

**Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes  
on Instagram: A continuation of gender roles  
found in advertisements?**

The Honors Program

Senior Capstone Project

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**ABSTRACT**

Social media has brought with it a closing of the relational distance between players and fans; athletes have an important decision to make about the way they want to be viewed, not only as athletes, but also in the many other facets of their lives, such as being a parent, friend or role model. By applying the differing gender expectations for males versus females to an athletic context, this research study aims to gain a better understanding of how these gender expectations for male versus female professional athletes are exhibited through self-presentation on social media, specifically Instagram. The athletes' own self-presentation via their Instagram posts were compared to traditional roles presented by the media in advertisements through a visual content analysis. Four of Erving Goffman's gender norm categories were utilized in analyzing Instagram posts: feminine touch, ritualistic touch, licensed withdrawal and ritualization of subordination. Twelve athletes were analyzed in this study, six of them male and six of them female. Each athlete was evaluated on the basis of seven different criteria including the presence of feminine touch, ritualistic touch, licensed withdrawal, a head tilt, nonathletic clothes, a knee bend, and a smile. In using qualitative and quantitative methods, 300 photos were analyzed for presence of this criteria (25 photos per athlete). The study found that both males and females are under considerable pressure to adhere to society's gender expectations which are constantly perpetuated by the media, namely in advertising settings. Despite their athletic achievements and elevated status, athletes are no more immune to gender expectations than the rest of society. Female athletes are found to adhere to gender expectations on Instagram more so when they are not presenting themselves as athletes. Male athletes also remain in the boundaries culture has set for them as acted out in Instagram settings. However, there is hope for a rebuttal to these standards in the near future and using social media outlets, such as Instagram to do so. Female athletes may have already begun this shift. The future of reshaping gender roles rests in the hands of those with social power and influence if society ever has a hope to change the rules of the game.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Over the last decade, social networking sites have completely infiltrated our everyday lives, thoughts and interactions. Social media sites (SNS) have been found to facilitate increased involvement, collaboration and interpersonal communication among many demographics (Sanderson, 2014). Several different types of social media platforms have been developed to cater to a user's specific needs or goals of communication. Some of the social networking sites that have experienced high popularity include Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Social media have infiltrated many demographics. While many of the sites are utilized on an interpersonal or social level, there has also been an upward trend in the presence of social media in athletics. From utilizing SNS to enhance marketing and customer service activities on sports teams (Smith and Sanderson, 2015), to major sports organizations such as the NFL cultivating relationships with sponsors (Emmons and Mocarski, 2014), social media has begun to dominate the athletic industry's strategic operations. Perhaps the two largest parties affected by this growing presence of social media in athletics, however, are professional athletes and their fans, who have both adopted social media at accelerating rates (Sanderson, 2014).

Professional athletes are afforded many opportunities to create and maintain their public image through social media. Not only do they have more control over the identity they want to project, but they also have more power to counteract or perpetuate their depictions on typical mass media outlets (Sanderson, 2014). Fans have been found to continuously seek and consume the latest information about their favorite sports teams and players on SNS (Emmons and Mocarski, 2014). In fact, entire pages on Facebook have been dedicated to fans who can then easily follow, support and discuss a specific athlete or sports team. On Twitter, athletes are able to interact with followers by discussing non-sports topics (Emmons and Mocarski, 2014). Some Twitter studies have shown that athletes even reach out to fans by asking them for opinions or advice on a certain matter; fans can then tweet back in order to actively participate in the cultivation of a relationship with the professional athlete (Sanderson, 2014). Before the onset of social media, this direct relationship would have been impossible.

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With this closing of the relational distance between players and fans, athletes have an important decision to make about the way they want to be viewed, not only as athletes, but also in the many other facets of their lives, such as being a parent, friend or role model. Many times, athletes are faced with a temptation to succumb to social pressures, especially in being confined to the cultural expectations people have of them based on their gender (Kim and Sagas, 2014). Studies concerning gender-role portrayals through media representation have exploded in the last few decades, as stereotypical portrayals of female bodies on television, in magazines and in advertisements have been examined. It has been found that the media demands unrealistic expectations of female beauty while also objectifying women and lending more diverse roles to men rather than women (Kim and Sagas, 2014).

While several of these studies seek to analyze the media's representation of both genders, the circumstances of males' and females' own self-representation in media remains a developing field of study. By applying the differing gender expectations for males versus females to an athletic context, this research study aims to gain a better understanding of how these gender expectations for male versus female professional athletes are exhibited through self-presentation on social media, specifically Instagram. The athletes' own self-presentation via their Instagram posts will then be compared to traditional roles presented by the media in advertisements.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Social Media Platforms**

Each social media platform has several overlapping characteristics, such as facilitating ease of communication, but each is different in its core purposes and capabilities (Sanderson, 2014). Facebook allows its over 1.71 billion registered users to post statuses, comment on or "like" posts and upload photos or other content (Statista, 2016). Twitter allows users to communicate via brief blog posts of 140 characters or less. Users can construct messages known as "Tweets" and then distribute these messages by posting to a feed that other Twitter users can read (Sanderson, 2014). While Facebook reports the highest levels of usage and

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number of accounts to date, Instagram has been named the fastest-growing social media platform (Smith and Sanderson, 2015).

In 2010, this photo-sharing application was born and provided a new outlet for people to share photos on their mobile devices. Instagram is different from Facebook and Twitter in that text-only content cannot be disseminated. This places more importance on the visual content posted through the app as viewers will make assumptions primarily through these photos and videos (Lee et al., 2015). Surpassing Twitter's 284 million users, Instagram continued to climb in popularity by acquiring over 300 million monthly users. The growth of this SNS is branching into many demographics and social groups ranging from young adults to celebrities (Lee et al., 2015).

#### Gender Expectations in Society

Many expectations for males and females have been established as a part of society's natural functioning. Gender is a deeply social construct that varies greatly across countries and cultures. At the same time, it also infiltrates almost every aspect of society and social categories (Djerf-Pierre, 2007). Gender can therefore be thought of as a social capital that has differing value depending on the category. Females may try to compensate for characteristics associated with their gender, such as femininity, by achieving other forms of social capital (Djerf-Pierre, 2007). This can include economic, social or professional success, such as in the case of a prosperous female athlete.

One important explanation of gender expectations in society is the concept of hegemonic gender roles. Hegemonic masculinity is reported by Claire Duncanson (2015) as an understanding of gender that is "dynamic and relational and of power as consent" (p. 232). These themes of hegemonic masculinity enable men to retain power over others in society. Individuals navigate and produce masculinity by engaging in practices that have been deemed "masculine;" in other words, masculinity can be thought of as an identifiable set of actions that are enacted by small groups and societies at large over space and time, thus creating an important form of social capital (Schippers, 2007). A major piece of the power rooted in masculine hegemony is the notion of subordinating other groups, especially women. Hegemony is ultimately associated with themes of power and domination; consequently, there

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are no femininities that can be deemed hegemonic. Schippers (2007) reports that all forms of femininity in society are “constructed in the context of the overall subordination of women to men” (p. 187). This notion forms the framework for a concept known as emphasized femininity in which females are forced to comply as subordinates to men, suppressing their ultimate desires and interests (Schippers, 2007).

Over time, researchers have identified five hegemonic gender portrayals of both genders, offered in an alternating paradox format: (1) while men are powerful, women are deemed submissive, (2) men prioritize occupational success while women embrace themes of family or being a homemaker, (3) men support familial patriarchy and women accept a role as a wife and mother (a subordinate), (4) men are active participants in the world whereas women are pushed to the background and sheltered, and last, (5) men must be the heterosexual “pursuer” while women are the ones being “pursued” (Emmons and Mocarski, 2014). Because of the gender stereotypes encouraged through these hegemonic portrayals, we as consumers expect role internalization for males and females to manifest itself in visual content (Emmons and Mocarski, 2014).

#### Representations of Gender in Advertising

These expectations are carried and even perpetuated by media representation. Advertisements have been found to preserve female stereotypes by establishing false expectations of female beauty. In addition, television and commercials continuously objectify and sexualize women while giving men more diverse roles (Kim and Sagas, 2014).

#### *Goffman's Conceptual Framework*

In his landmark study, *Gender Advertisements*, Erving Goffman created an extensive analysis of themes in advertisements that depict males and females.

#### *Relative Size*

Goffman first identified the theme of relative size in which one makes his or her “social weight” known via their proximity and size to other objects. Social weight can include anything such as power, authority or rank (Goffman, 1979). In analyzing relative size between genders, males typically exert a superior status over the female as demonstrated by their height and stature. Goffman found that relative size could also be expressed

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symbolically in advertisements in which objects are masculinized or feminized depending their size (Goffman, 1979).

#### *The Feminine Touch*

Another theme he uncovered involves “the feminine touch” in which women, more so than their male counterparts, are depicted using their fingers and hands to touch an object gently. This act is known as ritualistic touching and can be contrasted with a more “utilitarian kind that grasps, manipulates, or holds,” seen more frequently in images of men (Goffman, 1979, p. 29). Ritualistic touching also offers opportunities for face rather than hand touching to be used. In addition, self-touching might be used in advertisements to assert the fragility of the body or perhaps to portray one’s sexuality (Goffman, 1979).

#### *Function Ranking*

Goffman (1979) also discusses “function ranking,” which involves photographs that contain both men and women. This notion deems that men are likely to perform executive roles in photos; a “hierarchy of function” is then formed with the female more often as a subordinate (p. 32). This ranking of male as first and female as second in advertisements can be seen in many scenarios such as occupational or leisure settings. This can also be seen in individual depictions of men and women. For example, men are often depicted engaging in some sort of action or activity while women depicted along are often stationary.

#### *The Family*

Visual representations of family through photographs can symbolically hint at the family’s social structure. Taking this into consideration when deciphering advertisements, there is typically an allocation of at least one girl and a boy so that “the full set of intrafamily relations can be effected” (Goffman, 1979). Typically, mothers are seen holding daughters and fathers are posed next to sons. Additionally, fathers might be seen slightly removed from other members of the family. This could imply a notion that fathers have less focus on the family as their primary concern (Goffman, 1979).

#### *The Ritualization of Subordination*

This concept explains the notion of spatial relations and how power is distributed among the genders. High physical space symbolizes high social place; in advertisements men are



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typically depicted as being higher than woman, that is, above them (Goffman 1979). This is supported by understanding in our society that courtesy obliges men to favor women with first claim on whatever is available by way of a seat. However, space is not the only application to this concept. Holding the head high is stereotypically a mark of superiority, dominance or disdain. Comparatively, a head tilted downwards in relation to other in the photo can insinuate subordination or appeasement (Goffman, 1979).

Another interesting take on this concept is Goffman's identification of the "knee bend," commonly exhibited by females in advertisements. This posture seems to suggest submissiveness and succumbing to those also present in the photograph, either in a victimizing or sexual manner (Goffman, 1979). Similar to this seemingly minute gesture is also the "arm lock" in which a female holds onto a male for support as well as "shoulder hold," where typically the male asserts power by holding onto the female. Another potential indicator of sexual readiness according to Goffman (1979) includes subjects laying on bed or couch (p.41).

Interestingly, smiles are categorized by Goffman (1979) as a sign of inferiority in advertisements (p. 48). This is supported by the notion that in cross-sexed encounters in American culture, women are observed as smiling more expansively than men. This finding is many times then carried over into advertisements (Goffman, 1979).

Ritualization of subordination is also manifested in the types of clothing worn by males versus females in advertisements. Men are typically displayed in formal business attire; however, even when depicted in informal attire, they still emit a serious aura through facial expression or stance (Goffman, 1979). Women in advertisements, however, have a different relationship with their clothing and the gestures tied to each outfit. There are several broad categories of clothes for females to wear exhibiting a potential attraction to shopping and a need to wear "a costume." This conception of wearing different costumes to portray a variety of personas associates a comical or unserious impression with females (Goffman, 1979).

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#### *Licensed Withdrawal*

Goffman's final major observation in advertisements is the licensed withdrawal of women. This involves female subjects psychologically removing themselves from a situation, often times leaving them disorientated or dependent on the protectiveness of others. Often times, the women will be seen looking away from the camera or covering a portion of their face with their hand (Goffman, 1979). Additionally, gazing away from another or the camera can be interpreted as allowing one to submit to the situation around them. Goffman also addresses "anchored drifts" in which the female might be locked on another object, either depicted or not depicted, represents another mode of withdrawal from the present situation (p. 65). Advertisers may use this tactic to exhibit negative emotions such as fear as well as others such as shyness or laughter.

Advertisements are found to inadvertently project social cues that consumers digest and begin to accept as the status quo in everyday life. These hyperritualized representations become important parts of the frame in which we begin to construct gender norms in society (Baran and Davis, 2015). In identifying these themes, Goffman connects each one to the social role expected of both males and females. His findings will provide the conceptual framework for the research conducted in this study.

#### *Goffman's Theories in Advertising Today*

Many researchers still utilize Goffman's theories in evaluating advertising gender roles. One study by Bell and Milic (2002) discovered that advertisements featuring female participants typically still differ from those displaying male subjects. Another study found that women are seen in more domestic scenes or as elaborate models in ambiguous roles. Men however, are seen as working professionals, spokespersons or leisurely lounging (Morris, 2006). The study further found that men are assigned more valued and prestigious roles than are women. In addition, commercial visuals of men and women were found to be dominated by gender stereotypes. Since reading advertising is learned behavior, stereotypes projected in these visuals are thus also learned. Therefore, gender norms become part of a vicious cycle that both create and perpetuate gender stereotypes (Morris, 2006). In other words, socially constructed representations of gender in advertising ultimately shape how these gender roles are interpreted in society. Thus, after seeing repetitive media images reinforcing the same

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gender norms, society becomes conditioned to expect these same norms translated into reality (Lebel, 2013).

Athletes are scrutinized in photographs just like other famous celebrities who are showcased by the media. Some of these evaluations about athletes' outwards appearance concern topics of fashion or the appropriateness of their lifestyle, neither of which relate to their profession as an athlete (Emmons and Mocarski, 2014).

One study evaluated the visual implications of the portrayal of female athletes in the magazine *Sports Illustrated*. While it can be argued that female athletes' inclusion in the magazine is a step forward for women, researchers Kim and Sagas (2014) argued that the major problem rests in the *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issue; these publications establish an "atmosphere of objectifying women and hegemonic masculinity and femininity" (p. 138). Female athletes were typically portrayed with their sexuality and physical appearance as being more important than their athleticism (Kim and Sagas, 2014). In other words, the need to uphold gender roles in sports media seems to trump the importance of the players' roles as professional athletes. As a result, *Sports Illustrated* reinforces a culture for powerful institutions and society at large to continue perpetuating gender stereotypes. Kim and Sagas (2014) argue the necessity for media outlets to create a balance that showcases the hard work athletes put into their bodies while remaining unbiased to the stereotypes associated with their gender (p. 138).

#### Self-Presentation

According to Goffman's theories of presentation of self, when exhibiting identity, people act as performers. In other words, they express their identity through both verbal and nonverbal messages. The ultimate goal of these messages is to display the most ideal and credible "self" to audiences (Goffman, 1959). These presentations of self can be broken into frontstage and backstage performances. Frontstage performances require subjects to be more cautious and guarded with the self that they are presenting, whereas backstage performances are often more informal and less filtered presentations of self (Emmons and Mocarski, 2014).

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Goffman noted the use of social cues in self-presentation interactions that ultimately signal when a change of stage needs to be made. This changing of actions or words is referred to as *shifting*. Individuals can either downshift or upshift in order to reframe situations as either a more active or passive participant (Baran and Davis, 2015). This is an especially important concept when trying to understand self-presentation. For example, individuals may downshift after inadvertently insulting someone during a joke. This downshifting occurs so that the aggressor can rework his or her self-presentation as an antagonistic person to a more apologetic or concerned identity (Baran and Davis, 2015).

#### *Athlete Self-Presentation*

With a lens into the personal lives of many athletes on their social media profiles, audiences are more likely to view the athlete as relatable, interpreting their online communication actions as backstage or less scripted performances of self. However, many times athletes are aware of the public nature and influence of their posts, thus maintaining a frontstage performance of self that is more guarded and idealized in nature (Emmons and MocarSKI, 2014). While athletes can potentially utilize social media to break expectations of preconceived notions (Sanderson, 2014), both males and females can also be under considerable pressure to conform to expected societal portrayals in their social media posts and interactions (Emmons and MocarSKI, 2014).

Several studies have attempted to find the differences among male and female athlete online self-presentation across many different social media outlets. On Twitter, males were found to spend a larger amount of time performing their role as athletes than did their female colleagues. However, females were also found to focus more on their efforts to manage their brand and reach out to fans (Lebel, 2013). This study also found that female athletes chose to self-describe less than did male athletes. In another comparison, females provided a link to further content more so than did males. This way fans could seek out more information on a topic the female athlete was discussing. In examining some of the findings in this study, Lebel (2013) discriminated the commonality of athletes evoking a backstage performance of self (p. 28).

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In another analysis of professional athletes' Facebook profile pictures, researchers found several differences among male and female athletes. Contrary to stereotypes of females as submissive, female athletes were more likely to look at the camera, whereas male athletes were more likely to look away from the camera. The researchers assert that from a branding perspective, this could be because female focused on engaging their audience whereas males held a preference for fan observance (Emmons and Mocarski, 2014). These findings and interpretations contradict the presentational norms that Goffman suggests are typically held for men and women, requiring a need for further research and potential alternative explanations.

In the same Facebook study, male and female athletes were found to equally exhibit a sexual gaze (Emmons and Mocarski 2014). Consistent with this, another study of female Olympic athletes conducted on Instagram profiles also found that there were a surprisingly limited number of sexually suggestive photos. However, the photos that were found sexually suggestive produced higher numbers of likes and comments by followers (Geurin-Eagleman and Burch, 2016). In another study analyzing male and female athletes' self-presentation on Instagram, however, researchers found the opposite; females posted more sexually suggestive photographs than did men (Smith and Sanderson, 2015). This disparity between results offers a unique opportunity to further clarify self-presentation of athletes on Instagram.

Similarly, the researchers in the second study also discovered that female Olympians had significantly more photographs that emphasized their breasts as sexual objectification than did men. Another finding included Goffman's notion of ritualistic touching (Goffman 1959). Male athletes were less likely to be touching something, whereas females were more likely to engage in causal touch of another person, object or themselves (Smith and Sanderson, 2015).

Another major finding among the Olympic athletes on their Instagram profiles was the frequency of personal-life photos. This choice of self-representation offering a glimpse into the women's personal lives is actually consistent with the representations put forth by the media which, as Goffman might argue, typically focus on female athletes' families or personal lives rather than sport-related material (Geurin-Eagleman and Burch, 2016).

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#### *Female Athlete Paradox*

Female athletes' face a challenge to overcome what has come to be known as the female athlete paradox. In this notion, a female's sexuality is seen as operating at the forefront of her version of self; in fact, it is deemed the most important part of her representation and purpose as a human (Emmons and Mocarski, 2014). While self-presentation may portray factual evidence, societal expectations of how a person's self-presentation should be can become roadblocks to the subject's ultimate goal of representation (Baran and Davis, 2015). Therefore, female athletes have a hard time trying to represent their athleticism as being prominent over their sexuality (Emmons and Mocarski, 2014).

#### Conclusion

Inconsistent findings have been reported from the limited number of studies concerning athlete self-presentation on social media sites. Additionally, little research has been conducted on the potential relationship between male and female athletes' own self-presentation on SNS with the media's portrayal of both genders in advertising. Having a greater understanding of the way media advertisements potentially shape individuals' own self-presentation on social media is an important facet of knowledge in order to break stereotypes and boundaries of gender norms.

## **METHODS**

#### Pretest Design

A pretest was conducted to check the reliability of Goffman's categories when applied to self-presentation in athletes' Instagram posts. Two naïve coders were utilized. One coder was female and the other was male. This was designed to mitigate the potential for gender biases when analyzing both the male and female athlete photos. Both coders were also within the same age range as the majority of the athletes (18-32 years old) who were used in the test to avoid age biases.

Each coder was given a set of twelve definitions relating to Goffman's six major gender advertisement categories. For each category, two definitions were created: one in relation to male athletes and one in relation to female athletes. The definitions used are seen below:

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#### ***Relative Size – Female***

Relative size pertains to a way in which social weight such as power or authority is expressed. Females are often seen as smaller than men in stature and height or as standing further behind them.

#### ***Relative Size – Male***

Relative size pertains to a way in which social weight such as power or authority is expressed. Males are often seen as taller than women in stature and height or standing in front of them.

#### ***Function Ranking - Female***

Function ranking deals with interactions between the sexes. Typically when a man and woman are engaging in an activity, the woman is a bystander or second in command to performing the task – the man takes an executive role. This can also be seen when a female is depicted by herself; she is often pictured not engaging in any activity.

#### ***Function Ranking – Male***

Function ranking deals with interactions between the sexes. Typically when a man and woman are engaging in an activity, the man typically performs the executive or superior role. This can also be seen when a male is depicted by himself: he is often pictured engaging in some sort of activity or action.

#### ***The Feminine Touch - Female***

The feminine touch is a type of ritualistic touching defined by the action of female subjects in photos using their fingers and hands to gently touch themselves or perhaps objects.

#### ***Ritualistic Touching - Male***

Contrary to touching themselves, men are often more likely to engage in a more utilitarian type of grasp with objects or individuals other than themselves. This grasp is often strong, affirmative or sometimes harsh.

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***The Family - Female***

This concept describes the concept that mothers are usually seen next to their children, often their daughters when there are children of multiple genders. They maintain active participation in the family.

***The Family - Male***

This concept describes the visualization of fathers as more removed from their family members. Often the father stands a little outside the physical circle of the other members of the family. They are typically depicted next to their sons engaging in action or masculine activities.

***The Ritualization of Subordination - Female***

This concept explains the notion of spatial relations and how power is distributed among the genders. Women are often depicted as lower than men expressed through a variety of items: sitting lower, head tilts, knee bends, bending or shifting of weight on the body. Smiles are also regarded as more common among women than men insinuating a potential automatic compliance as being the inferior party. Lastly, women are often required to wear “a costume” in order to fit into the many roles they must play as deemed by society.

***Ritualization of Subordination - Male***

This concept explains the power distribution allocated between the sexes. Men are often depicted as “higher” than women by standing tall while their female counterparts slouch or make themselves smaller through a knee bend. Men are also seen as serious subjects, often smiling less often than women. Men are often depicted in formal attire or attire that is appropriate for a given situation. They often carry an aura of seriousness regardless of the situation.

***Licensed Withdrawal – Female***

Licensed withdrawal is described removing oneself psychologically from a social situation. Females are often depicted in this manner through visual aspects such as



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looking off into the distance with a look of fear, shyness or happiness. It also involves not looking directly into the camera, or covering their faces or mouths.

#### ***Licensed Withdrawal – Male***

Licensed withdrawal deals with psychologically removing oneself from a social situation. Males are less often depicted in this manner as they usually look directly into the camera. When they are shown looking away, they typically are seen with a serious expression on their face rather than emotions such as fear, happiness, or shyness as seen with women.

Coders were given twelve photographs of athletes. Athletes for the photographs were chosen based on their credibility as professional athletes according to online sources. More specifically, online rankings from known news channels were utilized in compiling a selection of top athletes. Athletes who are currently playing or who have now since retired were utilized for the pre-test photographs. They also were chosen based on their Instagram profile, as certain photographs were more conducive to showcasing Goffman's categories than were others. Six photographs depicted male athletes, while the other six depicted female athletes. Each photograph included the athlete's name and the sport he or she plays beneath it.

Coders were instructed to match the male definitions with the male photos that best fit the descriptions. They also did the same for the female definitions and female photos. No extra photos were offered, as the naïve coders had no background in Goffman's gender categories. This way, all photos had to be utilized in matching them to one of the twelve definitions.

#### **Pretest Results**

It was discovered that three of Goffman's categories were unreliable, as the coders incorrectly matched them. They included the female definitions for "relative size," "the family," and "function ranking." Naïve coder number 1 reported two pictures incorrectly by switching the pictures for relative size and function ranking. Naïve coder 2 reported two pictures incorrectly by switching the photos for relative size and the family. As these three categories potentially had little or unclear relevance when applied to athletes' self-presentation in Instagram settings, they were removed from the study. Though the naïve coders reported the definitions incorrectly only for female pictures, they were also removed

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for males. This is because both male and female self-presentations are needed for examination of each gender advertisement category to form a basis of comparison.

Study Design

A visual content analysis was used in this study. The goal of the study was to examine the classic understanding of Goffman's gender categories when applied to self-presentation settings such as Instagram. How media shapes people's perceptions is extremely relevant and timely as many of society's assumptions about gender rest on different societal expectations for males and females. After a detailed examination of the applicable literature and removing the unreliable categories based on the pretest, the following research question was developed:

R1: Are male and female athletes' self-presentation on Instagram consistent with that of Goffman's gender categories portrayed in advertisements?

In order to navigate the complexity of this research question, the following additional research questions were developed as support:

R2: Will female athletes engage in feminine touch on Instagram posts more than will male athletes?

R2a: Will female athletes engage in feminine touch more than they will engage in ritualistic touching?

R3: Will male athletes engage in ritualistic touching on Instagram posts more than will female athletes?

R3a: Will male athletes engage in ritualistic touching more than they will engage in feminine touch.

R4: Will female athletes, to a greater degree than will men, engage in licensed withdrawal in their Instagram posts?

R5: Engaging in ritualization of subordination, will female athletes be more likely to tilt their head downwards in Instagram posts than will male athletes?

R6: Engaging in ritualization of subordination, will female athletes be more likely to wear clothing other than athletic gear in Instagram posts than will male athletes?

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R7: Engaging in ritualization of subordination, will female athletes be more likely to exhibit the “knee bend” in Instagram posts than will male athletes?

R8: Engaging in ritualization of subordination, will female athletes be more likely to smile in Instagram posts than will male athletes?

Six professional male athletes and six professional female athletes were chosen for the study. Athletes were chosen based on several criteria: Online rankings, nationality, sport, and Instagram account verification. Athletes were chosen through a pooling of reputable online news sources such as Fox Sports and ESPN to analyze rankings. Only top athletes according to rankings were chosen for the study. Only athletes playing in America were chosen to avoid potential cultural factors. They were chosen from the following sports: tennis, soccer, and basketball. This is because all three of these sports are played by relatively equal numbers of males and females when compared to some other sports. In addition, the combination of these three sports provides a mix of both team and individually-based sports. Once the list of potential athletes was compiled, their Instagram accounts were checked for “verification.” Verified Instagram accounts are often used for famous or well-known people so that followers know it is the actual account of that person instead of a fake account. Verification is documented by a blue circle with a checkmark in next to a person’s name on Instagram. Only verified accounts were used. The twenty-five most recent Instagram photos in which each athlete appeared in the photo were used. No videos were utilized. In addition, any posts that showcased multiple photographs in a single post were also eliminated. If too much of the athlete’s body or face was hidden, photos were omitted. Similarly, any photos in which the athlete was sleeping or unconscious were also omitted from analysis.

Quantitative and qualitative techniques were used in the visual content analysis. Each male and female athlete was evaluated on the presence of the following items in his and her photographs: feminine touch, ritualistic touching, licensed withdrawal, a knee bend, nonathletic clothes, a head tilt and a smile. Each analysis of the photo also included documentation of the number of total people seen in the photograph. In addition, photos in which the athlete’s face or legs could not be seen yielded a “null” result; these photos were not evaluated for the hypotheses involving a knee bend or a smile. Similarly, if an athlete’s

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arms or hands were not seen in the photo, ritualistic and feminine touch categories received a “null” result.

For each athlete, conclusions were drawn about the connections between various combinations in the presence of certain categories. Themes and patterns were identified to better understand how athletes portray themselves on Instagram. This helped answer the main research question, “Do Goffman’s gender advertisement categories have relevance today when applied to self-presentation on Instagram?”

## **RESULTS**

Athletes were analyzed on the basis of seven different criteria specifically relating to the proposed research questions. In completing the visual content analysis, results for each Goffman category are displayed by each individual athlete. Each athlete’s scores on the analyzed Goffman categories are displayed below. Analyzing each athlete separately helps to identify complex relationships and patterns between categories among each athlete. A quantitative accounting of each athlete and their corresponding results can be found in Appendices B and C.

### **Female Athletes**

#### ***Serena Williams – Tennis***

Serena Williams is a highly regarded tennis player. Her 25 most recent Instagram photos display a strong prevalence of licensed withdrawal at 76%. She is frequently not making eye contact with the camera. Her next highest category percentage is her display of a knee bend, present in 73% of photos. It should also be noted that only 11 pictures were deemed viable to test for the knee-bend category as the remainder did not showcase her legs. Eight of these 11 photos displayed a knee bend in which she makes herself seem lower or smaller in stature. Williams can also be seen in her photos half the time in athletic clothes and half in nonathletic clothes, with the latter offering a slight percentage more at 52%. The head-tilt category also offered an almost evenly split divide between photos in which her head is tilted sideways and downward versus those she is looking straight or upwards, at 48%. Categories of ritualistic touch, feminine touch, and smiling represented William’s lowest presence in the photos

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analyzed. Interestingly, she displayed ritualistic touching 9% more than she did feminine touch, contrary to R2. Feminine touch represented a low percentage of photos as only 6 of 23 possible photos contained feminine touch. Ritualistic touch made up 35%. Last, Williams rarely displayed a smile at only 24% or 5 of 21 photos.

#### *Sloane Stephens – Tennis*

Sloane Stephens represents the second female tennis player in this study. The strongest category among her Instagram posts is smiling, at 84%. This was the highest percentage among all other categories as the remaining areas displayed less than a 50% presence in Instagram posts analyzed. Her second highest category was a presence of a knee bend in 4 out of an available 9 photos, for a 44% presence. Similarly, Stephens displayed a 40% rate of licensed withdrawal in photographs. Interestingly, she also displayed an even split between ritualistic and feminine touch as each category was at 7%. Stephens' displayed a head tilt and wore nonathletic clothes for 6 out 25 photos, or 24%, for both categories. It is important to note that athletic clothes represented 76% of photos. These represent the categories with the smallest presence.

#### *Alex Morgan – Soccer*

Alex Morgan represents the first female soccer athlete in this study. The category with the highest percentage among analyzed posts is smiling, at 84%. Closely following this is the category of nonathletic clothes. Morgan self-presented in nonathletic clothes 80% of the time, or 20 of 25 posts. Only 5 photos displayed her identity as an athlete in athletic clothes. The remainder of the categories make up a very small percentage of presence in the posts. Head tilt and licensed withdrawal both make up only 36% of pictures, while head tilts were seen in 36% of posts, or 9 of 25 photos. Interestingly, Morgan displayed 2 more photographs with ritualistic touch than she did feminine touch, at 32% and 21% respectively. She displayed a knee bend in only 3 of 12 possible posts, or only about 25%.

#### *Lynn Williams – Soccer*

Lynn Williams is the second female soccer player used in this study. Licensed withdrawal makes up the largest percent of Instagram posts, at 80%. In other words, Williams is seen not looking at the camera in 20 of 25 photos. The second highest presence in her Instagram posts is smiling, at 75%. This is followed by nonathletic clothes, which represents

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60% of photos. Williams is wearing athletic clothes in only 10 of 25 photos, compared to 15 of 25 in nonathletic clothing. Feminine touch was seen in 4% fewer photos than was ritualistic touch. Whereas 32% of her posts contained feminine touch, 36% contained ritualistic touch. Other categories with a low presence for Williams include head tilt and knee bend. Williams tilted her head in only 7 of 25 photos, or 28%. In addition she displayed a knee bend in only 4 of 13 possible posts, or 31%

#### *Tina Charles – Basketball*

Tina Charles is a highly ranked professional basketball player. The category with the highest presence in her photos was smiling at 80%. The category with the second highest presence for Charles is nonathletic clothes, which was seen in 14 of 25 photos. This 56% presence of nonathletic clothes in posts obviously represents a 44% presence of athletic clothes. This category is close to being evenly split, with a slight preference for displaying herself outside of athletics. Licensed withdrawal also represented a relatively even split, having a 52% presence in her Instagram posts. In these 13 photographs, she is not looking at the camera. Similarly, Charles displayed a knee bend in half of an available 10 photos. Charles displayed feminine touch in only 10% or 2 of a possible 20 photos. This is 25% fewer than ritualistic touch, which showed up in 7 of 20 photos, or 35%. The lowest category for Charles, at 28%, is display of a head tilt.

#### *Elena Delle Donne – Basketball*

Elena Delle Donne is this study's second female basketball player. Smiling represents the category with the largest presence, at 83%. The second highest category is nonathletic clothes, at 80%. Delle Donne is wearing nonathletic clothes in 20 of 25 photos and is thus wearing athletic clothes in 20% of the posted images. Another category with high representation in Instagram posts was knee bend. Though there were only 7 possible photos, she exhibited a knee bend in 5 of these, creating a 71% representation rate. Delle Donne displayed the remaining categories at less than 50% in posts. Head tilt represented 40% of photos and licensed withdrawal represents only 28% of photos. Feminine touch was seen slightly less than ritualistic touch, at a 27% to 32% rate respectively.

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#### Male Athletes

##### *John Isner – Tennis*

John Isner is the first male tennis player evaluated in this study. In his 25 most recent Instagram photos, Isner can be found dressed in nonathletic clothes in 72%, or 18 photos. Therefore, he was wearing athletic clothes only in about 18% of posts. The second highest Goffman category displayed by this athlete is smiling. He is found smiling in 15 of the 25 photos, which is roughly 60%. Isner demonstrated a moderate amount of ritualistic touching in his photos, as just under half contained this category. Ritualistic touching represented roughly 45% or 10 of a possible 22 photos. Opposite of ritualistic touching, he displayed feminine touch 27% of the time in 6 of 22 photos. Isner exhibited a head tilt in 9 of the total posts which totaled to 36%. In addition to this, he was not looking at the camera about 32% of the time engaging in licensed withdrawal. Isner's smallest represented category is a knee bend at 25% or only 2 of 8 photos.

##### *Jack Sock – Tennis*

The second male tennis player in this study is Jack Sock. Licensed withdrawal was demonstrated by Sock the most of any other Goffman categories, as he was not looking at the camera in 76% of posts. This totaled to 19 of 25 photos. A close second, ritualistic touching, was Sock's next highest represented category; 71% or 17 of a possible 24 photos contained ritualistic touching. Complimentary to this, Sock only displayed feminine touch 21% of the time in only 5 of 24 photos. The remaining categories were extremely under-represented in Sock's photos. Sock was seen exhibiting a smile in only 7 of 25 photos or 28% of the time. In addition to this, he was wearing nonathletic clothes 24% of the time. Therefore, he was seen self-presenting as an athlete in athletic gear about 76% of the time. Sock was seen bending his knee in only 13% or 2 of 16 photos. Perhaps one of the lowest percentages in the study, Sock only exhibited a head tilt in 1 of 25 total photos or 4%.

##### *Clint Dempsey – Soccer*

Clint Dempsey is the first male soccer player analyzed in this study. Overall, Dempsey exhibited a relatively low representation of Goffman's categories across all posts. The highest category was smiling at 10 of 20 photos or 50%. The second highest category of licensed withdrawal was discovered in just under half of photos; final totals were 12 of 25 or 48% of

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posts. His next highest category was at 40%, as 10 of a possible 25 photos Dempsey was seen in nonathletic clothes. Therefore, he displayed himself more often as an athlete wearing athletic clothes in 60% of posts. Dempsey exhibited ritualistic touching in 33%, or 7 of 21 photos. Feminine touch however, only received a 10% presence as Dempsey was seen engaging in this category in 2 of 21 photos. The category of head tilt only made up about 12%, or 3 of 25 photos. Dempsey's lowest represented category was a knee bend as none of the possible 10 photos displayed engagement in this action.

#### *Tim Howard – Soccer*

Tim Howard is the second soccer player among the male athletes in this study. The category most represented by Howard is nonathletic clothes as 68%, or 17 of 25 photos displayed this item. This means about 32% of photos showed Howard in athletic gear. A close second, Howard was seen smiling in posts 67%, or 16 out of 24 photos. Howard's third highest category was ritualistic touching of objects or others, as slightly under half (47%) photos demonstrated this. Only 2 of 19 or 11% of posts displayed Howard engaged in feminine touch. Howard engaged in licensed withdrawal about 40% of the time, or 10 of 25 photos. He exhibited a knee bend only about 13% of the time. This is seen in only 1 of a possible 8 photos showing his legs. Howard did not demonstrate a head tilt in any of the 25 posts.

#### *Kobe Bryant – Basketball*

Kobe Bryant is a highly regarded basketball player in the National Basketball Association. He is the first male basketball player in this study. The highest Goffman category demonstrated by Bryant was smiling; nineteen of 24 photos, or 79% displayed this item. Bryant's second highest Goffman category was nonathletic clothes as 72% of posts he as seen in nonathletic gear. This totals to about 28% of posts in which he is seen in athletic clothes. His next highest category was a moderate 44% of ritualistic touching. Eight of the 18 photos displayed this item. Only 3 of 18 photos, or 17%, displayed feminine touch of objects or others. Bryant only engaged in licensed withdrawal 32% of the time. He is seen not looking at the camera in 8 of 25 photos. He tilted his head downwards in 20% of posts, or 5 of 25. Bryant did not exhibit a knee bend at all in the 3 available photos displaying his legs.



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#### *James Harden – Basketball*

James Harden is the second male basketball player studied. Harden often engaged in licensed withdrawal, as 72% or 18 of 25 posts contained this item. His second most represented Goffman category is wearing nonathletic clothes; sixteen of 25 photos, which is about 64%, displayed Harden in nonathletic outfits. This means that 36% of posts contained Harden presenting himself as an athlete wearing his uniform or other athletic gear. Ritualistic touching was seen a moderate amount, as half of the 22 possible photos exhibited this category. Feminine touch was seen in only 4 of the 22 photos, or 18%. He exhibited a knee bend 33% of the time, which is 2 of the 6 photos. Harden is seen smiling in 6 of 19 available photos, totaling to 32%. His lowest represented category was head tilt as only 16%, or 4 of 25 photos displayed this.

#### Evaluation of Research Questions and Results

More information and data for the items below can be found in Appendices A, B and C.

The posts of almost every female athlete demonstrated feminine touch to a greater degree than did those of the men. Only two female athletes, Tina Charles and Elena Delle Donne, reported feminine touch scores low enough that they were equal to that of two male athletes, Clint Dempsey and John Isner, respectively. Dempsey received the lowest score for males in this category while Isner reported the highest presence for this area. Overall, the average number of male athletes' posts exhibiting feminine touch was lower than the number for female athletes' posts by almost 8%. Due to these results, there is support for RQ2 can be answered in the affirmative.

There is also an affirmative answer for RQ3 regarding males engaging in ritualistic touch more than female athletes. Each male, as represented by their posts, engaged in ritualistic touching more than did each female, with the exception of two athletes who received the same score for the category of ritualistic touching: Clint Dempsey and Sloane Stephens. Dempsey received the lowest presence of ritualistic touching among the other male athletes in the study. His score was equivalent to that of Stephens. In addition, Dempsey's score was also slightly lower than the ritualistic touch scores for female athletes Lynn Williams, Tina Charles, and

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Serena Williams. However, the majority of male athletes reaped higher ritualistic touch scores by 15.4% than did the female athletes.

The posts of every male athlete demonstrated ritualistic touch to a greater degree than they did feminine touch. Overall, men engaged in ritualistic touch roughly 49.2% of the time and feminine touch only 17.5% of the time. This 31.75% gap again provides an affirmative answer for RQ3a.

The posts of females to a greater degree than those of males displayed a higher presence of Goffman's head tilt category under ritualization of subordination. Only one male athlete, John Isner, displayed a percentage equal to one of the female athletes Alex Morgan. Isner's score was also higher than three of the other female athletes' scores for this category. However, the overall averages for both sexes report a significantly higher percentage of head tilt presence for females than males. On average, females exhibited a head tilt 34% of the time while males showcased a head tilt only 14.7% of the time. Therefore, RQ5 can be answered in the affirmative.

Female athletes more so than male athletes exhibited ritualization of subordination via a knee bend in Instagram posts. All female athletes, except for Lynn Williams and Alex Morgan, received scores higher than that of their male counterparts. Williams' and Morgan's scores were slightly lower than that of male athlete James Harden. Harden's score was also the highest reported value across his male counterparts for the category of knee bend. Morgan's score was equal to that of male athlete John Isner. In looking at the overall averages for this category, it is determined that females show a significantly higher percentage of bent knees by 33.1% as compared to the average for men. It can be determined that Harden's and Isner's scores are thus outliers among the other four male athletes. This observation suggests an affirmative answer for RQ7.

Females demonstrated smiling to a greater degree than males in Instagram posts. All female athletes with the exception of two, Lynn Williams and Serena Williams, demonstrated smiling more than did males. Lynn Williams received a score lower than male athlete Kobe Bryant. Serena Williams' score represents a major outlier among the group, as hers was the lowest

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score among all the athletes across both sexes. In looking at the averages for females and males, the women demonstrated a significantly higher percentage of smiling in their photos by 19.6% when compared to men. Therefore, RQ8, which asks if female athletes will be more likely to smile in Instagram posts than will male athletes, can be answered affirmatively.

#### Other Research Questions

Several of the female athletes' posts contained licensed withdrawal to a greater degree than did the posts of male athletes. However, there were several males and females who received the same scores, such as Serena Williams and Jack Sock, as well as Sloane Stephens and Tim Howard. The overall average score of licensed withdrawal scores for the females at 52% were only 2% higher than the overall average scores for males in this category. As a result, it is not clear that RQ4 can be answered affirmatively.

Male and female athletes were found to have a varying presence of nonathletic clothes in Instagram posts. Overall, females reported a 58.7% presence of nonathletic clothes while males displayed a 2% lower presence at 56.7%. Women, therefore, demonstrated a slightly higher average in this category than the average of male athletes in this category. However, three of the female athletes, Sloane Stephens, Serena Williams, and Tina Charles, reported scores that were lower than four of the males, John Isner, James Harden, Kobe Bryant, and Tim Howard. Here, too, it is difficult to answer RQ6 strongly in the affirmative.

RQ2a, asking if females will engage in feminine touch more than ritualistic touch, can be answered in the negative. In fact, each individual female athlete was found to touch objects, themselves, or others ritualistically more than she did in a manner of feminine touch. The exception to this is tennis player Sloane Stephens, who had the same percentage of photos with feminine touch as she did ritualistic touch. The overall proportion of ritualistic touch in photos was 15.4% higher than the overall proportion for feminine touch among female athletes.

## **DISCUSSION**

In an age of constant conversations regarding equal opportunities for men and women, there are still stigmatized expectations and roles that each gender is expected to act out. This

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situation has been perpetuated by the onset of social media. Not only are individuals expected to self-present identity in a certain way when face-to-face with others, but now they must constantly present a sense of their “proper” gender role via virtual platforms. This may well establish a constant pressure to offer portrayals of one’s identity that may be different from what it truly is. More specifically, athletes on social media are opting to exhibit a frontstage performance maintaining a more formal and idealized identity (Emmons and Mocarski, 2014). They rarely choose to showcase a backstage performance that is perhaps more genuine to who they are as an individual. Athletes might choose to do so in order to keep their lives as a celebrity separate from their personal lives, thus portraying differing identities. However, this constant depiction of oneself as other than what may actually be can blur the lines between one’s true identity and one’s idealized identity. This blurring of lines is ultimately perpetuating the acceptance of stereotypes, gender roles and societal expectations that have been set for men and women. While some men and women might be breaking free from some of the stereotypes previously set for them, male and female athletes are still struggling to this day, perhaps unknowingly, with many of the social expectations that surround them in face-to-face and especially digital settings.

#### Maintaining Feminine and Ritualistic Touch

Females are still choosing to present themselves in a way that shows them interacting with objects and others in a gentle or soft manner more so than do their male counterparts. This is consistent with the broader finding from Smith and Sanderson (2015) that male athletes are overall less likely to be touching something. The research discovered that females were almost always more likely to engage in causal touch of another person, object or themselves (Smith and Sanderson, 2015). In the present study, females still felt a need to display some degree of feminine touch in Instagram posts, certainly to a greater degree than did men. This basis displays evidence that there is still a societal issue going on. Perhaps female athletes need validation that they are still feminine to some degree. They could also be worried that society will reject them if they fail to post photos consistent with society’s expectations. Women are often unwilling to reject the status quo, especially in positions of high visibility. This is because society has often scorned women who go against expectations and enter lines of work, such as athletics, dominated by males (Geis et al, 1985). Though female athletes

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showcased a desire to post photos with tendencies for ritualistic touch, they still were not able to surpass the ritualistic touch proportions of men.

Males' self-representations also remain within the restrictions set by society. More specifically, society has taught men that they will often be rejected upon engaging in tender or gentle actions, which are typically deemed feminine. Therefore, men still choose to present themselves as strong, aggressive and firm individuals through ritualistic touch. Male athletes, to an even greater degree than men who are not athletes, could be held to greater expectations in maintenance of gender norms. The media is constantly populated with male sports and athlete interviews to a greater degree than those from female athletes. This notion of constant scrutiny of each male athlete's actions forces these athletes to act in a way that will allow them to maintain credibility in their field. In the case of sports, men are expected to maintain a competitive, aggressive and tough demeanor. Any faltering of this expected persona could gravely impact their career, perhaps even to a greater degree than females since male athletes are in the media spotlight more than women. Male presentation on Instagram provides another outlet in which these individuals must uphold expectations in order to be consistent across all platforms. It is no surprise that male athletes were found to showcase feminine touch less than they did ritualistic touch.

In addition, men also upheld ritualistic touch to a greater degree than did their female counterparts. Though female athletes had moderate rates of ritualistic touch that were higher than expected, this only forces men to elevate their presentation of ritualistic touch. Men feel the need to uphold their masculinity to any end over the possibility of being deemed less masculine, and therefore less credible than female athletes.

Interestingly, female athletes actually chose to post photos with higher degrees of ritualistic touch than those containing feminine touch. This notion represents a huge step forward for women as they work to break out of preexisting binaries. Female athletes in the study are not only great examples of strength, fortitude, passion as shown in their interactions with others and objects, but they display one of the few examples of a objectified group attempting to break out of the mold that society has come to expect from them. These results showcase the idea of women portraying themselves as athletes first and women second. Interestingly, many

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female athletes are trying to overcome this gender boundary, yet there still remain examples of subjects going in the opposite direction. Serena Williams, for example, showcased feminine touch with presences of sexualized body position and touch. Though Williams is the world's highest ranked female tennis players with numerous awards and wins, she still feels an inherent need to portray herself as an objectified woman of society. This notion makes it difficult to rationalize that women are truly breaking out of gender expectations as they still feel the need to default to media expectations.

However, perhaps these female athletes are not true representations of the larger female population. As athletes, females may already have a slightly different persona and mentality, as the competitive drive and the strength involved with the very nature of their profession could bias this group into exhibiting slightly higher percentages of ritualistic touch. During analysis, the category of feminine touch was often limited as photos that did not show the subjects' hands or arms were not viable points of examination.

#### Licensed Withdrawal

There were inconsistencies in the frequency of posts containing licensed withdrawal, both within the male pool and female pool of athletes. One potential reason is that many posts contained the athletes engaging in their sport; therefore, they were unaware of the camera taking their photo at the time. In other words, the shot was meant to be candid from its origin. However, these athletes still decided to post these photos, perhaps displaying a preference for posting photos that represent their identity as an athlete.

In examining photos containing licensed withdrawal as compared to those in which the athlete is in nonathletic clothes, men were found to overall have fewer posts with both of these categories displayed at the same time. Therefore, the majority of their posts with licensed withdrawal were actually action shots of them engaging in their sport, which is why they were not looking at the camera. For example, Jack Sock contained 19 photos with licensed withdrawal; however, only 2 of these photos (photo 7 and 13 in Appendix E) out of 19 containing this category also showed Sock dressed in nonathletic clothes. As a result, it can be speculated that Sock prefers to display his frontstage performance of himself as an athlete first and foremost over that of himself as a regular male. Clint Dempsey is also another example.

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Dempsey had two photos (photo 13 and 16 in Appendix E) of a possible 12 containing licensed withdrawal in which he was wearing nonathletic clothes. He, too, is also displaying himself more as an athlete than as a male in general. Though John Isner remains an outlier with his tie between photos with licensed withdrawal and nonathletic clothes, the remaining three male athletes, Kobe Bryant, Tim Howard and James Harden, also contained low to moderate scores of this relationship.

Interestingly, the majority of female athletes were seen engaging in licensed withdrawal while also wearing nonathletic clothes. This displays their preference to display their identity as a woman over their identity as an athlete. For example, Elena Delle Donne was seen wearing nonathletic clothes in every single one of her photos containing licensed withdrawal (photos 3, 5, 10, 14, 15, 17, and 18 in Appendix D). Similarly, Alex Morgan wore nonathletic clothes in 7 (photos 8, 10, 11, 18, 20, 24, and 25) of a possible 9 within the licensed withdrawal category. Morgan and Delle Donne's showcase themselves falling into their expected role as women, which in this case renders them bystanders, mentally removed from the situation, providing a sort of inferiority not associated with the men's photos. In other words, women are making themselves more vulnerable by not looking directly into the camera while also wearing nonathletic clothes. They feel forced to portray themselves as women first and athletes second. The remaining female athletes, Sloane Stephens, Tina Charles, Serena Williams, and Lynn Williams, received low to moderate ratings for this category.

In looking at the literature, other social media studies found that female athletes on Facebook were likely to look at the camera in profile pictures (Emmons and Mocarski, 2014), whereas mixed findings occurred in this study. Perhaps women decided to take on a more assertive persona looking into the camera in Facebook profile pictures since these tend to be the focal point of one's profile; Instagram posts, however, involve more frequent posting which allows viewers to look at several photos at once, creating a more holistic basis to form opinions. As a result, viewers of Instagram posts are able to form rapid opinions on the basis of several photos as opposed to only looking at one. In the Facebook study previously mentioned, Emmons and Mocarski (2014) discovered that men were found to look away from the camera in their profile pictures, despite Goffman's (1979) research that men were likely to be shown

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making direct eye contact. Another reason for these varying results among men and women could be because of the identification of branding preference in these photos. Emmons and MocarSKI (2014) identified that females might make eye contact in order to better engage their audience, while men prefer to be observed by fans. This rationale could also hold true for the present research study in explaining the split between engagement in licensed withdrawal for men and women.

#### Ritualization of Subordination

The present research study has shown that females are engaging in the female athlete paradox via ritualization of subordination; that is, they are putting their sexuality and timidity as females before their qualities as an athlete. This is quite apparent through the sub-categories of head tilt, nonathletic clothes, knee bend and smiling which were looked at in detail within the study.

#### Head Tilt

Females were found to tilt their heads downwards in photographs. While some may argue that this is due to a preference for their face's appearance at a certain angle, this display is actually part of a bigger issue. The tilting of one's head downward symbolizes inferiority and submission (Goffman, 1979). It makes others in the photograph, who are not tilting their heads, be viewed as superior and potentially more credible. Tilting one's head has become a common trend among social media posts; in fact, females in general have been found to tilt their heads in this manner more so than their male counterparts (Krumhuber, et al, 2007).

Krumhuber, Manstead and Kappas (2007) discovered that higher levels of attractiveness were attributed to subjects with a tilted rather than an upright head, and that overall, women were found to engage in this action more than men. Perhaps the female athletes in the study hold a greater awareness of how their Instagram posts will make them look in regards to attractiveness. On the contrary, male athletes in the study had lower rates of head tilting because they were not trying to be perceived as attractive; this was simply not the goal of their posts. Krumhuber, Manstead and Kappas (2007) also asserted that items like tilting one's head downward can act as a "subtle moderator" that shapes the meaning of the expression. In other words, tilting one's head downward is an act of conforming to the pressures of society



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that goes much further than a simple action of moving one's head around. Therefore, female athletes in the study, though they may not even be aware of it, engaged in this activity as a direct consequence of the pressure society puts on them to always be aware of their attractiveness.

In addition, individuals who tilt their heads in photos have been perceived as engaging in an act of submission (Mignault, A., and Chaudhuri, A., 2003). Therefore, female athletes tend to engage in this action as a compliance to the standards society has set for them. Though they are athletes with strong mentalities and a dominant personality by competitive nature, they still feel the need to comply with these standards. A raised head, however, has been found to signal dominance (Mignault, A., and Chaudhuri, A., 2003). Therefore, it can be determined that male athletes embrace this dominant mindset that is also expected of them by society as they do not frequently engage in head tilts. Both sexes have been found to stay within the binds society sets for them in regards to head tilting.

#### Nonathletic Clothes

Ritualization of subordination is also manifested in the types of clothing that individuals wear. In the case of the research study at hand, results were often split among male and female athletes regarding their display of nonathletic clothes, with a slightly higher score for women than men. Perhaps athletes are seen in nonathletic clothes in more than half of posts because they desire to have their own identity outside of the sport. This portrayal of themselves as someone other than an athlete could be a willingness to show audiences a backstage portrayal of their identity. Past studies have shown that athletes do in fact desire to let audiences know them on social media outlets as someone other than who they are on the field. In other words, they often desire to showcase a backstage performance of self (Lebel, 2013). These backstage representations allow audiences to see the athletes in a less filtered and more informal presentation of self (Emmons and Mocarski, 2014). Athletes who display themselves in this manner could also want to create relationships and connections with fans (Lebel, 2013). However, in general, research has shown that males spend a larger amount of time performing their role as athletes than do their female colleagues (Sanderson, 2014). This is consistent with the slightly higher percentage for females exhibiting nonathletic clothes.

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Despite the unclear trends in presence of nonathletic clothes among the male and female athletes, patterns do exist between the nonathletic clothes category and the other categories that were examined, namely ritualistic touch, feminine touch, and head tilt. For example, Serena Williams was more likely to ritualistically touch rather than feminine touch when she was seen in athletic clothing. However, when she was not in uniform, she embodied more of the qualities associated with females such as feminine touch, bending her knee, and tilting her head. Another example is Alex Morgan who tilted her head when in nonathletic clothes, but did not engage in this activity when wearing athletic clothes. Similarly, almost every one of Lynn Williams's pictures in the nonathletic clothes category contained multiple elements of the other categories feminine touch, licensed withdrawal, head tilt, knee bend, and smiling. Only one of these photos, photo 4 (see Appendix D), contained ritualistic touching while Williams's was wearing nonathletic clothes. So while she is portraying herself as an athlete when wearing athletic clothes, she displays herself as female as her primary identity when in nonathletic attire. There were much fewer of these trends among the male athletes, except for ties between smiling when wearing nonathletic clothes.

#### **Knee Bend**

Little research in the past has examined the relationship between bending one's leg at the knee in photos with perceptions of dominance and superiority. Future research should look into the propositions behind why subjects engage in this behavior and if there is a prevalence of this action among more men or women. Despite limited available research, Goffman's (1979) assertion that women often bend their knee in advertisement photos serves as the main basis of support in looking at this category in the present research study. Female athletes were found to bend their knees, thus making their stature smaller more so than male athletes in Instagram posts. In speculating about this result with a minimal amount of prior research to rest on, it can be inferred that women engage in this activity to make themselves inferior to men, especially when photographed with them. While most women did consistently engage in this behavior, some did not. Perhaps one of the best examples in the research study of countering the expectation for a knee bend is seen with Elena Delle Donne in photograph 6, depicted in figure 1 below.

## Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

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Delle Donne is depicted standing in between two male athletes assuming the same exact stance as them. All three athletes, including Delle Donne, have a smile on their face, hands on their hips, and straight legs assuming an upright position. In this example, Delle Donne serves as an example of a female breaking out of the expected mold society has for women.



In another example as in Figure 2 below, Sloane Stephens displayed a very similar photo (photo 18) to Delle Donne's, yet with different body positioning.



Standing in the middle of two male athletes just as Delle Donne did, Stephens is smiling widely while her male counterparts exhibit either no smile, or only a slight smile showing no teeth. In addition to this, Stephens is engaging in a knee bend making her stature smaller than that of the men's. Though she is an athlete, she feels the need to portray herself in this way especially because of the men on either side of her. Her identity as a woman in this example is more important than her identity as an athlete.

The difference between these two photographs brings into question the meaning behind what is portrayed. Women like Stephens could be displaying themselves in this way in order to accommodate the power of men that society has reinforced. In other words, women know their place as the subordinate figure to men. Though women are often physically smaller in general than men, they are still choosing to make themselves even smaller by lowering their height with a knee bend. Some might argue that engaging in a knee bend is simply a pose;

## **Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes**

### ***Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor***

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however, the fact that more women are seen engaging in this action does call into question the deeper meanings behind it. Is this knee bend simply a pose? – Or is it part of a deeper cultural issue? Future research should aim to solidify this notion. In addition to this, research in the future should focus on the differences in subject behavior when he or she is photographed alone, with members of the same sex, and with members of the opposite sex.

#### Smiling

Women were found to smile more than their male counterparts in Instagram posts, which is consistent with Goffman's (1979) assertions regarding this category. Past research has shown that societal expectations hold that women smile more than men, and that they should smile more than males (Krumhuber, et al, 2007). Krumhuber and his colleagues (2007) discovered that because of this expectation, women were seen as less truthful and informative as they are expected to smile across all situations. Yet men who smile are operating in an "out-of-role behavior" resulting in a wider range of inferences and perceptions of the male subject by viewers (Krumhuber, et al., 2007). Males in the present study may also not have engaged in smiling in order to assert their dominance and seriousness, similar to the findings within the knee bend category. Females on the other hand, smile more to increase perceptions of attractiveness and friendliness. While women must be conscious of their likability by maximizing all outlets that showcase qualities such as smiling, men do not need to worry about this as much. This is because their worth as individuals is often judged on much more than their looks and friendliness (Krumhuber, et al., 2007). This could be why female athletes still feel a need to smile in Instagram posts more so than male athletes do. They still feel a need to be liked according to the criteria society expects of them.

#### Conclusion

More research needs to be conducted in this area in order to further explore the appropriateness of Goffman's categories as in our new era of media self-presentation. Further, statistical analysis rather than a qualitative visual content analysis could give additional insight into the differences among male and female athletes in relation to these categories. However, findings in the present research study were consistent with much of the available related research. As asserted by Emmons and Mocariski (2014), both males and females are under considerable pressure to adhere to society's gender expectations which are constantly

**Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes**  
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perpetuated by the media, namely in advertising settings. Though athletes can view social media as a way to break out of expected binaries preset for them (Sanderson, 2014), this could be a more difficult feat than it seems. Advertisements are often found to project social cues in which viewers come to normalize and act out in everyday life. Consequently, these hyperritualized representations become integral parts of the frame in which gender norms in society are constructed in the first place (Baran and Davis, 2015).

Findings in the current research study are no different; despite their athletic achievements and elevated status, athletes are no more immune to gender stereotypes and norms than the rest of society. Female athletes are found to adhere to gender expectations on Instagram more so when they are not presenting themselves as athletes. Male athletes also remain in the boundaries culture has set for them as acted out in Instagram settings. Despite athletes' elevated status, public visibility and success, they still feel a need to remain within societal confines. This fact shows just how deeply rooted these social expectations are within everyday life as well as society at large. However, there is hope for a rebuttal to these standards in the near future and using social media outlets, such as Instagram to do so. Female athletes may have already begun this shift as they present ritualistic touch to a greater degree than feminine touch in photographs. The future of gender roles rests in the hands of those with social power and influence if society ever has a hope to change the rules of the game.

Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes  
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**APPENDICES**

Appendix A – (Results)

**Total Presence of Goffman Category**

Male	John Inner	Jack Sock	Clint Dempsey	Tim Howard	Kobe Bryant	James Harden	TOTALS	%Total
<b>Feminine Touch</b>	6	5	2	2	3	4	22	
Possible Photos	22	24	21	19	18	22	126	17.46%
<b>Ritualistic Touching</b>	10	17	7	9	8	11	62	
Possible Photos	22	24	21	19	18	22	126	49.21%
<b>Licensed W/drawel</b>	8	19	12	10	8	8	75	
Possible Photos	25	25	25	25	25	25	150	50.00%
<b>Head Tilt</b>	9	1	3	0	5	4	22	
Possible Photos	25	25	25	25	25	25	150	14.67%
<b>Nonathletic Clothes</b>	18	6	10	17	18	16	85	
Possible Photos	25	25	25	25	25	25	150	56.67%
<b>Knee Bend</b>	2	2	0	1	0	2	7	
Possible Photos	8	16	10	8	3	6	51	13.73%
<b>Smile</b>	15	7	10	16	19	6	73	
Possible Photos	25	25	20	24	24	19	137	53.28%

Female	Serena Williams	Sloane Stephens	Alex Morgan	Lynn Williams	Tina Charles	Elena Delle Donne	TOTALS	% Total
<b>Feminine Touch</b>	6	7	4	7	2	6	32	
Possible Photos	23	21	19	22	20	22	127	25.20%
<b>Ritualistic Touching</b>	8	7	6	8	7	7	43	
Possible Photos	23	21	19	22	20	22	127	33.86%
<b>Licensed W/drawel</b>	19	10	9	20	13	7	78	
Possible Photos	25	25	25	25	25	25	150	52.00%
<b>Head Tilt</b>	12	6	9	7	7	10	51	
Possible Photos	25	25	25	25	25	25	150	34.00%
<b>Nonathletic Clothes</b>	13	6	20	15	14	20	88	
Possible Photos	25	25	25	25	25	25	150	58.67%
<b>Knee Bend</b>	8	4	3	4	5	5	29	
Possible Photos	11	9	12	13	10	7	62	46.77%
<b>Smile</b>	5	21	21	18	20	20	105	
Possible Photos	21	25	25	24	25	24	144	72.92%

## Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

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#### Appendix B – (Female Athletes – Individual Results)

<b>Tina Charles - Basketball</b>				
	Photos Appeared in	Possible Photos	% of Photos appeared in	Photos # it Appeared in
Feminine Touch	2	20	10%	12, 18
Ritualistic Touching	7	20	35%	2, 8, 11, 13, 14, 15, 20, 21
Liscenced W/drawel	13	25	52%	1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 22
Head Tilt	7	25	28%	6, 8, 9, 11, 18, 20, 23
Nonathletic Clothes	14	25	56%	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 20, 21, 24, 25
Knee Bend	5	10	50%	3, 5, 11, 12, 24
Smile	20	25	80%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25
<b>Elena Delle Donne- Basketball</b>				
	Photos Appeared in	Possible Photos	% of Photos appeared in	Photos # it Appeared in
Feminine Touch	6	22	27%	2, 3, 10, 12, 18, 20
Ritualistic Touching	7	22	32%	4, 6, 7, 11, 14, 15, 21
Liscenced W/drawel	7	25	28%	3, 5, 10, 14, 15, 17, 18
Head Tilt	10	25	40%	1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 11, 16, 18, 25
Nonathletic Clothes	20	25	80%	2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 25
Knee Bend	5	7	71%	1, 4, 9, 19, 21
Smile	20	24	83%	1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25
<b>Alex Morgan - Soccer</b>				
	Photos Appeared in	Possible Photos	% of Photos appeared in	Photos # it Appeared in
Feminine Touch	4	19	21%	8, 11, 19, 20, 23
Ritualistic Touching	6	19	32%	1, 6, 16, 18, 20, 25
Liscenced W/drawel	9	25	36%	7, 8, 10, 11, 18, 20, 23, 24, 25
Head Tilt	9	25	36%	6, 8, 10, 12, 17, 19, 21, 22, 23
Nonathletic Clothes	20	25	80%	2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25
Knee Bend	3	12	25%	1, 8, 14
Smile	21	25	84%	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24
<b>Sloane Stephens - Tennis</b>				
	Photos Appeared in	Possible Photos	% of Photos appeared in	Photos # it Appeared in
Feminine Touch	7	21	33%	1, 5, 9, 12, 13, 15, 23
Ritualistic Touching	7	21	33%	2, 3, 6, 11, 16, 18, 25
Liscenced W/drawel	10	25	40%	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 15, 17, 23
Head Tilt	6	25	24%	1, 5, 7, 12, 19, 23
Nonathletic Clothes	6	25	24%	7, 8, 12, 13, 16, 23
Knee Bend	4	9	44%	9, 12, 13, 18
Smile	21	25	84%	1, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 24, 25
<b>Lynn Williams - Soccer</b>				
	Photos Appeared in	Possible Photos	% of Photos appeared in	Photos # it Appeared in
Feminine Touch	7	22	32%	2, 7, 8, 11, 12, 21, 23
Ritualistic Touching	8	22	36%	4, 5, 10, 13, 15, 17, 22, 25
Liscenced W/drawel	20	25	80%	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25
Head Tilt	7	25	28%	1, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12, 21
Nonathletic Clothes	15	25	60%	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 18, 21, 23
Knee Bend	4	13	31%	8, 11, 12, 21
Smile	18	24	75%	1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24
<b>Serena Williams - Tennis</b>				
	Photos Appeared in	Possible Photos	% of Photos appeared in	Photos # it Appeared in
If	6	23	26%	4, 9, 11, 16, 21, 22
Ritualistic Touching	8	23	35%	1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 12, 13, 24
Liscenced W/drawel	19	25	76%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 30, 23, 24
Head Tilt	12	25	48%	1, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 17, 18, 21, 22
Nonathletic Clothes	13	25	52%	4, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23
Knee Bend	8	11	73%	4, 5, 9, 10, 12, 16, 19, 22
Smile	5	21	24%	9, 10, 14, 19, 21

**Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes**  
**Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor**

**Appendix C – (Male Athletes – Individual Results)**

<b>Kobe Bryant - Basketball</b>				
	Photos Appeared in	Possible Photos	% of Photos appeared in	Photos # it Appeared in
Feminine Touch	3	18	17%	3, 21, 24
Ritualistic Touching	8	18	44%	4, 6, 11, 13, 16, 18, 23
Liscenced W/drawel	8	25	32%	10, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 23
Head Tilt	5	25	20%	2, 3, 4, 20, 21
Nonathletic Clothes	18	25	72%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 20, 24, 25
Knee Bend	0	3	0%	
Smile	19	24	79%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 21, 22, 23, 24
<b>Clint Dempsey - Soccer</b>				
	Photos Appeared in	Possible Photos	% of Photos appeared in	Photos # it Appeared in
Feminine Touch	2	21	10%	1, 6
Ritualistic Touching	7	21	33%	3, 4, 6, 9, 14, 15, 20
Liscenced W/drawel	12	25	48%	1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 11, 13, 16, 17, 20, 21, 25
Head Tilt	3	25	12%	13, 18, 20
Nonathletic Clothes	10	25	40%	3, 9, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 22, 23, 24
Knee Bend	0	10	0%	
Smile	10	20	50%	8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 19, 22, 23, 24
<b>James Harden - Basketball</b>				
	Photos Appeared in	Possible Photos	% of Photos appeared in	Photos # it Appeared in
Feminine Touch	4	22	18%	4, 5, 10, 11
Ritualistic Touching	11	22	50%	2, 6, 8, 9, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25
Liscenced W/drawel	18	25	72%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 22, 24, 25
Head Tilt	4	25	16%	5, 16, 17, 22
Nonathletic Clothes	16	25	64%	1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24
Knee Bend	2	6	33%	5, 20,
Smile	6	19	32%	1, 3, 4, 7, 9, 12
<b>Tim Howard - Soccer</b>				
	Photos Appeared in	Possible Photos	% of Photos appeared in	Photos # it Appeared in
Feminine Touch	2	19	11%	10, 19
Ritualistic Touching	9	19	47%	2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 12, 14, 16, 21
Liscenced W/drawel	10	25	40%	1, 4, 9, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 25
Head Tilt	0	25	0%	
Nonathletic Clothes	17	25	68%	3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24
Knee Bend	1	8	13%	3,
Smile	16	24	67%	1, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25
<b>John Isner - Tennis</b>				
	Photos Appeared in	Possible Photos	% of Photos appeared in	Photos # it Appeared in
Feminine Touch	6	22	27%	2, 4, 5, 10, 13, 19
Ritualistic Touching	10	22	45%	6, 7, 11, 12, 15, 17, 20, 22, 24, 25
Liscenced W/drawel	8	25	32%	4, 5, 6, 10, 18, 19, 20, 24
Head Tilt	9	25	36%	4, 5, 6, 10, 13, 16, 22, 24, 25
Nonathletic Clothes	18	25	72%	1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25
Knee Bend	2	8	25%	4, 16
Smile	15	25	60%	3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 22, 23, 25
<b>Jack Sock - Tennis</b>				
	Photos Appeared in	Possible Photos	% of Photos appeared in	Photos # it Appeared in
Feminine Touch	5	24	21%	7, 8, 12, 21, 25
Ritualistic Touching	17	24	71%	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24
Liscenced W/drawel	19	25	76%	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24
Head Tilt	1	25	4%	1,
Nonathletic Clothes	6	25	24%	1, 7, 8, 9, 13, 25
Knee Bend	2	16	13%	10, 13
Smile	7	25	28%	1, 2, 8, 9, 10, 12, 25



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

### Appendix D – (Female Athlete Instagram Posts)

Tina Charles

Photo 1

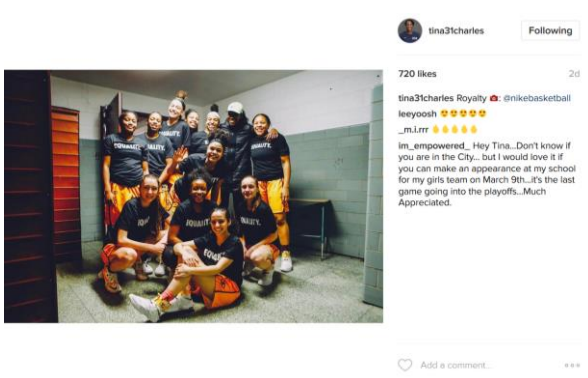


Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5



Photo 6



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 7



Photo 8



Photo 9



Photo 10



Photo 11



Photo 12



**Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes**  
**Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor**

**Photo 13**



**Photo 14**



**Photo 15**



**Photo 16**



**Photo 17**



**Photo 18**



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 19



Photo 20



Photo 21



Photo 22



Photo 23



Photo 24



**Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes**  
**Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor**

**Photo 25**



*Elena Delle Donne*

**Photo 1**



**Photo 2**



**Photo 3**



**Photo 4**



**Photo 5**



**Photo 6**



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 7



Photo 8



Photo 9



Photo 10



Photo 11



Photo 12

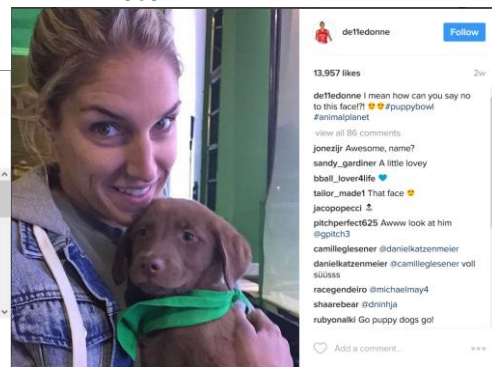


Photo 13



Photo 14



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 15



Photo 16



Photo 17



Photo 18



Photo 19



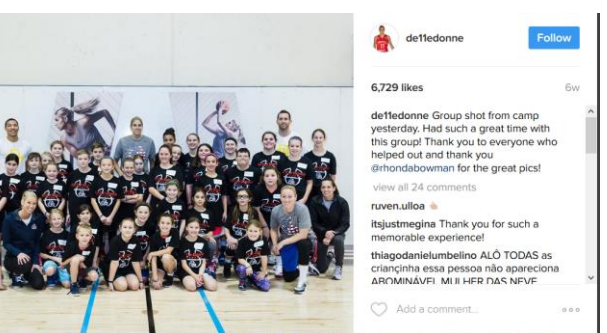
Photo 20



Photo 21



Photo 22



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 23

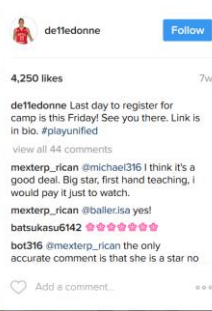
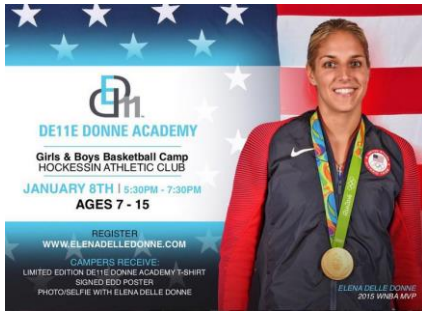


Photo 24

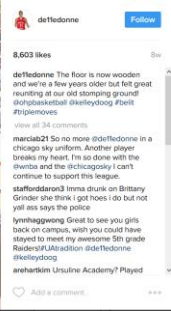
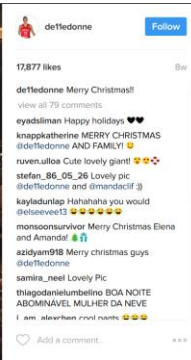


Photo 25



Alex Morgan

Photo 1



Photo 2





# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5



Photo 6



Photo 7

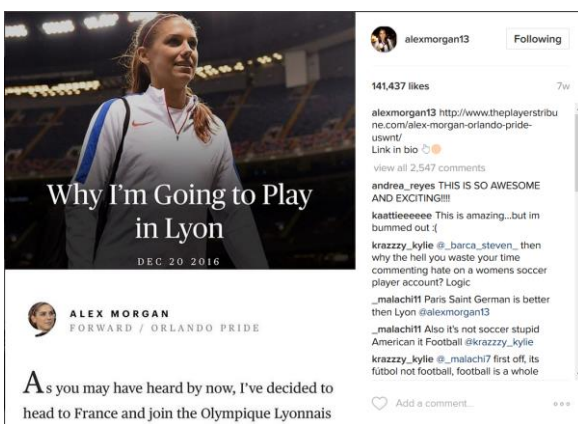


Photo 8



Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes  
 Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 9



Photo 10



Photo 11



Photo 12



Photo 13



Photo 14



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 15



Photo 16



Photo 17



Photo 18



Photo 19



Photo 20





**Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes**  
**Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor**

*Sloane Stephens*

**Photo 1**



**Photo 2**



**Photo 3**



**Photo 4**



**Photo 5**

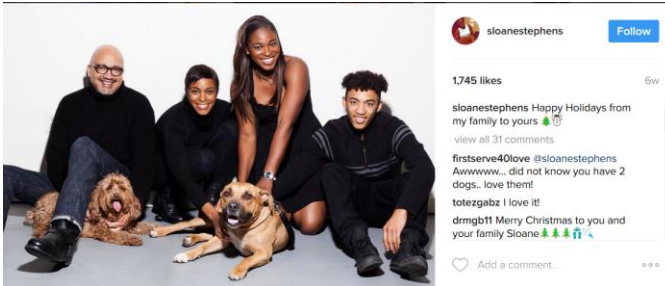


**Photo 6**



**Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes**  
**Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor**

**Photo 7**



**Photo 8**



**Photo 9**



**Photo 10**



**Photo 11**



**Photo 12**



**Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes**  
**Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor**

**Photo 13**



**Photo 14**



**Photo 15**



**Photo 16**



**Photo 17**



**Photo 18**



**Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes**  
**Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor**

**Photo 19**



**Photo 20**



**Photo 21**



**Photo 22**



**Photo 23**



**Photo 24**





**Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes**  
**Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor**

**Photo 25**



*Lynn Williams*

**Photo 1**



**Photo 2**



**Photo 3**



**Photo 4**



**Photo 5**



**Photo 6**

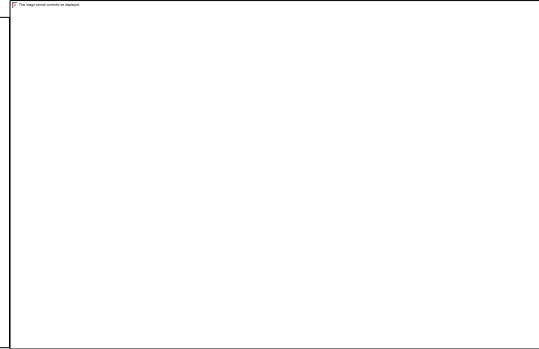


**Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes**  
**Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor**

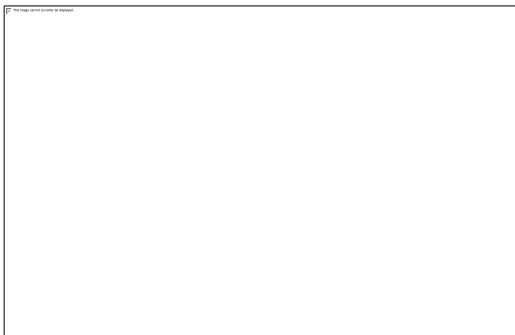
**Photo 7**



**Photo 8**



**Photo 9**



**Photo 10**



**Photo 11**



**Photo 12**



**Photo 13**



**Photo 14**



**Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes**  
**Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor**

**Photo 15**



**Photo 16**



**Photo 17**



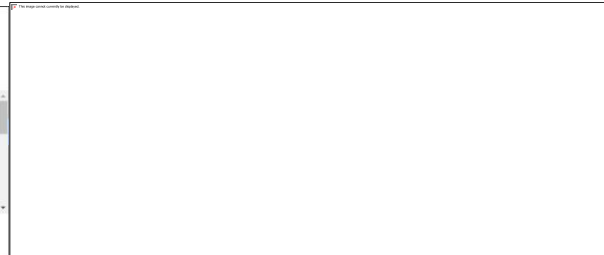
**Photo 18**



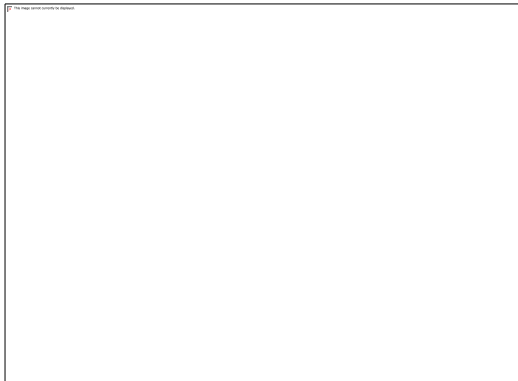
**Photo 19**



**Photo 20**



**Photo 21**



**Photo 22**



**Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes**  
**Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor**

**Photo 23**



**Photo 24**



**Photo 25**



*Serena Williams*

**Photo 1**



**Photo 2**



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 3



serenawilliams Following

88,279 likes

serenawilliams I spent the day at @Nike had a blast and some personal time with the one and only Mark Parker. What a day it has been already. 🙌🙌🙌 #greatestever #nike #nikecourt

ashidau2028 Hello butiful... 🥰

kimdracula77 @popsockets

Photo 4



serenawilliams Following

196,758 likes

serenawilliams

Photo 5



serenawilliams Following

175,022 likes

serenawilliams New year, new watch, same timeless brand! #audemarspiguette #millenary

Photo 6

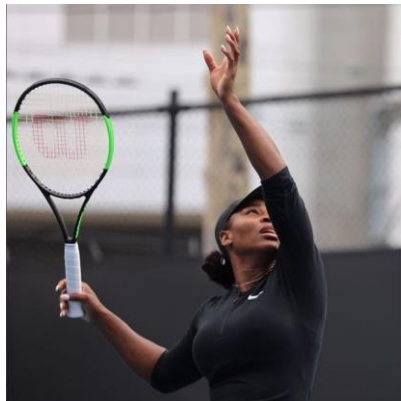


serenawilliams Following

61,217 likes

serenawilliams

Photo 7

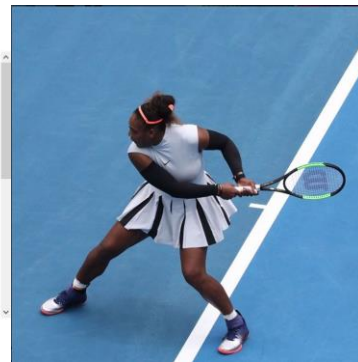


serenawilliams Following

89,071 likes

serenawilliams Incredibly excited to be playing the first Grand Slam of 2017 with my new Autograph Blade SW104! 🏆 Go pick one up today! @willsontennis

Photo 8



serenawilliams Following

102,721 likes

serenawilliams With my Wilson...ready for you Oz. @willsontennis @austaliansopen

Photo 9



serenawilliams Following

164,025 likes

serenawilliams Can't resist a strong shoe game #nike

dwilly6211 It's not about skin color but the crimes that they committed on us not just them but the Arabs in the Africans which was known as triangler trade Arabs had us in slavery before the Caucasian the African caught us from the west part of Africa were we was living because we left jureselum in 70ad fleeing from Roman execution in ran I west part of Africa because there was other dark races

dwilly6211 Zoner van bible dictionary HAM - THE YOUNGEST SON OF NOAH BORN ABOUT 96 YEARS BEFORE THE FLOOD AND ONE OF EIGHT PEOPLE TO LIVE AFTER THE FLOOD HE BECAME THE PROGENITOR / FOREFATHER OF ALL THE DARK RACES NOT THE

Photo 10



serenawilliams Following

136,749 likes

serenawilliams

serena\_hutson Answer lu my thing my name is Serena ooooouuu plz follow me 🥰 although I'm vex at this moment with a barber

ambur\_maurya so cute serena

adonistrinidad99 Sweet sexy powerful porteman2121 Lets play one on one??

**Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes**  
**Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor**

**Photo 11**



**Photo 12**



**Photo 13**



**Photo 14**



**Photo 15**



**Photo 16**



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 17

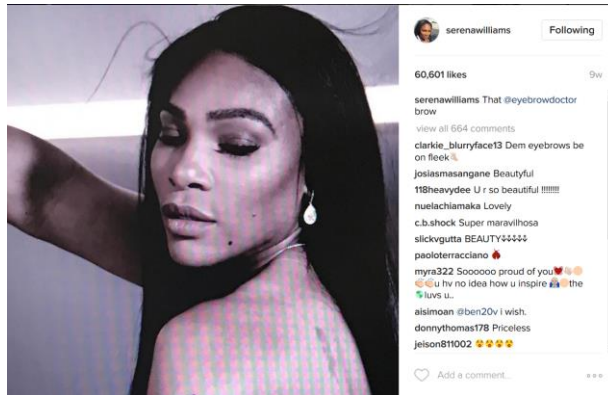


Photo 18



Photo 19



Photo 20



Photo 21



Photo 22



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 22



Photo 23



Photo 25





**Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes**  
**Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor**

**Appendix E – (Male Athlete Instagram Photographs)**

*Kobe Bryant*

**Photo 1**



**kobebryant** Follow

344,758 likes 2w

kobebryant Happy Valentine's Day to my gorgeous mamacita. Ti amo. #QueenMamba #deterlight

View all 2,981 comments

amirsh

coreygetbucketz Goat

kmdd1 Miss u mamba

giulio goes triathlon Like this! Go ahead

brfuel Very cool

dboyisballin24 Miss you goat!

Add a comment...

**Photo 2**



**kobebryant** Follow

274,971 likes 4w

kobebryant Loved being a part of this talented group of people at the @Ame Awards last night! @GlenKeanePD @slicemocha

View all 1,808 comments

librenmarie rice

kellywongkebal KellyWorksGlobal.com

cookclubdabing

33lv @gleen david's kobe look like black pony ans

anapier loving the beard pops

draywy17 Mamba. Much love man #DuoWay

thebubalays 100

arndalphen Cool Cool

gavinnew17 It's ye but Kobe

amirsh rice!

Add a comment...

**Photo 3**



**kobebryant** Follow

253,846 likes 13w

kobebryant Spread some Mamba cheer with this limited edition holiday sweater. Available for only a few days! Click link in bio.

View all 4,604 comments

barr.ann Goat

joaquinpopok ussususus

colenator 2.0 Love you Kobe and always will

sovietphotographer Please tell me you're going to coach the Lakers!

ikobebryant

andrewkobe824 KOBE ITS TIME

lakeview starter Return kobe

denghalai 科比好好

la cam My dog Kobe

lew leawer So much love for you hark to

Add a comment...

**Photo 4**



**kobebryant** Follow

414,897 likes 24w

kobebryant Alexander is battling Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy. Help keep him and other boys walking strong at <http://walkingstrong.org/>

View all 4,136 comments

sinfulsabrinnaa Wtffff why this

ibasketball jp

basketball jp @sinfulsabrinnaa THIS IS KOBE u gook

sinfulsabrinnaa Ik u slum @basketball jp

basketball jp @sinfulsabrinnaa this is the real 24

basketball jp @sinfulsabrinnaa if I'm a slum then im a slum lord

anebyler I chose you for my bio bottle

rakhezat Omegaag kobe bryant

icjy falthhhh

feraz 64 whets un kobe

Add a comment...

**Photo 5**



**kobebryant** Follow

367,508 likes 27w

kobebryant It was MY honor to play here for 20 years. Much respect, LA. #kobebryant

View all 4,465 comments

wymag Miss you"

deandee designer Best wishes for u (u are my idol!)

ari koraine Thanks for being a huge inspiration Going to miss you out there

bimozhiyan inc.

kbzjp Miss you

lmbatolgi

lamtheomarufu Will miss u mamba

yanshaohuoshan look nice.

wanganan0004 Congrats

wanganan0004 Congrats

a7585758

Add a comment...

**Photo 6**



**kobebryant** Follow

196,939 likes 28w

kobebryant @idrinkbodyarmor HQ with my founding partner Mike Resple. Amazing how much we have grown since 2015!

View all 8,575 comments

slm d10 @idrinkr is a far superior product @llemwag1 @lryfemardian

fyoyswag1 It looks like you have just landed all those bottle flips and are getting a Guinness world record picture

neva galaxy4 Kobe, any expansion to Texas??

godddeesss Baby daddy

dloodingd! What kind liquor is that

bryant wgm Kobe Bryant #NBAVOTE

mapemaker 23 kobe

carsonuff Please follow me

frnce @kobebryant COME BACK

Add a comment...

# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 7



Photo 8



Photo 9



Photo 10

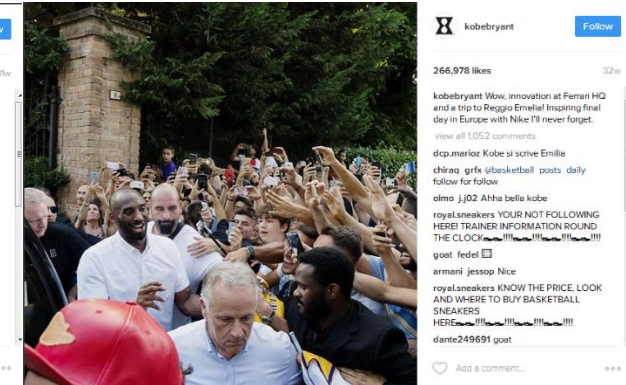


Photo 11



Photo 12



Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes  
Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 13



Photo 14



Photo 15



Photo 16



Photo 17

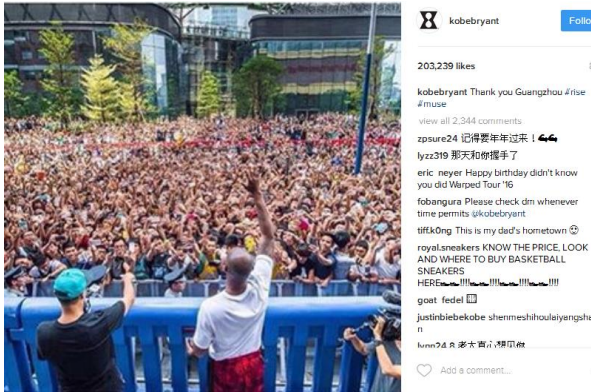


Photo 18



Photo 19

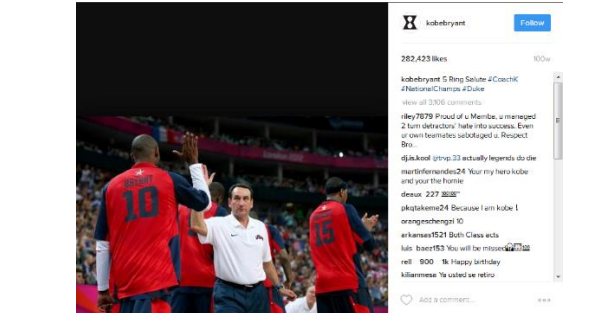


Photo 20



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 21



Photo 22

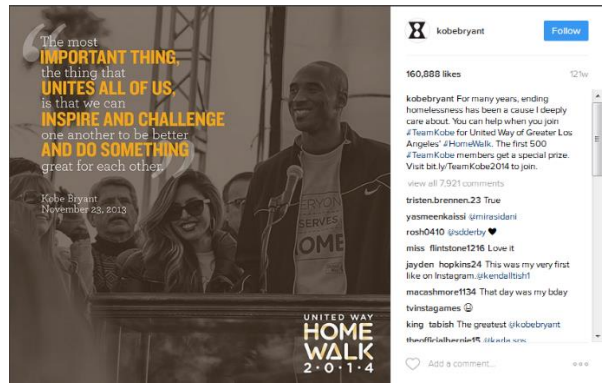


Photo 23



Photo 24



Photo 25



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

### Clint Dempsey

Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4

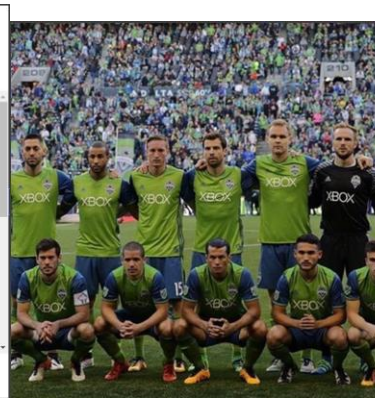
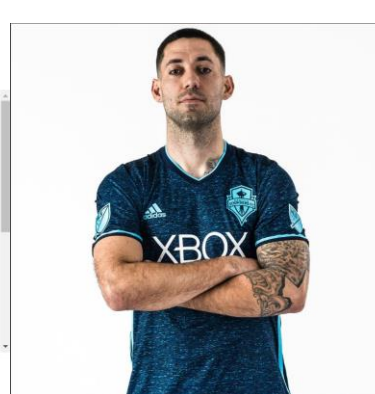


Photo 5



Photo 6



**Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes**  
**Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor**

**Photo 7**



**Photo 8**



**Photo 9**



**Photo 10**



**Photo 11**

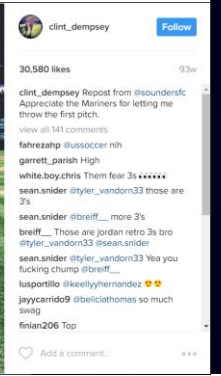


**Photo 12**

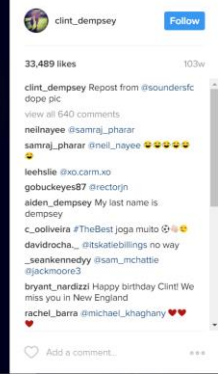


**Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes**  
**Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor**

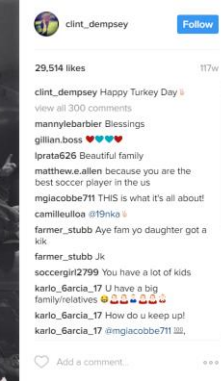
**Photo 13**



**Photo 14**



**Photo 15**



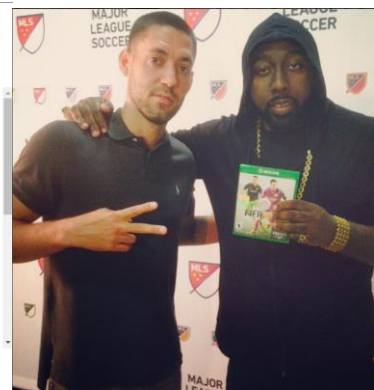
**Photo 16**



**Photo 17**



**Photo 18**



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 19



Photo 20



Photo 21



Photo 22



Photo 23



Photo 24



Photo 25





Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes  
Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

James Harden

Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5



Photo 6



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 7



Photo 8



Photo 9



Photo 10



Photo 11



Photo 12



Photo 13



Photo 14



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 15



Photo 16



Photo 17



Photo 18

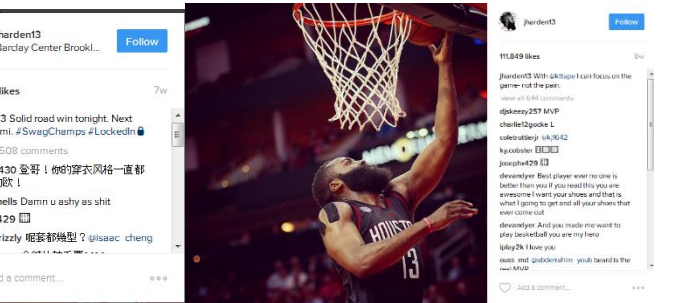


Photo 19



Photo 20



Photo 21



Photo 22



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 23



**jharden13** Follow  
101,168 likes  
jharden13 Anyone want them problems in #halo or #FFA7?? 🤔🤔🤔🤔 #Abosone. The whole squad ready!!  
view all 1,202 comments  
emreheleman NBAVote james harden enderprof? What is your petri? name? Xbow one  
jolek0219 What about 2k  
nilly2x Drop those kicks you got on lol telfon. tee tk-SomeSand? What's up @jharden13 I'm the best FFA player in the

Photo 24



**jharden13** Follow  
69,673 likes  
jharden13 #3TheHardenWay assisting one smile at a time. #AGTG  
view all 254 comments  
soria360  
fabnes barbie What the fuk wrig w u @jharden13 baby im busy moving  
fabnes barbie Go find yo girlfrd @jharden13 bee. I  
laronh mckean lames harden/ mark mill

Photo 25



**jharden13** Follow  
66,192 likes  
jharden13 Much respect to "The Dream" for setting the bar high. #Bachlor #AGTG #Achieve #Lokesh  
view all 537 comments  
abene1920 Love the wallpaper  
ferryyoung100 Best guard  
joshim31 #NBAVOTE James harden microphonegutta Nice  
microphonegutta #oklahoma  
alefession #NBAVOTE James Harden  
sterky235 Jim westbrook  
wadenallete #jshard13 making history my boy wend number one for a reason  
glenn4 #wadenallete Westbrook has that many triple doubles this season

Tim Howard

Photo 1



**timhow1** Follow  
12,623 likes  
timhow1 Thank you @iftuccon for a great few weeks @coloradorapids  
view all 32 comments  
clashjose63 Number 1 fan here jose josh coolest Good on ye tim! I'm still a fan and I've bought your book twice  
nanieeee That's my baby boy.  
marcio12 Our future soccer player!!!  
buebrahim75 Missing u in the pit  
Orking official Vemos Tim @iam 2prince  
nanieeee @marcio12 yes his Nino needs to get this pic. He is happy to see this I think  
J sloan 28 Missing you on the men's team  
syntheticvox @laureniteiraona Wait there's an @iftuccon????

Photo 2



**timhow1** Follow  
17,687 likes  
timhow1 us @coloradorapids us photo: @tobyphoto  
view all 69 comments  
khatti Use Usa  
Usassussussussussussuss  
ajc1979  
oliviawoodrich @us  
sadeq 1997 @timhow1 you love  
jvagin @michellejagin @beckah\_jay fut5ive  
czehcgagsport  
riccardo vape المسمى الكروي حاكم  
sebfotball05123 Boss  
jxxtobias  
lovefootballshirt Nice!, Follow me if you football shirt!  
kineticsociety

Photo 3



**timhow1** Follow  
11,609 likes  
timhow1 @thefrycompany #FRYElover #Modemcan  
view all 62 comments  
luke latty cool shot  
robblewhite04 Dapper  
marciociano @dipaool that u bro? Aha  
ameaney69 What a stud  
dipaool @marciociano haha wish I had that beard still!!  
kingloruh #Dadddddyyyyy  
jeymarlie #2017sTheBar  
niklav7 Look at Gu  
valvalvroom BABE  
barragall @vetniklavne  
steanf Lol @cartym michelle they had a baby!  
joel.beachwood Some of your content is

Photo 4



**timhow1** Follow  
16,411 likes  
timhow1 Pre-season Day 3 @coloradorapids #Nike  
view all 65 comments  
krishna - sharma Please send gloves for me in India  
asier dempsey #timhow1  
digital veterans firefan AWESOME POST!  
mansh01113 Your the best person in the world!! My room is like "YOU" legalfootball  
brennan devia Dude awesome  
asier dempsey Follow me please  
asier dempsey  
asier dempsey Please tim

# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 5



Photo 6



Photo 7



Photo 8



Photo 9



Photo 10



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 11



timhow1 [Follow](#)

8,813 likes 9w

timhow1 Keep your circle tight #LastOfTheReal

view all 56 comments

m. aquinn p Please PLEASE come to Atlanta United!!!

bangarengrufo1 Bocanegra

ptfbzsd Powerful 3 right there

sfyancy Hmu if you wanna watch @vevorton at the Brewhouse tomorrow

evalish Great pic

kJee 48 @carsidecakes

banjo blues Boca!!!!

theresa goodstockco 🍷❤️

6fo Steve & Tim 08902

brooklynaguirre 909 x NJ

reza99999 My love mr howard❤❤❤❤

♡ Add a comment...

Photo 12



timhow1 [Follow](#)

14,835 likes 10w

timhow1 🏀🏀 HOOPIN' 🏀🏀

view all 45 comments

jaimefana Loving the hat...

antoniofanes official Fungul a nonontan strc 🍷🍷#BeardsOnFire

aleckuzyk Cool

nickrimando @timhow1 your boys taller than me already!

jasoncarv15 @nickrimando @ sos grande Rimando!

marccritical Style king 🍷

collin davidson The barter 🍷🍷🍷

@nickrimando @timhow1 @isa.j.b

azain jato15 Bro you look so fresh skalmky Tim- dip em out with a pair of Kyries. My boy isn't allowed to dribble with the right hand!

♡ Add a comment...

Photo 13



timhow1 [Follow](#)

14,480 likes 11w

timhow1 Good luck trying to get a normal picture with this kid around 🤪🤪🤪🤪🤪🤪

view all 83 comments

justintime888 Lol, what, Maui? Have you even seen the movie?

kamren field @timhow1 is this Anna Maria Island Florida? I recognized the background bro 🤪

peggy702 So cute

william.d.angelo Om teletolet om

william.d.angelo Om teletolet om

william.d.angelo Om teletolet omb

william.d.angelo Om teletolet om

william.d.angelo #TeloletForIndonesia

william.d.angelo Om teletolet om

william.d.angelo Om teletolet om

♡ Add a comment...

Photo 14



timhow1 [Follow](#)

13,084 likes 11w

timhow1 On top of the world! Taking in rooftop views and unwinding with a @whiteclaw. All-natural hard seltzer with nothing artificial keeps your boy on his A game! #whiteclaw #ad

view all 66 comments

owenbennett12 @jghev

owenbennett12 @jghev @vashkian73

jaime25alessio @angel tremontin classy guy

tonir22 Eres el pto amo

lupituhh 🍷

grammyunicorn NYC?

luke macker 11 🍷 COVB

dragonoffthewagon Great photo! Cheers 🍷

juanrancejr @joserancelbravo

♡ Add a comment...

Photo 15



timhow1 [Follow](#)

14,460 likes 12w

timhow1 Let's Go Big Blue!! (She's rooting for the Cowgirls 🍷🍷)

view all 184 comments

t21d @fyyguy33

jbrelg1 @ig redwards still my hero despite being a giants fan

marisimandy I'm with her! 🍷🍷

clarkliethewolf I hate both teams

ebony tesselin soccer mom I read your book #thekeeper very good! My 13 year old daughter has TS, when she found out you also had it, she thought that was pretty cool! Thank you for being so truthful and letting our youth know you can do ANYTHING you want when your living with TS 🍷🍷

youngwolf k Wow

gymbunny 3 Crazy 🍷🍷

♡ Add a comment...

Photo 16



timhow1 [Follow](#)

19,557 likes 12w

timhow1 The Howard Crew kicking it with KD 🍷

view all 67 comments

ethan.coston13 L

beeta.es 🍷

jacobwayneadams @reidcourtney

ashe lenz @tand lenz

drevan @mattiasifter

reidcourtney @jcbadms no

djparkr2004 Right goalie - WRONG team! No pics with the Grizzlies????

onlycasillas Please follow for christmas

onlycasillas Please follow me for christmas

gatorgirl17 Wow! He makes you look small

justinpanell10 @lanecampbell4 @zmb429

♡ Add a comment...

# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 17



Photo 18



Photo 19



Photo 20



Photo 21



Photo 22



**Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes**  
**Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor**

**Photo 23**



**Photo 24**

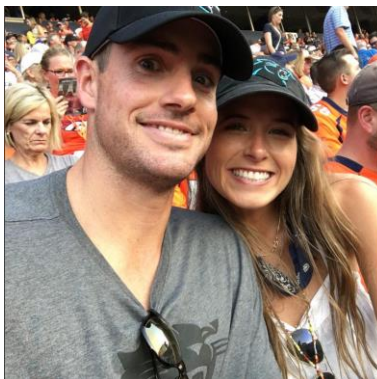


**Photo 25**

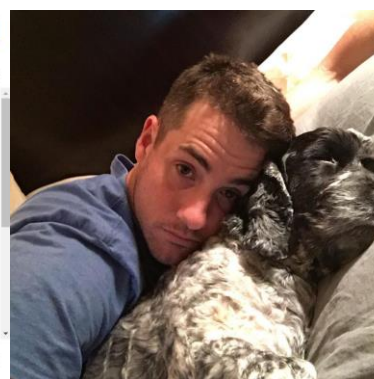


*John Isner*

**Photo 1**



**Photo 2**





# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5



Photo 6



Photo 7



Photo 8



Photo 9



Photo 10



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 11



Photo 12



Photo 13



Photo 14



Photo 15



Photo 16



**Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes**  
**Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor**

**Photo 17**



**Photo 18**



**Photo 19**



**Photo 20**



**Photo 21**



**Photo 22**



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

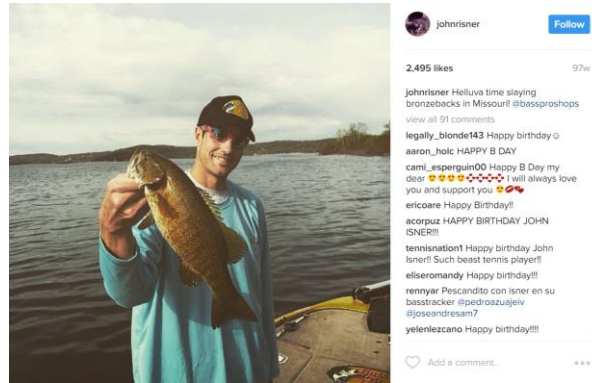
Photo 23



Photo 24



Photo 25



Jack Sock

Photo 1



Photo 2



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5



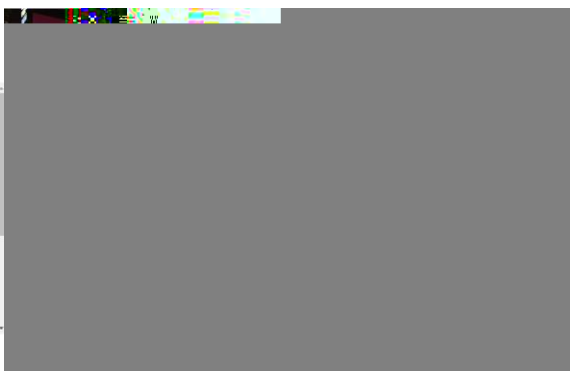
Photo 6



Photo 7



Photo 8



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 9



Photo 10



Photo 11



Photo 12



Photo 13

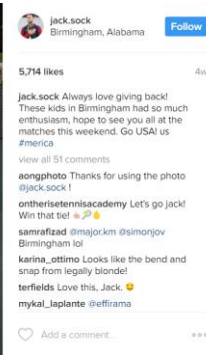


Photo 14

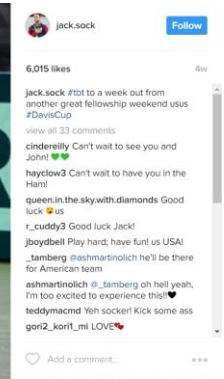


**Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes**  
**Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor**

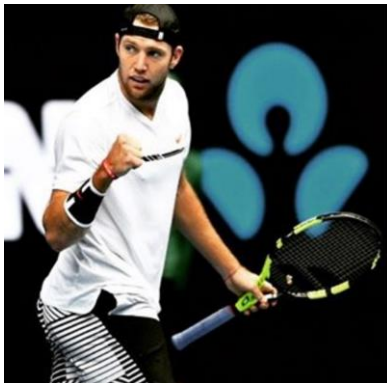
**Photo 15**



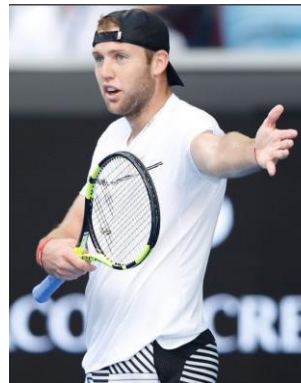
**Photo 16**



**Photo 17**



**Photo 18**



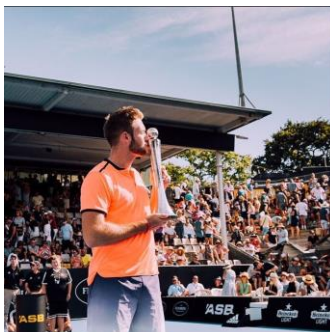
**Photo 19**



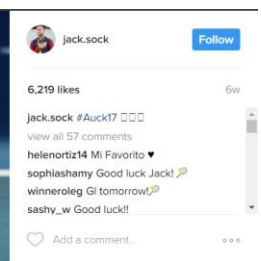
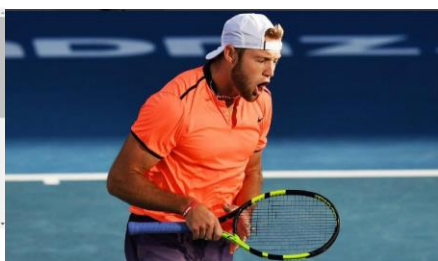
**Photo 20**



**Photo 21**



**Photo 22**



# Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes

## Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor

Photo 23



Photo 24



Photo 25





**Self-Presentation of Male and Female Athletes**  
***Senior Capstone Project for Kelsey Gainor***

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