Cratty (5) reported findings stressing the influence of a group on an individual's perception. As a member of a group, the individual is progressively molded toward the group's perception. While it might be correct to say that perception of femininity depends upon an individual's viewpoint, one must consider that the individual is a social being who has been influenced by his environment since birth. Therefore, determining the social view (or perceptions of the majority) is important and meaningful for those interested in seeking knowledge about the human race and what makes people do what they do.

Snyder, Kivlin, and Spreitzer (49) found that female athletes had a more positive attitude toward themselves and life than non-participants did. Kelley (43) found that female athletes scored higher than nonathletes on traits of dominance, socialization, sense of well-being, and self-acceptance. The nonathletes surpassed the athletes on

the femininity trait assessed by the California Psychological Inventory administered by Kelley.

While Greendorfer (42) discovered that selection of activity by female athletes often depended upon socio-economic level, Malumphy (34) found more similarities than differences in the personalities of female athletes involved in individual or team sports. Studies such as these on female athletes have not been as numerous as those done on males. However, it is interesting to consider the implications of these findings. Perhaps there is an athletic female personality different from nonparticipants but not different from females involved in other sports. Taking the step into athletic endeavors by a female may require certain attitudes about oneself which would influence her scores on a personality inventory.

Felshin (8) concluded that women athletes do not differ from other populations in terms of views of themselves or of their own feminine roles. Yet Burris, Faust, and Felshin (41) discovered that high school female athletes held more positive attitudes toward females in sport than either non-participants or boys.

DeBacy, Spaeth, and Busch (30) emphasized the importance of male perception since his choice of a mate is based upon the desirability and suitability of the female in his eyes. Their study indicated a moderately positive attitude toward women's competition by college males.

Berlin (40) found no relationship between the ideal woman and the woman athlete as perceived by female athletes. Social and competitive profiles administered by Rector (46) revealed different

profiles for the same individual in competitive and social situations. This does not contradict Berlin's findings but it does show that the athlete knows that she must be able to play two roles. The female athletes studied by Rector admitted to possessing male traits for competition and a more feminine repertoire when involved socially.

The study by McNally and Orlick (44) compared female perceptions of women in competition. High school females rated slides of women in intense competition in terms of how much of an ideal female they perceived the athletes to be. The findings showed a significant difference in the perceptions of athletes and nonathletes with the athletes rating the female competitors as more ideal females than did the nonathletes.

#### Locale Differences

Differences between urban and rural concepts toward female roles may exist due to the fact that experiences of the urban resident appear "to be wider and extend to more numerous and varied fields" (22:251). The urbanite has the opportunity for more interaction and for more activities because of the concentration of facilities and participants.

In Gibbs (12:45), the United States Bureau of Census' definition of an urbanized area stated that it "contains at least one city of 50,000 inhabitants or more in 1960, as well as the surrounding closely settled incorporated places and unincorporated areas." However, Carver (4) reported the impact of city people spreading far and wide over a vast surrounding region through mass media and practices such as the merging of school districts (24). Merged school districts simulate

urban area living with a larger population and an increase in opportunities to the students through greater numbers of teachers and expanded facilities.

While mass media is now a reality in all sections of the country via regular channels or cable television, the rural scene remains in existence in many areas. Even though the rural residents have more contact with the rest of society, traditional attitudes and mores tend to resist rapid change. The effect of mass media may not be as great as one might expect.

Cheska (27) attributed the increases in girls' sport participation to urbanization while Treble and Neil (39) attributed the opposition to women's participation in strenuous activity to urbanization as well as to cultural attitudes. The opposition stemmed from crowded urban facilities which resulted in limiting participation of women.

#### Summary

Feminine characteristics within a society encompass those which will attract a male. The female is socialized from birth to acquire and demonstrate these characteristics.

These characteristics include being sweet, pretty, expressive, passive, cooperative, nurturing, not too intelligent, modest, shy, fragile, conventional, and subordinate to the opposite sex. They do not include success, competitiveness, aggressiveness, strength, or physical prowess, all of which are considered masculine attributes.

Females who succeed are threatened with a loss of femininity and thereby a loss of desirability by males. This is due to the fact that the male may feel that his masculinity has been questioned since successful females would not need to depend upon a male.

The recent feminist movement has triggered thought in a more humanistic direction suggesting that actions by people be considered human actions as well as accepting that whatever a female does is feminine and whatever a male does is masculine. It would necessitate a change in the designation of certain traits or actions as being purely feminine or masculine.

In the past, the female has been kept out of sport for both physical and psychological reasons. Society's concept of femininity does not concur with the traits necessary for sport participation.

Mechanization of the society has made sport one of the only remaining proving grounds available to males to demonstrate their superiority over females. This has led to the acceptance of only limited sports for female participation which include non-strenuous activities.

While past arguments for preventing girls and women from participation in strenuous activity were based on physical well-being, current attempts are being made to dispel these myths. This, combined with increased equality in other aspects of life, has made more sports opportunities available to girls and women.

The perception of one's acceptance in any endeavor has been influenced by society. "Society" includes one's family, peers, school, community, and the nation. Mass media has brought much of the community

and nation closer to the individual.

Studies have shown that female athletes tend to perceive themselves and other athletes more positively than do nonathletes. Males are moderately accepting of female sport participation and the trend is more toward acceptance.

Urban-rural differences are based upon the density of the population and the accessibility of sport facilities and equipment. The urban resident has more opportunities for interaction and participation. There is some disagreement as to whether urbanization encourages or discourages female athletic participation.

## Chapter 3

### METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The methods used to collect and interpret the data are included in this chapter. Specifically, this chapter deals with: (1) selection of subjects; (2) testing instrument; (3) methods of data collection; (4) scoring of data; (5) treatment of data; and (6) summary.

#### Selection of Subjects

A total of 280 urban subjects who were enrolled in April of 1975 in 14 social studies sections at West Genesee High School, Camillus, New York, participated in this study. Responses by 160 of the athletes (80 females and 80 males) were randomly selected for statistical treatment.

An additional 160 rural athletes (80 females and 80 males) were randomly selected from 225 students who participated in this study. The rural students were enrolled in April of 1975 in seven class sections (two of English and five of social studies) at Honeoye Central School, Honeoye, New York, and in six class sections (one of physical education and five of social studies) at Bloomfield Central School, East Bloomfield, New York.

To ascertain whether the subjects were athletes or non-athletes, each subject was instructed to answer up to four questions prior to viewing the slides (Appendix A).

As the percentage of negative responses to the questions



regarding participation was less than 16 percent for male respondents and less than 20 percent for rural female respondents, all non-athlete subjects were eliminated from the study.

### Locale Selection

West Genesee High School is in a district in Camillus, a suburb of Syracuse, New York. The high school enrolls 2000 students in grades 10-12. The proximity of the school district with a city of 200,000 people and the willingness of the teachers to allow this study to be administered in their classes were the reasons that West Genesee High School students were used as the urban school subjects in this study.

The two rural schools in the communities of Honeoye and East Bloomfield were selected because of their distance from a large urban area, their lack of extensive drawing power of urban residents during tourist seasons, and the willingness of the teachers to allow this study to be administered in their classes. The number of students in grades 9-12 at Honeoye Central School is less than 300 and at Bloomfield is less than 400.

### Testing Instrument

A series of 15 slides of female athletes were selected by McNally and Orlick (44) from a collection of approximately 2000 slides in Sport Canada's slide library. All of the slides were taken at either the most recent Olympic (1972) or Canada (1973) Games. The sports depicted were shot put, hurdles, high jump, archery, sprinting, javelin, long jump, pistol shooting, field hockey, and basketball.

The recording instrument was a single page survey-response sheet distributed to each subject. The survey section requested information about the subject, and the response section listed each slide by number and provided spaces for rating of each slide and giving a reason for the rating (Appendix A).

#### Methods of Data Collection

As the data were to be collected by the showing of slides and heterogeneous groups were desired, it was decided to use classroom situations rather than physical activity classes. As the study was concerned with more than the physical aspect of athletics, such as the effects of women's equality and social attitudes toward female participation, the investigator selected social studies classes primarily as the intact groups for collection of the data.

The 15 slides were shown by the investigator at West Genesee High School, Camillus, New York, on April 7, 1975, to 10 sections of social studies classes, and on April 9, 1975, to another four sections of social studies classes.

The 15 slides were shown by the investigator at Honeoye Central School, Honeoye, New York, on April 23, 1975, to five sections of social studies classes and two sections of English classes.

The 15 slides were shown by the investigator at Bloomfield Central School, East Bloomfield, New York, on April 24, 1975, to one physical education class and five sections of social studies classes.

In each of the class sections in which the slides were shown, the projector and screen were set up, and the survey-response forms

were distributed to each student in the classroom. Verbal instructions for completion of the forms were standardized (Appendix B).

The slides were shown allowing a viewing time of 30 seconds for each one. During the viewing, additional standardized instructions (Appendix B) were given to clarify which girl was to be rated when more than one was pictured on a single slide.

At the conclusion of the slide showing, the papers were collected by the investigator. In those classes where time allowed, questions were answered and comments concerning the study were aired.

#### Scoring of Data

The 505 survey-response forms were sorted by the investigator by locale (rural, urban), sex (female, male), and participation (athlete, non-athlete). Eighteen of the forms were eliminated because of incomplete responses in the rating scale or reversal of the rating scale by the subject.

All non-athlete forms were dropped from the study because the small number of subjects reporting no physical activity beyond the required physical education classes was not sufficient for statistical analysis.

After the forms had been divided into four categories (urban females, rural females, urban males, rural males), each paper was numbered and, using a random numbers table, 30 completed forms in each of the four categories were selected for statistical treatment.

The 15 ratings by each subject in each category were transferred to data cards for computer analysis. The reasons for the ratings given

by each subject were plotted on a frequency distribution chart for subjective analysis.

#### Treatment of Data

The data were subjected to the BMD02V: Analysis of Variance for Factorial Design program. The analysis of variance program revealed if there were statistically significant differences between and within subjects. The output included means, sample sizes, between and within groups sums of squares, degrees of freedom, and mean squares. F-statistic ratios were computed from the statistics described above with the aid of a desk calculator.

In the event that significant within groups differences existed, these differences were subjected to an analysis of variance of mean simple main effects. Mean simple main effects were analyzed to determine whether one treatment behaves differently under different levels of other treatments. Tukey's test was utilized to compare all pairs of means and to locate significant differences within the data.

A statistically significant difference at the .05 level was required for significance. All results were interpreted according to their statistical significance.

The different reasons given for the ratings were analyzed subjectively according to the following categories: body build, personality traits, sport, and other. Between groups variation was determined according to the frequency within each category.

### Summary

The subjects were randomly selected from intact groups in one urban and two rural high schools in New York State. Eighty subjects' responses were selected in each of four categories: urban females, rural females, urban males, and rural males.

The subjects were shown a series of 15 slides and instructed to rate each slide on a scale from 1 to 10 and to give a reason for the level of the rating. A rating of "1" would mean the subject perceived the woman pictured as an ideal female while a rating of "10" meant that the woman was totally unrelated to the subject's perception of an ideal female.

The scores obtained were subjected to analysis of variance for a factorial design of  $2 \times 2 \times 15$  and for mean simple main effects. Tukey's test was utilized to locate significant differences. A .05 level of significance was required for interpretation. The reasons for the ratings were subjectively analyzed.

## Chapter 4

### ANALYSIS OF DATA

The results of this investigation are presented in this chapter. The main divisions of this chapter include: (1) perception differences by slides and sex; (2) perception differences by slides and locale; (3) slide differences by sex; (4) slide differences by locale; (5) comparisons of slide means for location of within group variation; (6) subjective analysis of comments on the 15 slides; and (7) summary.

#### Perception Differences by Slides and Sex

Mean scores of the four groups (urban females, rural females, urban males, rural males) on each of the 15 slides are presented in Table 1. A matrix of the grand means for each of the four groups is presented in Table 2 which also includes grand means for each of the variables (urban, rural, female, male).

The results of an analysis of variance for a 2x2x15 factorial design of mean scores at the levels of sex, locale, and slides appear in Table 3. The significant differences shown for within groups sex by slides ( $F=6.83$ ,  $df=14/4424$ ,  $p<.05$ ) allows the rejection of the null hypothesis of  $H_1$  which stated that there would be no differences on the slides between males and females in their perceptions of women in competition.

Hypothesis one was accepted by comparing the mean scores for each of the two groups (Table 2) once significance was revealed. The

Table 1

Means for Urban Females and Males and Rural Females  
and Males of Rating Scale Responses on 15 Slides  
of Women in Competition (N=30)

Slide Number	Action Depicted	Urban Females	Rural Females	Urban Males	Rural Males
1	Shot put	5.88	4.20	6.19	5.69
2	Hurdles	5.13	3.80	5.61	6.03
3	Piggyback	3.24	3.00	3.09	3.25
4	High jump	5.18	3.54	4.86	4.71
5	Archery	3.75	3.55	3.48	3.21
6	Sprinting	4.06	3.06	4.34	4.26
7	Javelin	7.24	5.43	7.46	6.78
8	Long jump	5.33	4.29	5.88	5.33
9	Pistol shoot	4.58	4.26	3.95	3.65
10	Shot put	4.03	3.43	4.53	3.83
11	Field hockey	4.93	3.56	5.45	4.03
12	Shot put	4.75	4.24	5.60	5.34
13	Sprinting	4.71	3.43	5.83	5.05
14	Basketball	3.60	2.44	4.68	3.90
15	Long jump	4.85	3.81	5.84	5.44
Totals		4.75	3.74	5.12	4.63

Table 2  
Matrix of Means by Sex and Locale (N=60)

Variable	Urban	Rural	Sex
Females	4.75	3.74	4.24
Males	5.12	4.63	4.87
Locale	4.93	4.18	4.56



Table 3

Analysis of Variance for Factorial Design of Means  
for Sex and Locale Perception Differences  
Between Slides, Sexes, and Locale

Source of Variation	df	MS	F
<u>Between Subjects</u>			
Sex	1	480.396	12.62*
Locale	1	674.021	17.71*
Sex X Locale	1	83.749	2.20
Ss within groups	316	38.057	
<u>Within Groups</u>			
Slides	14	260.531	67.92*
Sex X Slides	14	26.200	6.83*
Locale X Slides	14	12.207	3.18*
Sex X Locale X Slides	14	4.911	1.25
Ss within groups	4424	3.836	

\*Significant at the .05 level.

female athletes rated the women competitors as more ideal females ( $\bar{X}=4.24$ ) than did the male athletes ( $\bar{X}=4.87$ ).

#### Perception Differences by Slides and Locale

The results of an analysis of variance for a  $2 \times 2 \times 15$  factorial design of mean scores at the levels of sex, locale, and slides shown in Table 3 revealed a significant difference for within groups locale by slides ( $F=3.18$ ,  $df=14/4424$ ,  $p<.05$ ). These differences permit the rejection of the null hypothesis of  $H_2$  which stated that there would be no differences between urban and rural athletes in their perceptions of women in competition.

Hypothesis two was rejected by comparing the mean scores for the two groups (Table 2) once significance was revealed. The rural athletes ( $\bar{X}=4.18$ ) rated the women competitors as more ideal females than did the urban athletes ( $\bar{X}=4.93$ ).

#### Slide Differences by Sex

The results of the analysis of variance of mean simple main effects appear in Table 4. Significant differences between males and females occurred on slides 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, and 15 ( $df=1/4740$ ,  $p<.05$ ). The null hypothesis of  $H_3$  was rejected as ten slides affected differences in female and male ratings of women in competition.

By comparing the male and female mean scores on each of the ten slides for which a significant effect was found, it was revealed that the males scored significantly higher (less than ideal ratings) on the slides depicting the shot put, hurdles, sprinting, javelin, long

Table 4  
ANOVA of Mean Simple Main Effects of Perception  
Differences Between Slides, Sexes, and Locale

Source of Variation	df	MS	F
<u>Between Subjects</u>			
Males and Females			
Slide 1	1	64.96	10.62*
Slide 2	1	58.66	9.59*
Slide 3	1	0.18	.03
Slide 4	1	14.86	2.43
Slide 5	1	7.46	1.22
Slide 6	1	43.49	7.11*
Slide 7	1	50.28	8.22*
Slide 8	1	50.47	8.25*
Slide 9	1	30.65	5.01*
Slide 10	1	16.21	2.65
Slide 11	1	19.51	3.19
Slide 12	1	76.10	12.44*
Slide 13	1	149.87	24.50*
Slide 14	1	128.76	21.05*
Slide 15	1	136.53	22.32*
Urban and Rural			
Slide 1	1	94.75	15.49*
Slide 2	1	73.16	11.96*
Slide 3	1	0.12	.02
Slide 4	1	63.92	10.45*
Slide 5	1	0.43	.07
Slide 6	1	23.12	3.78
Slide 7	1	125.64	20.54*
Slide 8	1	50.47	8.25*
Slide 9	1	7.46	1.22
Slide 10	1	33.83	5.53*
Slide 11	1	155.43	25.41*
Slide 12	1	12.05	1.97
Slide 13	1	235.02	38.42*
Slide 14	1	75.06	12.27*
Slide 15	1	41.29	6.75*
Pooled Error	4740	6.12	
<u>Within Subjects</u>			
Females	14	106.83	27.85*
Males	14	179.89	46.89*
Urban	14	171.72	44.77*
Rural	14	101.00	26.33*
Error term	4424	3.84	

\*Significant at the .05 level.

jump, and basketball. Females rated the pistol shooting as significantly less ideal than did the males.

The five slides for which no between subjects differences existed depicted emotion (piggyback), high jump, shot put, archery, and field hockey.

A graph showing the significant interactions of the mean simple main effects for females and males is pictured in Figure 1.

#### Slide Differences by Locale

The results of analysis of variance of mean simple main effects (Table 4) revealed significant differences between urban and rural scores on slides 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, and 15 ( $df=1/4740$ ,  $p<.05$ ). The null hypothesis of  $H_4$  was thereby rejected since 10 slides affected differences in urban and rural ratings of women in competition.

By comparing the urban and rural mean scores on each of the 10 slides for which a significant effect was found, it was revealed that urban athletes scored significantly higher (less ideal) than the rural athletes on all 10 slides. These slides depicted women competing in the shot put, hurdles, high jump, javelin, long jump, field hockey, sprint, and basketball.

The five slides on which no differences were revealed depicted emotion (piggyback), archery, sprinting, pistol shooting, and shot put.

The significant interactions for urban and rural athletes of the mean simple main effects are shown in Figure 2.

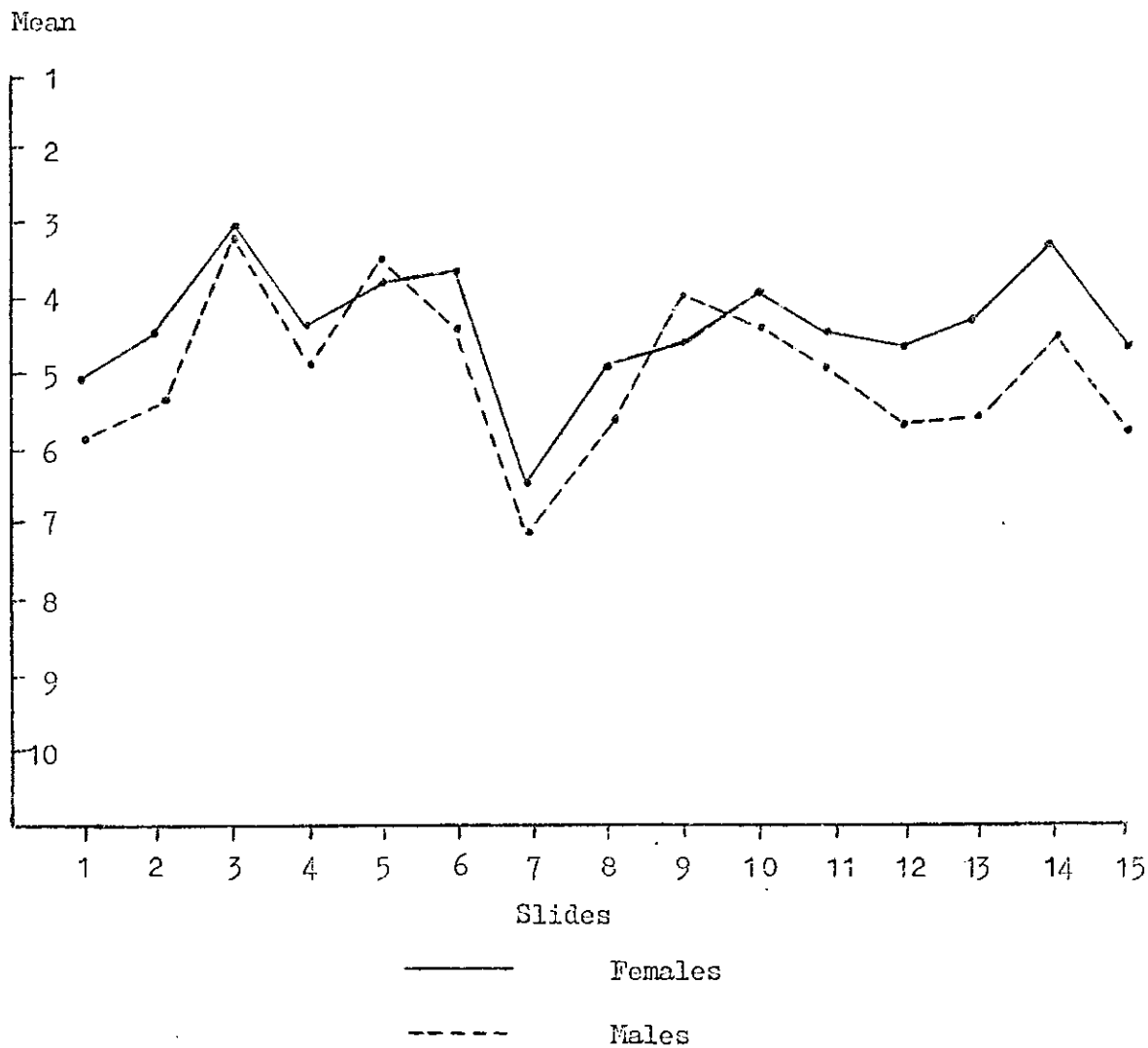


Figure 1

Female-Male Interactions of  
Mean Scores by Slides

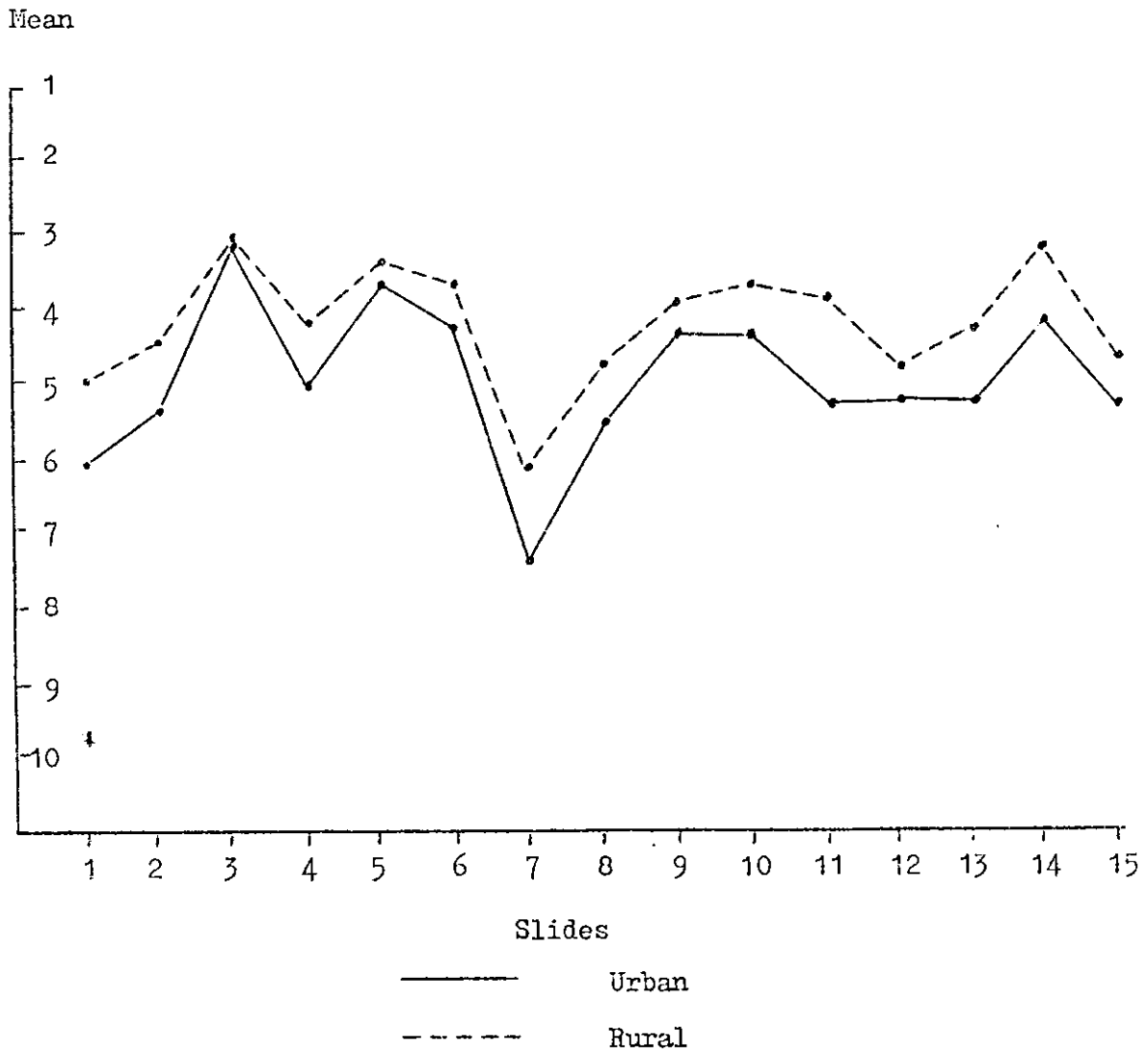


Figure 2  
 Urban-Rural Interactions of  
 Mean Scores by Slides

Comparisons of Slide Means for Location  
of Within Group Variation

To locate on which slides a group deviated significantly from the other slides, a comparison of all pairs of means was made using Tukey's Post Hoc Location of Differences test. A T value at or above 1.05 was needed for significance at the .05 level.

Females

Slide 7 (javelin) was rated significantly higher (less ideal) than all other slides. Slide 1 (shot put) and slide 8 (long jump) were rated higher than the slides depicting basketball, piggyback, sprinting, archery, and shot put (face view). Six other slides (12, 2, 9, 4, 15, 11) were rated higher than the two slides depicting basketball and piggyback.

The slides showing basketball and piggyback received lower ratings (more ideal) than 10 and nine different slides, respectively. Slides 5, 6, and 10 revealed significantly lower ratings than three other slides (1, 7, and 8), slide 13 deviated significantly lower from slides 1 and 7, and all other slides were rated lower than slide 7.

From these comparisons it can be stated that the female athletes were most accepting of the actions depicting females playing basketball and riding piggyback, and somewhat accepting of females involved in sprinting, archery, and shot put competition. Least acceptable was the javelin, while the shot put and long jump were the next least acceptable actions to the female athletes. A rank order of acceptance of the slides by each group is presented in Table 5.

Table 5  
 Rank Order of Slides by Mean  
 Scores for Each Group

Rank*	Females	Males	Urban	Rural
1	Slide 14	Slide 3	Slide 3	Slide 3
2	3	5	5	14
3	6	9	14	5
4	5	10	6	10
5	10	14	9	6
6	13	6	10	11
7	11	11	4	9
8	15	4	12	4
9	4	2	11	13
10	9	13	13	2
11	2	12	15	15
12	12	8	2	12
13	8	15	8	8
14	1	1	1	1
15	7	7	7	7

\*From low means (most ideal) to high means (least ideal).



### Males

Slide 7 (javelin) was rated significantly higher than all other slides. Slide 1 (shot put) was rated higher than the slides depicting piggyback (3), archery (5), pistol shooting (9), shot put (10), basketball (14), sprinting (6), field hockey (11), and high jump (4). Slides 15 and 8 (both long jump), 12 (shot put), and 13 (sprinting) were rated higher than slides 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, and 14. Slide 2 (hurdles) received significantly higher ratings than slides 3, 5, 9, and 10.

The slides showing piggyback and archery received significantly lower ratings than 11 and nine different slides, respectively. Slides 9 and 10 revealed lower ratings than seven other slides while slides 14 and 6 were lower than six other slides. Slides 4 and 11 deviated lower from slides 1 and 7, and all other slides were rated lower than slide 7.

From these comparisons it can be stated that the male athletes were most accepting of the actions showing females riding piggyback and competing in archery, somewhat more accepting of those showing females involved in pistol shooting, shot put, basketball, and sprinting. Least acceptable was the javelin, while the shot put (slide 1) was the next least acceptable by the males. This can be seen in Table 5 which shows the rank order of slides for each group.

### Urban Athletes

Slide 7 (javelin) was rated significantly higher (less ideal) than all other slides. Slides 1, 2, 8, and 15 were rated higher than the slides depicting piggyback (3), archery (5), basketball (14), sprinting (6), pistol shooting (9), and shot put (10). Slide 13

(sprinting) received higher ratings than 3, 5, 6, and 14, and slide 11 (field hockey) was rated higher than slides 3, 5, and 14.

The slides showing piggyback and archery received significantly lower ratings than 11 and nine different slides, respectively. Slide 14 (basketball) was rated lower than seven other slides and slide 6 (sprinting) was lower than six other slides. The slides showing pistol shooting (9) and shot put (10) received lower ratings than five other slides and the remaining eight slides were rated lower than slide 7.

These comparisons revealed that the urban athletes were most accepting of the slide showing females riding piggyback, with archery and basketball as the next most acceptable involvement by females. Least acceptable was the javelin while the slides showing women involved in the shot put, long jump, and hurdles were the next least acceptable to the urban athletes. These levels can be seen in Table 5 which shows a rank order of the slides.

#### Rural Athletes

Slide 7 (javelin) was rated significantly higher (less ideal) than all other slides. Slide 1 (shot put) was rated higher than six slides, and slides 8 (long jump) and 12 (shot put) received higher ratings than the slides depicting piggyback (3), basketball (14), archery (5), shot put (10), and sprinting (6). Slide 15 (long jump) was rated higher than 3, 5, and 14 while slides 2 (hurdles) and 13 (sprinting) received higher ratings than slides 3 and 14.

Slides 3 and 14 (piggyback and basketball) received significantly lower ratings than seven other slides. The slide showing archery (5) was

rated lower than five other slides, and slides 10 (shot put) and 6 (sprinting) deviated lower than four other slides. Field hockey (11) was lower than slides 1 and 7, and the eight other slides were rated lower than slide 7.

These comparisons revealed that the rural athletes were most accepting of the actions showing females riding piggyback and playing basketball. Least acceptable was the javelin, while the shot put and long jump were the next least acceptable by the rural athletes. These levels appear in Table 5 which presents a rank order of the slides for each group.

#### Subjective Analysis of Comments

##### on the 15 Slides

###### Slide 1: Shot put

Urban females were concerned about her musculature and strength, thought she looked and acted too masculine. Rural females commented positively on the effort she was putting out and that it was fine if that was what she wanted to do. Negative comments referred to her muscles or masculinity.

Urban males felt it was a man's activity as it required muscles that girls should not have developed. Several comments were regarding her shape and size. Rural males commented on muscles and strength and generally considered that it was not a woman's sport. More positive comments than those by the urban males remarked about effort, ability, and the right to compete.

Slide 2: Hurdles

Urban females remarked on her form and the effort she was displaying. Quite a few thought she looked too masculine but it was okay for girls to run and jump. Rural females were generally favorable with comments about good exercise, determination, form, fun, challenge, and that girls can be as good as guys.

Urban males considered it a man's sport and were concerned about possible injury and pressure in competition. Rural males generally approved of the activity but were often negative on comments regarding looks (legs, build).

Slide 3: Piggyback

Urban females considered her typically feminine, were pleased that she was showing emotion of happiness and joy, and thought she looked fun-loving. Rural females noted that she was excited, expressing emotion, and having fun. Several did not think she was serious enough to be a good competitor.

Urban males thought she looked more like a girl, was pretty, and was having fun. They believed that this was a more common sight, that cheering was okay for girls. Rural males approved of the show of emotion, commented on her being pretty, being a nice person, her friendliness, and her sportsmanship.

Slide 4: High jump

Urban females were positive about her ability but negative as to her femininity. Rural females admired her grace and ability and for doing what she wants.

Urban males were most concerned about her physical appearance—whether she was pretty or had nice legs. Some comments referred to skill and effort in the activity. Rural males remarked more than urban males on her skill and effort with few comments on her looks.

#### Slide 5: Archery

Urban females liked her form in what they considered good competition; more remarks about being feminine than most other slides received. Rural females centered their remarks around the sport: ability and form needed, mostly a woman's activity, concentration. Many were approving because she was doing what she wanted to do.

Urban males generally confined their comments to the sport, that it was a good female sport with few comments on the skill required. Rural males thought she was good in the sport and doing what she likes.

#### Slide 6: Sprinting

Urban females admired her effort and strain which resulted in more feminine ratings. Rural females, who also admired her effort, were definite about letting girls participate in running, especially if that was what they wanted to do.

Urban males thought she was pretty and admired her dedication and perserverance. Rural males saw her trying her hardest but doing what she liked. They considered her an average girl.

#### Slide 7: Javelin

Urban females thought she was too muscular and masculine-looking, and that it was not a sport for women. Rural females made positive

comments about her ability and the right to do what she wants but a number of them thought she looked too masculine.

Urban males centered their comments around her physical appearance with comments about being too muscular, fat, and ugly. Rural males saw her as too fat and bulky and considered it a man's sport.

Slide 8: Long jump

Urban females were impressed with her ability in the challenging sport, although some thought it should be a male activity. Rural females saw her form and grace and her right to do what she wanted. Some did not think that she looked very feminine.

Urban males concentrated on her looks, thought she looked distorted and too skinny. Rural males recognized her ability in the sport, thought she was graceful and gave her generally feminine ratings.

Slide 9: Pistol shooting

Urban females were split in their remarks about liking or not liking guns and whether or not she looked feminine. Rural females rated the activity more than what she looked like; some thought it was good competition while others did not think girls should handle guns.

Urban males saw her as pretty and considered it a good sport, or at least okay. Equality and the right to do what she wants were other frequent comments on this slide. Rural males also thought she was pretty and had the right as a female to do this. They thought she had good form and was probably a good marksman.

Slide 10: Shot put

Urban females thought she was pretty and concentrating hard but did not consider it a sport for girls. Rural females saw her deep concentration while doing what she wanted, generally rated her as feminine.

Urban males thought she was pretty and nice looking, some saw her choice of activity as one which required too much strength for a girl. Rural males saw her as pretty and some observed the determination in her face.

Slide 11: Field hockey

Urban females did not think she looked very feminine, did not consider it a good sport for girls. Rural females noted her effort in trying to get the ball, thought it was good competition, and she was doing something that she wanted to do.

Urban males could not be sure if it was a good sport for girls but many said it was okay if that was what she wanted to do. Rural males recognized it as an acceptable woman's sport and saw her competitiveness and aggressive behavior positively.

Slide 12: Shot put

Urban females saw her as being too muscular and masculine-looking. Rural females saw her form and concentration in the activity she chose.

Urban males were upset that they could not see her face but several thought she had nice legs. Some thought the activity required too much strength while others saw her as skinny. Rural males stated

that she was strong and good in the sport, generally gave lower ratings than the urban males.

#### Slide 13: Sprinting

Urban females saw pain and determination in her effort to win, considered it good competition for girls. Rural females also commented on the pain and struggle she was showing, but some said she looked too masculine.

Urban males thought she was ugly and too masculine-looking; many noted the effort she was exerting as a good characteristic for girls. Rural males thought she looked ugly and too skinny but were positive about the strain and effort she showed.

#### Slide 14: Basketball

Urban females considered it a woman's sport and noticed her aggressiveness positively. Rural females thought it was a good sport, approved of the ability and effort she displayed.

Urban males thought she had nice legs and hair and was well-skilled. Some did not think they could see enough to tell for sure. Rural males saw pretty hair and nice legs, thought it was a good sport for anyone, and admired her skill in the sport.

#### Slide 15: Long jump

Urban females saw good form and ability in a sport she has chosen; some saw the form as weird. Rural females also noted her ability and form but did not think she looked very feminine.

Urban males stated that she had the right to do it but did not



think she looked very feminine or pretty. Rural males did not like her looks but admired her skill in a sport she likes.

### Summary

The analysis of variance for factorial design revealed significant within group differences between slides and sex, and between slides and locale to allow rejection of the null hypotheses of  $H_1$  and  $H_2$ . The mean scores revealed that female athletes rated the women competitors as more ideal females than did the male athletes, and the rural athletes gave more ideal ratings than the urban athletes.

The null hypotheses for  $H_3$  and  $H_4$  were rejected when an analysis of variance for mean simple main effects revealed that significant differences occurred on 10 of the slides in the analysis of slides by sex and on 10 of the slides in the analysis of slides by locale. Males scored significantly higher on nine slides; females scored higher on one slide; and urban athletes scored higher on 10 slides.

A comparison of all pairs of means for each group revealed that the javelin slide was rated significantly higher than all other slides by all groups. Basketball, piggyback, and archery were rated lowest by most groups.

A subjective analysis of the reasons for each rating on each slide by each group revealed that: (1) the urban females saw ability, form, effort, and emotional display in the slides they rated more feminine and in those that were rated higher, they were concerned about the masculine appearance and too much strength; (2) the rural females had nearly the same reactions except they were more accepting in all

cases because they were of the opinion that the girl in the slide had the right to do what she wanted; (3) the urban males were generally critical of their looks and thought the girls were too strong or had too many muscles; and (4) the rural males saw their ability in each of the activities and were accepting of the strain and effort shown by the girls.

## Chapter 5

### DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The major concentration of this chapter focuses upon a discussion of the results as reported in Chapter 4. The following areas are included: (1) perception differences by slides and sex; (2) perception differences by slides and locale; (3) slide differences by sex; (4) slide differences by locale; (5) comparisons of slide means for location of within group variation; and (6) summary.

#### Perception Differences by Slides and Sex

The results of this study indicated that males in high school scored the slides of women competitors significantly higher than the females did. This indicates not that males do not approve of females in athletics, but that the males were not as accepting as the females were. This concurs with the findings of Burris, Faust, and Felshin (41) whose results indicated that the female athletes were more positive about women athletes than female non-participants or boys.

A shortcoming of this investigation was the inability to compare perceptions of male and female nonathletes. The small number of nonathletes currently attending the public high schools is, actually, a welcomed finding in the eyes of physical educators. However, the omission of this segment of the population leaves a gap in this study.

As this was not a longitudinal study, comments on trends cannot be made. However, the results of this study do not conflict with

Harres (32) who found that the trend is toward acceptance of women in sport by both sexes. As the grand mean for each group was less than five (more ideal female), it appears that athletics are an acceptable role for the modern female.

#### Perception Differences by Slides and Locale

The results of this study indicated that urban high school athletes scored the slides of women competitors significantly higher than the rural athletes did. As these results were unexpected, this section will attempt to discuss various reasons which may explain why the urban athletes scored the females less ideal or the rural athletes scored them more ideal.

First, the rural subjects included ninth graders while the urban subjects did not. The younger students may not have developed their perceptions of "ideal" regarding the opposite sex and, therefore, scored them as ideal or close to it rather than scoring at the other end of the scale. In other words, grade level or age could be a factor which was not considered in this study. The physical and mental changes that occur, especially in males, between ninth and twelfth grades can be extensive and could have affected the outcomes of this study.

Another factor which might be considered is the socio-economic level of the subjects. While this study attempted to compare urban and rural perceptions, the urban students qualify officially as urban, but actually were all enrolled in a school district outside the city limits. Might the inner city perceptions be different? The urban residents on

the outskirts of cities generally are in a higher economic bracket than many city residents. The rural population tends to be in a lower economic and social bracket.

The reason for discussing socio-economic levels is that in the lower brackets, females are expected to do more to help support the family. Any way in which the female can help is accepted and encouraged and, therefore, she receives equality in all aspects of life. Her contributions give her just as many rights as the males for work, home, and leisure activities.

Limitations on women in athletic programs can be found in the urban areas to a much greater extent than in the rural areas. Treble and Neil (39) referred to urbanization in their study as a contributing factor to opposition of women in athletics. Larger populations require that limitations be made somehow in order to provide maximum usage of facilities and equipment by those who deserve it, while rural areas do not need to limit participation because of the smaller population within a reasonable travelling distance.

It is this factor of population which seems to be the most critical regarding the outcome of this study. Approximately 150 girls in each of the rural schools has six sport teams to choose from. At an average of 20 players on a team, this would mean that 120 girls could participate. In the urban school, 1000 girls have 13 sports available. Squads of 20 times 13 sports means that 260 girls can participate. When one considers these figures, it is easier to explain why the urban subjects scored the female athletes as less ideal females. The urban subjects are not as familiar with this type of female "role" since the

majority of urban females are not given the opportunity to participate in their school athletic program.

The grand means in Table 2 help to show the greater differences in scoring by the urban subjects compared to the rural. While the first hypothesis was accepted (females would score the slides more ideal than the males), the urban females scored the slides less ideal than the rural males. Thus, the distances between means was greater for urban-rural subjects than for male-female subjects.

A final consideration which may have contributed to the rejection of  $H_2$  might be the sport(s) in which the subjects participated. Perhaps those who participated in "strenuous" sports (football, wrestling, etc.) were not as accepting of females in strenuous activities as those subjects who participated in sports such as swimming or golf. This tendency is accepted by the investigator with the knowledge that one of the rural schools involved in the study does not offer football in its program, and neither rural school offers wrestling.

While the differences between urban and rural athletes were more extensive than between males and females, the grand mean for each group was less than five. These results imply that athletics might be an acceptable role for the modern female in any locale.

#### Slide Differences by Sex

A look at Table 4 shows the results of the analysis of variance for mean simple main effects between males and females. The males scored the slides numbered 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, and 15 significantly higher than the females while the females scored slide 9 higher

than the males.

These results coincide to a great extent with Metheny's (17) findings of 20 years ago. When one considers which slides were different and the males' reasons for giving what ratings they did, the implication is that the males did not approve of strenuous activity for women.

Slide 7 (javelin) and slides 1 and 12 (both shot put) require extreme arm strength; slide 2 (hurdles) and slides 8 and 15 (both long jump) require extreme leg strength; and slides 6 and 13 (both sprinting) require speed and endurance. Slide 14 (basketball) does not easily fall into any of those categories, therefore, speculation as to why the males scored it higher revolves around its popularity among males and spectators. Boys' varsity basketball is the winter pasttime in the rural areas and is nearly as popular in the urban district. It is the attitude of many that females do not and never will play basketball as well as males and, therefore, it should only be played by males.

The higher ratings given by females on slide 9 (pistol shooting) appear to stem from a dislike for guns. Many of the females did not consider it a sport and since it was an activity they would never consider participating in, the ratings by the females were high.

#### Slide Differences by Locale

Slide differences between the urban and rural subjects appeared through an analysis of variance of mean simple main effects (Table 4). A review of Table 1 revealed that the urban athletes scored significantly higher on slides 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, and 15.

The earlier reference to the urban females scoring higher than the rural males (Table 2) helps one to understand these slide differences. It would appear that the population factor and, subsequently, the lack of participation by urban females in sport activities affects the perception of not only the males, but also the females. Whether the attitude of the males affects the participation of urban females is difficult to determine from the results of this study.

To discuss why certain slides did get higher ratings by the urban athletes is not that simple. Eight of the slides which the urban athletes rated significantly higher were of track and field events, a girls' activity which is offered in all three subject schools. On the other hand, two slides of track events (6 and 12) were not significantly different between urban and rural scoring.

Had all of the males scored alike and all of the females scored alike but different from the males, no urban-rural differences would have appeared. Since the urban females' scores were more similar to the urban males than to the rural females, the significant differences between urban and rural scoring was revealed. The urban athletes were more concerned about the strength and effort required than were the rural athletes who lauded the female athletes depicted for doing what they had selected for themselves. These differences between the two groups which emerged through a review of their reasons for the ratings help to clarify why these urban-rural differences might have occurred.

Field hockey and basketball, the two sports depicted in the two other slides which evoked urban-rural differences, appeared to be accepted as female activities by the rural athletes and not accepted by



the urban subjects. The rural schools have produced winning girls' teams in both of those sports in recent years. This success, which has put the girls' teams in the limelight in their schools, has undoubtedly affected the attitudes of the students positively toward participation by females in these activities.

#### Comparisons of Slide Means for Location of Within Group Variation

Tukey's test revealed that all groups scored the javelin thrower significantly higher than any other slide. A review of the reasons given for these high ratings reveals that most subjects considered her to be too fat, too muscular, or participating in what they consider a man's sport. Javelin throwing is not a familiar high school field event, a fact which may account for the latter reason.

The slide showing emotion (#3--two girls riding piggyback) received significantly lower ratings by all four groups. Even though they were obviously competitors in a track meet (outside, wearing sweatsuits), it appears that their overt demonstration of elation is in line with what the high school athletes consider to be appropriate feminine behavior.

Archery (slide 5) also received significantly lower ratings by all four groups. The reasons are apparent from the subjects' comments which refer to her concentration, the accuracy required, and the fact that they consider it a woman's activity.

Slides 6 (sprinting), 10 (shot put), and 14 (basketball) were rated significantly lower than from three to 10 other slides by three

of the groups. Sprinting and basketball were rated significantly lower than six other slides and higher than one slide in the ratings by the males. The shot put was significantly lower than five slides and higher than one slide in the urban ratings.

These findings indicate that differences actually existed on the ratings of the slides by the different groups. Because of this, it may be said that those sports (slides) which received significantly lower ratings than other slides are the most acceptable female activities of those sports depicted. These activities include emotion (slide 3), archery (slide 5), sprinting (slide 6), shot put (slide 10), and basketball (slide 14).

The least acceptable activities for women included those slides on which the groups scored significantly higher than on other slides. While the javelin thrower was rated significantly higher than all other slides, the shot put (slide 1) and long jump (slide 8) were rated significantly higher than from five to eight other slides by all four groups.

How the shot put event found both ends of the acceptability scale is explained by the views presented in the two slides. In slide 1, the throw was completed showing the amount of strain and effort which the event requires. Slide 10 was a full view of the shot putter's face prior to starting the event. Her concentration was noted by the subjects, and many ignored what she was about to do.

### Summary

The acceptance of  $H_1$  concurs with other findings in the literature—that females are more accepting of women in competition than are males. The means for both groups were less than five which enables one to consider that athletic competition is acceptable for females.

The rejection of  $H_2$  (urban athletes would score the slides as more ideal females than the rural athletes) might be supported by consideration of several reasons for the outcome. Included in these are grade level of subjects, socio-economic levels, population effects on participation, and sport(s) in which the subjects themselves competed.

The slide differences by sex were in agreement with the findings of 20 years ago. Strength and endurance were required in the slides on which the males differed; danger was an element on the one slide on which females differed from the males. Basketball may have received higher male ratings because of its popularity as a male spectator sport.

The slide differences by locale may have occurred because of the population factor and the lack of consciousness of urban students concerning females in sport. While the rural athletes (male and female) often gave their reason for rating as "she's doing what she wants," the urban athletes were appalled by the strength and muscularity shown by the females in the slides.

Javelin throwing, revealed by Tukey's test to be the least acceptable of all activities, appeared to receive higher ratings because of the size of the woman thrower and feelings that it was not

a woman's sport. Two other sports events which were not acceptable to the high school athletes for women competitors were the shot put and the long jump.

Appropriate feminine behavior appeared in slide 3 (piggyback) and slide 5 (archery), according to all four groups of high school athletes. Three other slides (shot put, sprinting, and basketball) showed more acceptable status than the remaining 10 slides.

## Chapter 6

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to assess whether locale and/or sex differences exist in high school students' perceptions of the ideal female versus women participating in competitive athletics.

A secondary purpose was to discover if certain competitive activities in which women participate were more acceptable to the high school students.

#### Summary

Fifteen slides showing women in strenuous competition were rated on a scale from one to 10 to indicate whether or not the female depicted was perceived by 160 urban and 160 rural students as an ideal female.

An analysis of variance for factorial design revealed significant within group differences between slides and sex, and between slides and locale to allow rejection of the null hypotheses of  $H_1$  and  $H_2$ . The mean scores revealed that female athletes rated the women competitors as more ideal females than did the male athletes, and the rural athletes gave more ideal ratings than the urban athletes.

The null hypotheses for  $H_3$  and  $H_4$  were rejected when an analysis of variance for mean simple main effects revealed that significant differences occurred on 10 of the slides in the analysis of slides by sex and on 10 of the slides in the analysis of slides by locale. Males

scored significantly higher on nine slides; females scored higher on one slide; and urban athletes scored higher on 10 slides.

A comparison of all pairs of means for each group revealed that the javelin slide was rated significantly higher than all other slides for all groups. Basketball, piggyback, and archery were rated lowest by most groups with sprinting and shot put as the next most acceptable activities for women.

### Conclusions

Within the scope of this investigation, the following conclusions appear to be tenable:

1. Male and female athletes perceive women in competition differently. The males see the woman athlete as being less feminine than do the females.
2. Urban and rural athletes perceive women in competition differently. The urban athletes see the woman athlete as being less feminine than do the rural athletes.
3. Athletics appear to be acceptable to the high school students as proper roles for females.
4. Males and females perceive certain sports and events in which women compete differently. Strength and speed appear to be the factors which affect higher male ratings while danger (use of guns) appears to be the element for higher female ratings.
5. Urban and rural athletes perceive sports and events in which women participate differently. A larger population limiting the

percentage of female participants in urban areas appears to be a major factor which produced higher urban ratings.

6. Sport activities acceptable for female participants include basketball, archery, sprinting, and shot put. The action of showing emotion also produced positive reactions toward the femininity of the participant.

7. The acceptability of certain sport activities for female participation may depend upon the female who wishes to compete. Conflicting results concerning the shot put were affected by both the female involved and the moment of the picture.

#### Recommendations

In light of the present investigation, the following recommendations might be considered:

1. A larger number of subjects, derived from the total population so that non-athlete perceptions might be assessed, would be necessary if the results are to be generalized.
2. Comparisons of the perceptions of members of the society residing in conservative and in liberal sections of the country might be considered for future study.
3. It would be interesting to determine if socio-economic status affected the perceptions of the high school students toward femininity in sport.
4. One might consider the effect of grade level and/or sport preference as possible elements which could confound the outcome of future studies.

5. For a wider perspective of the acceptable sports for females, this writer recommends that a greater variety of sport activities be depicted in the slides to be rated.

6. In order to factor out the differences between the appearances of human beings, a series of slides of the same female in different sports might be considered.

7. In order to factor out the different sports, a series of slides of a variety of female types performing the same activity might be considered for investigation of perceptions of femininity.



APPENDIX A  
SURVEY-RESPONSE SHEET

## SURVEY

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_9 \_\_\_10 \_\_\_11 \_\_\_12

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female

\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No 1. Do you presently or have you ever participated  
in an organized athletic team or endeavor?

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. If yes to question 1, in what sports?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No 3. If no to question 1, do you participate  
regularly in any voluntary physical activity?

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. If yes to question 3, name the activity.

\*\*\*\*\*

## SLIDE RESPONSES

Slide No.	Rating	Reason
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		

APPENDIX B  
STANDARDIZED INSTRUCTIONS

## VERBAL INSTRUCTIONS

Please fill in the Survey section of the answer sheet. Do not put your name on the paper. Question 1 does not refer to your required physical education classes. Are there any questions regarding the Survey section of the answer sheet?

You are going to see a series of slides of women in competition. They were taken at the 1972 Olympics in Munich and at the most recent Canada Games. Please look carefully at each one and assign a rating from 1 to 10. A rating of 1 means that the girl in the picture typifies what you think the "ideal" female ought to be like. A rating of 10 means that you feel that the girl depicted is totally unrelated to your own impression of what the "ideal" female ought to be like. This rating is to be placed on the answer sheet opposite the slide number.

After you assign the rating to a slide, please give your reason for rating the slide at the level you did. Keep your explanations short, but clear. You will have 30 seconds to view each slide.

Are there any questions before we begin? Can everyone see their papers well enough to write? Please do not verbally react to the slides as your responses are to be your own, not those of your neighbors.

(During the viewing, the following comments were added for clarification.)

Slide 3: Rate the girl on top.

Slide 6: Rate the girl in orange wearing #205.

Slide 11: Rate the girl with the sunglasses.

Slide 13: Rate the nearest girl.

Slide 14: Rate the jumping player in orange.

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