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Gendered Self-Presentation on Social Media: A content analysis of Tweets from UNLV Men's and Women's Athletic Teams

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GENDERED SELF-PRESENTATION ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF TWEETS FROM

UNLV'S MEN'S AND WOMEN'S

ATHLETIC TEAMS

by

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Gendered Self-Presentation on Social Media:

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines how sports teams vary by means of self-presentation on a social media

platform in relation to gender and sport. Building on Erving Goffman's (1959) constructs of self-

presentation and operationalizing impression management strategies, this study content analyzed

seven UNLV teams' Tweets. The analysis spanned from August 2015 to October 2015. Every

Tweet posted, during these three months, from the seven different sporting teams was coded to

compare and contrast the men's teams accounts with the women's teams accounts, as well as one

account that combines the men's and women's team on one Twitter page. The study found that

the time of the season affects how teams present themselves. Moreover, the teams of the same

sport (i.e. men's and women's basketball) had similarities in the content of their Tweets,

including the media they included in each Tweet.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Although Twitter was created in 2006, sports teams at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), did not adopt it until 2009. The athletic department joined Twitter in March of 2009, but most teams did not make a personal page until 2011 or 2012, with the exception of baseball that also joined in 2009. During this period, the social media tool has evolved into an important medium for sharing information on various aspects of athletic programs and intercommunicating. Athletes now rely on Twitter, writes entertainment lawyer Jaia Thomas, "to share their thoughts, post pictures, make announcements and even relay inspirational messages to fans" (Thomas, 2011, p. 115). The sports teams at UNLV are using Twitter for these exact reasons. A majority of the teams' Twitter pages contain information about upcoming games or tournaments, the outcome of these games or tournaments, pictures/biographies of the athletes on the team, and Tweets to other athletic teams on campus.

This thesis implemented a content analysis of Tweets from seven different UNLV sporting teams to compare and contrast the men's and women's teams accounts, as well as one account that combines the men's and women's teams on one Twitter page. The analysis spanned from August to October 2015, coding every Tweet from these seven teams during the three months mentioned. Erving Goffman's Dramaturgy Theory was adopted in order to put into perspective the motives for teams self-presenting. Ten self-presentational frames, which were gleaned from previous research, were used to form the basis of analysis. The 10 frames fell into

1

two categories: front stage performances (broadcasting/being "on" for others) and backstage performances (letting down one's guard).

With the Tweets of four different sporting activities and seven different teams, variations according to gender and sport were analyzed. The study found that the time of the season affected how teams represent themselves. Moreover, the teams of the same sport (i.e. men's and women's basketball) had similarities in the content of their Tweets, such as the media they embedded. However, there were noted differences in the content and media featured across genders, with men and women generally having different approaches to their social media practices — differences theoretically attributable to gender stereotypes and agentic roles.

Background

Twitter is just one of many social networking sites (SNSs). As Hessey & Patmore noted in a 2011 study, social activities in contemporary society involve multi-dimensional activities. "Among the most common 'dimensions' are: sharing experiences via pictures and videos on a [SNSs], commenting on the news or politics via status message on Twitter, reporting on life via a Blog, or adding to the knowledge of the planet via Wikipedia" (Hessey & Patmore, 2011, p. 1). SNSs have become a dominant mode of communication. Because of the accessibility of SNSs, by computer or mobile devices, a large population has adopted them. From 2005 to 2013, users and developers saw a 64% increase in the number of people using social media (Tsikerdekis, 2014). The dramatic increase of users on social media, as well as the priority it has taken in people's lives, has caused a dramatic increase in research on the topic.

Multi-platform use has increased dramatically, 52% of online adults now use two or more social media sites (Duggan, Ellison, Lampe, Lenhart & Madden, 2015). SNS users generally

believe the sites complement each other rather than compete with one another. Facebook remains the dominant player in social networking, but in 2014, more Facebook users reported to also use Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest or LinkedIn (Duggan, Ellison, Lampe, Lenhart & Madden, 2015).

The social media phenomenon shifted the organization of online communities. While early public online communities were structured by topics, SNSs were structured with the individual at the center of their own community (boyd & Ellison, 2007). Social media users are free to communicate and follow the lives of whomever they chose, and because of enhanced communications technologies, participants now have the potential to know far more about the people around the world. "This 'openness' of communication is allowing people to express themselves in ways that were not possible in the past" (Hessey & Patmore, 2011, p. 1). People express themselves in a particular way in attempt to control the impression they make on others. One need not own a printing press or a broadcasting station to reach large audiences anymore; SNSs allow internet users to become content creators.

Twitter is a free social-networking and micro-blogging service (Thomas, 2011). Like most social-networking sites, Twitter encourages users to establish an online, interactive community. Of the participants surveyed, 36% of Twitter users visit their site daily, with 22% saying they go on Twitter several times a day (Duggan, Ellison, Lampe, Lenhart & Madden, 2015). Miraculously, in 2011, 100 million active Twitter users allegedly used the function worldwide, collectively producing 250 million Tweets per day (Parr, 2011). Reports show, 250 million Tweets per day doubled by 2013. More than 500 million Tweets are sent per day and an average of 5,700 Tweets per second (Krikorian, 2013).

Twitter is unique because of its simplicity. It is for short bursts of information. Twitter microblogs consists of 140-character posts or short messages, known as "Tweets." Microblogs

consist of distinctive online features relevant to journalistic norms that include the expression of opinions and the conveying of information from others and providing hyperlinks and other intelligence about the origination of information (Lasorsa, 2012, p. 402). Because Twitter is limited to 140 characters, users tend to direct their audience to other sites rather than focusing communication purely on the platform. "Twitter is the Usain Bolt of social media channels. 140 characters is the fastest way to spread the word" (Robinson, 2015). Over the years, various conventions have been used to maximize the utility of the 140-character limitation, such as URL shortening services, the @ sign for mentions and hashtags (#) for categorizing content (Williams, Chinn, & Suleiman, 2014). Users scroll through Twitter until something interests them and then click on the provided link for more information. Facebook on the other hand is the perfect channel for brand storytelling and long conversations because of its unlimited character updates.

Unlike other SNSs, Twitter is asymmetric. Before Twitter on social networks all relationships were bilateral, meaning there was a mutual agreement to be friends on the network. Asymmetric follow allows people to follow or be followed by any user without reciprocating. O'Reilly says asymmetric follow should at least be an option on any social network because it's the way the world really works. "We never find ourselves in clearly delineated friend-circles, where everyone has or wants complete visibility with everyone else, or none at all" (2009). When you follow another Twitter user, you are expressing interest in that other user and are opting-in to the content they post.

There is a downside to asymmetric following. It also works in reverse. Users can be perceived as making too much noise on Twitter by followers who do not follow many accounts. Depending on the impression users are trying to give off well decide whether or not they consider this while Tweeting.

Twitter is less about "real-life" friendships. Twitter networks allow people to build open and serendipitous relationships with new people. "This makes twitter a great platform to build influencer relationships.

As Twitter continues to grow, many business organizations have adopted Twitter accounts within their marketing strategies (Witkemper, Lim & Waldburger, 2012). While many industries have recognized benefits of Twitter and other social-networking sites, the sports world has definitely reaped the benefits. Scholars agree that the swift revolution social media have achieved in sports may be unrivaled in terms of impact compared with any other industry (Sanderson, 2011). The social-media technologies have transformed the way sports are both reported (Schultz & Sheffer, 2010) and consumed (Clavio & Kian, 2010; Kassing & Sanderson, 2010).

Twitter has significantly changed the way athletes and fans communicate. Athletes use Twitter to directly connect with fans instead of sharing their messages through mainstream-media outlets. Hambrick, Simmons, Greenhaigh, & Greenwell (2010) found that professional athletes tweet more interactivity Tweets than anything else and only 5% of all tweets coded were promotional.

It is evident that sports fans follow their favorite athletes and teams for the direct fan interaction. More recently researchers develop instruments to measure why consumers are motivated to view sports website content (Williams, Chinn, & Suleiman, 2014) and what motivates and satisfies Twitter followers of professional sport teams (Gibbs, Reilly, & Brunette, 2014).

Like athletes, sports organizations and teams use Twitter to connect with their fans worldwide. Twitter has been used to break news, share pictures, sell tickets, increase fan

engagement, and share live updates during games or events. Researchers continue to test the effectiveness of organizations on Twitter. Twitter provides numerous promotional opportunities for sports organizations. It also allows teams, organizations, and athletes to present themselves to fans and other followers in the desired form.

Theoretical Constructs

While research in the area of new media use and sports does exist, it is limited regarding the presentation strategies in the content produced by teams or athletes on Twitter. Twitter and SNSs are still considered new compared to other types of media such as radio, television, and newspapers. An optimal theoretical approach in studying the way individuals present themselves on Twitter can integrate a Goffman framework regarding self-presentation (Goffman, 1959). Users of SNSs have more control over their self-presentational behavior than in face-to-face communication, which provides an ideal setting for fixed impression management as described by Goffman. Goffman's (1959) Dramaturgy theory employed the metaphor of the theatrical performance. Just as an actor's or an actress's impression on an audience is very important, the impression SNSs users' make on their online audiences is very important. Previous researchers have used this approach to show how athletes manage their online personas just as actors manage their on- and off-stage personas.

Goffman studied at the University of Chicago. At the University of Chicago, philosopher George Herbert Mead (1863-1931) emphasized subjective meaning of human behavior, today known as symbolic interactionism. Herbert Blumer, who studied with Mead at the University of Chicago, coined the term. Mead is recognized for shaping the work of symbolic interactionists. Symbolic interactionism is a distinctively American sociological perspective with roots in the philosophy of pragmatism (Hewitt & Shulman, 2011, p. 6). Most important for this study, Mead

and his followers taught that individuals develop a sense of self through assessing the reactions that other people have to them (Hewitt & Shulman, 2011, p. 61). Mead's theory recognizes the sociability of human beings and puts the human experience of self on center stage (Hewitt & Shulman, 2011, p. 8). SNSs are also a center stage for self. Because symbolic interactionists advocate that people act with plans and purposes, the proposed thesis examines the plan and purposes of groups as they present their organization in a particular way on Twitter.

In *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Goffman analyzes how individuals and groups of people present themselves to others (Goffman, 1959). It should be noted, Goffman did not work with Mead or recognize the similarities in their work. Though, his work is placed alongside symbolic interactionism because it analyses how people convey a personal identity and definition of the situation by managing the impressions that they express to others (Hewitt & Shulman, 2011, p. 66). Self-presentation is defined as the effort to convey a particular image on others. People present themselves in a certain way generally seeking favorable impressions. Self-presentation changes when one moves from dealing with strangers to dealing with friends. SNSs have created a very different way to self-present. There is no chance to change self-presentations with strangers and friends. Through Goffman's performance of self, previous studies have found that people self-present themselves on Twitter for social acceptance (Farquhar, 2012; Kuo, Tseng, Tseng & Lin, 2013). A few theoretical explanations have been advanced to explain the causes and effects of self-presentation, but Goffman's theory of self-presentation remains one of the prominent explanations of the cause.

Goffman described a front becoming a "collective representation." A collective representation is different routines employing the same front. "A given social front tends to become institutionalized in terms of the abstract stereotyped expectations to which it gives rise,

and tends to take on a meaning and stability apart from the specific tasks which happen at the time to be performed in its name" (Goffman, 1959, p. 27). Goffman says if an individual takes on a new front, although it is new to the individual, society probably has several well-established fronts from which to choose. Whether athletic teams of different genders from UNLV take on already established fronts on Twitter will be determined by analyzing Tweets sent from their Twitter pages.

People naturally have a preferred manner in which they seek to present themselves to the world. When using SNSs, people have more control over their self-presentational behavior than in face-to-face communication. Researchers insist that control provides an ideal setting for precise impression management as described by Goffman. It is believed Twitter self-presentation is premeditated so users' appear a certain way to followers. This proposed thesis analyzed sports teams' self-presentation on Twitter. By creating Twitter accounts, teams have the opportunity to display whichever aspects of their program they wish in order to present themselves a certain way to their audience. UNLV teams were compared based on gender and sport. The UNLV men and women's basketball teams, men and women's soccer teams, men and women's golf teams, and co-ed swimming and diving team were all analyzed by coding the Tweets they published from August to October.

<center>Thematic Statement</center>

"On stage, an actor manages what the audience sees through the performance of a specific scene. Behind the curtain, among friends, the actor is able to take respite from his or her formal presentation. Goffman suggested that it is in the backstage were real, behind-the-scenes living is experienced and personality is revealed" (Papacharissi, 2002). This study explored the

idea that teams would predominantly present themselves in one of two ways via Twitter: either with front stage performances (more formal in nature) or with backstage performances (less measured and more intimate). Seven team Twitter accounts were studied to find whether gender stereotypes play a role in the way teams present themselves. Lebel & Danylchuk (2012) found that athlete image construction was found to be largely similar between genders whereas both males and females Tweeted more backstage Tweets than front stage Tweets. But male athletes were found to spend more time in the role of the super fan (backstage performance) than female athletes and female athletes Tweeted significantly more as the brand manager (front stage performance) than male athletes. The seven UNLV teams include: men's and women's basketball; men's and women's soccer; men's and women's golf; and men's and women's swimming and diving combined on one account.

The study looked for patterns — occurrence, interaction, and use of multi-media — in the content of aggregated Tweets to compare their tactics to present their team as agentic. The coders helped test the frames for analysis of Tweets between August and October 2015. The fall semester begins in August, making this a prime time for teams to begin interacting with fans via social media. It's important for college athletic teams to receive support from the students at their University, as well as people in their city. The study revealed the teams used very different tactics in trying to gain followers and support for their upcoming season. The analysis ended at the end of October to allow time to develop findings.

This study used a similar coding protocol as Lebel & Danylchuk (2012) and Weathers, Sanderson, Matthey, Grevious, Warren & Tehan (2014). These researchers analyzed Tweets prior to their experiment to discover themes based off their samples and translated them into broader self-presentational frames. This study adopts the standard 10 self-presentation frames

constructed by Lebel & Danylchuk and Weathers etc. Lebel & Danylchuk combined Goffman's dramaturgy theory and Goffman's frame analysis theory (1974) to rationalize their frames. "It has also been argued that these frameworks are not merely a matter of mind but correspond in some sense to that way in which an aspect of the activity itself is organized — especially activity directly involving social agents" (Goffman, 1974, p. 247). Because the activity of athletes tweeting is well established by now, their study found six backstage frames and four front stage frames use. The backstage frames include the conversationalist, the sports insider, the behind-the-scenes reporter, the super fan, the informer, and the analyst. The front-stage frames included the fan aficionado, the publicist, the superintendent, and then brand manager (Lebel & Danylchuk). Weathers etc. (2014) also constructed 10 self-presentation frames, six backstage and four front stages. Since their study analyzed broadcasters instead of athletes the frames differed slightly. The six backstage included the stylist, the conversationalist, the sports insider, the behind the TV persona, the super fan and the source. The front stage frames included the analyst, the publicist, the acknowledger, and the image manager. It is important to understand, backstage performance is the interactions and performances of an individual preparing for front stage performances. A common misconception is that backstage is when others cannot see you. Goffman labels "front" performances as the "part of the individual's performance which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who observe the performance" (1959, p. 22).

Unique to this study, compared to the prior research mentioned, is the word team. In *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Goffman addresses team, "I will use the term "performance team" or, in short, "team" to refer to any set of individuals who co-operate in staging a single routine" (1959, p. 79). This is especially true through SNSs. By using one

account to represent any set of individuals, it is implied all members are co-operating in staging a single routine. One or two individuals are responsible for presenting each team a certain way via Twitter. This makes it appear all members perform and interact in this way. When an individual joins a sports team, they are giving consent to be presented as one with the other members.

Significance of the Study

The growth of Twitter has been noticed in the sport industry, as it is becoming commonplace to hear about athletes who "tweet" or to read an article where the story broke from someone's Twitter account. (Witkemper, Lim, & Waldburger, 2012). Professional athletes dominate as the subject in research that explores athletes' Twitter use and motivations. It is very common for scholars to compare gender self-presentation strategies between professional athletes on Twitter (Lebel & Danylchuk, 2012; Lebel & Danylchuk, 2014; Coche, 2014). Weathers, etc. (2012) looked at the way sports broadcasters presented themselves on Twitter. Other sports communication research on Twitter focused on the production of sport texts (e.g., Sheffer & Schultz, 2010), the content of sports texts (e.g. Browning & Sanderson, 2012; Pegoraro & Jinnah, 2012), and the audience consuming sports texts (e.g., Frederick, Lim, Clavio & Walsh, 2012). Still after a thorough review of available studies, searched through online and library resources, no research has examined the way teams present themselves to their fans via Twitter, until now. "The future of Twitter research in sport communication lies in the ongoing research process we have started, thorough empirical observation that is insightfully blended with equally comprehensive theoretical analysis" (Pegoraro, 2014). While all the previous research proved that gender plays a role on self-presentation tactics in individuals, little to no research has been done to explore if this is true with teams. This thesis contributes to scholarship

on an innovative level by exploring if teams self-present themselves in a specific way based off gender.

According to Goffman, "a set of individuals who might be dissimilar in important respects, and hence desirous of maintaining social distance from one another, find they are in a relation of enforced familiarity characteristics of teammates engages in staging a show" (1957, p. 84). Entire teams are represented through one account on Twitter to engage in staging a show, yet no research has been done to evaluate how these teams are presenting themselves and communicating with fans. "Researchers have called for an examination of the Twitter-based relationship between sports organizations and fans (Hambrick et al., 2010) and investigation into the followers of different Twitter feeds to understand the dimensions of Twitter use (Clavio & Kian, 2010). Gibbs, Reilly, & Brunette (2014) answered this call by finding four primary gratifications sought by Twitter users: interaction, promotion, live game updates, and news. But whether or not sports organizations and team are utilizing these gratifications sought by Twitter users is unknown. This study adds to the previous literature by identifying whether or not college sports teams use interaction, promotion, live game updates, and news to connect with their followers. It also explores if male and female teams use more or less of specific gratifications.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Literature pertinent to this research is tied to Goffman's theory of self-presentation. Researchers will often use gender to explain why Twitter users present themselves in a certain manner. There will be a few studies about gender added into this section although they may not use Goffman's theory. This will lead to articles that looked at the self-presentation tactics of athletes. A majority of previous studies focused on professional athletes.

With the rapid and widespread growth in the use of Twitter by professional athletes, sports clubs, leagues, and fans, the literature to follow will fully examine the interaction, motives and trends between each. Pegoraro (2014) proposed the three categories of research agendas in sport communication study adopted from Wenner (1989) should also stem as the foundation for sport communication Twitter research.

The three categories will be discussed in this chapter: production of sport texts (Burch, 2012; Frederick, Lim, Clavio, Pedersen & Burch, 2012), content of sport texts (Browning & Sanderson, 2012; Pegoraro, 2010), and the audience consuming sport texts (Frederick, Lim, Clavio, & Walsh, 2012; Marwick & boyd, 2010).

Research is expanding in the interest of the audience. Marwick & boyd (2010) investigate how content producers navigate "imagined audiences" on Twitter. Hambrick, Simmons, Greenhaigh & Greenwell (2010), following Seo & Green (2008) and Calvio (2008), used six categories to measure the interaction of professional athletes with audiences. These categories are interactivity, diversion, information sharing, content, fanship, and promotional. The

interaction of teams to their audiences is unknown due to the lack of research in this area. This study helps scholars know the content displayed by collegiate athletic teams and leads to finding effective ways to present teams and organizations to help gain and keep fans of sports teams.

To understand Goffman's theory of self-presentation in-depth, self-presentation and Twitter non-athletes or non-professional athletes is addressed (Marwick & boyd, 2010; Papacharissi, 2012; Weathers et al., 2014). Due to the prominent number of studies, professional athletes' self-presentation and Twitter will be thoroughly analyzed (Lebel & Danylchuk, 2012; Lebel & Danylchuk, 2014; Kassing & Sanderson, 2010; Hambrick, Simmons, Greenhaigh & Greenwell, 2010; Colapinto & Benecchi, 2014).

Studies on this topic can be placed into categories.

- Gender differences in content (Lebel & Danylchuk, 2012).

- Gender differences in profile pictures (Lebel & Danylchuk, 2014; Coche, 2014).

- How professional athletes use Twitter to communicate with fans (Hambrick, Simmons, Greenhaigh & Greenwell, 2010; Frederick, Lim, Clavio, Pedersen & Burch, 2012; Kessing & Sanderson, 2010).

- How professional athletes use Twitter to enhance their personal brands (Pegoraro & Jinnah, 2012; Colapinto & Benecchi, 2014).

Unlike the previous literature mentioned, this study analyzed the self-presentation of college sports teams.

To broaden the knowledge of self-presentation on Twitter, it is important to compare the previous studies on professional athletes with studies that focused on the self-presentation of other Twitter users.

<u>Self-Presentation</u>

Professional athletes are not the only celebrities on Twitter analyzed by scholars. The interaction between celebrities and other Twitter users via Twitter has been explored through a few angles. Marwick & boyd (2011) explore how famous people "performed celebrity on Twitter" by drawing from Goffman's dramaturgical metaphors. (p. 143). Through an analysis of tweets from 237 highly followed Twitter users, they signify to readers that celebrities practice presenting a seemingly authentic, intimate image of self while meeting expectations and maintaining important relationships. The researchers read the most recent 2-3 months of Tweets from the users, note each content type or use, and aggregated types across users. Of the sample, 42% of the Tweets are replies. This indicates even celebrities are using Twitter to communicate and not just promote. "Famous people mention fans to perform connection and availability, give back to loyal followers, and manage their popularity" (p. 145). Marwick and boyd looked at what techniques 'traditional' celebrities adopted to present an authentic, intimate image while maintaining important relationships. They refer to one formerly characterized technique as 'micro-celebrity.' Micro-celebrity refers to a style of behavior both online and off, that involves an increase in 'self-branding' and strategic self-presentation. "On Twitter, performative intimacy is practiced by posting personal pictures and videos, addressing rumors, and sharing personal information" (p. 148).

This literature provides a lot of useful information such as the point, "Twitter does to some extent bring famous people and fans "closer" together, but it does not equalize their status" (p. 156). Backstage and front stage performances are simply identified. Celebrity practitioners' public acknowledgement of friends, peers, and colleagues is rarely critical, primarily adhering to front stage norms of public appearance. Backstage is the proposed appeal of direct access and

insider information. This is important for the current study in determining whether or not teams utilize it when presenting themselves to their audience. Marwick & boyd also propose that Twitter creates a new expectation of intimacy because celebrities "must expend emotional labor maintaining a network of affective ties with their followers." Sports teams have fans just like celebrities; therefore, this expectation of intimacy also applies to them. The results of this thesis will show whether or not the men and women teams uphold this expectation and if one gender upholds it more than the other.

Gender and Twitter

       Gender and language is a relationship that has been studied way before social media sites. The linguistic style of males and females on Twitter has also become relatively popular. Studies on the differences between male and female journalists (Lasorsa, 2012), broadcasters (Weathers, Sanderson, Matthey, Grevious, Warren & Tehan, 2012), and professional tennis players (Lebel & Danylchuk, 2012), have been done but no research has been done on male and female sports teams.

       "It was found that new media only reflected the sexist hierarchies found in traditional media: women were no more likely to be in the position of the highest-level editors of online publications than they were in the traditional media" (Lasorsa, 2012, p. 404). In the article, *Transparency and Other Journalistic Norms on Twitter*, Lasorsa (2012) analyzed how journalists use Twitter and how that use differs based off one's gender. Through a content analysis of 22,248 Tweets, Lasorsa found that male and female journalists did not vary significantly in their Twitter presence, topics, or the extent to which they engaged in expressing opinions. Using one of the most prominent sites for aggregating the Tweets of professional journalists, Muck Rack,

the researcher took a listing of 500 journalists from around the world with the most followers. Ten Tweets per day, per journalist, for two weeks were collected and coded. They were coded into one of the following categories commonly use to analyze news content: (1) politics and government; (2) technology and science; (3) economy and business; (4) entertainment and celebrities; (5) sports; (6) nature and environment; (7) social welfare; (8) Tweets that deal only with a journalist's personal life; and (9) Tweets that deals with some other unspecified topic (p. 407). The findings of this study indicate that female and male journalists differed little in the topics about which they tweeted, with two notable exceptions. Male journalists tweeted more about sports than female journalists. Also, Tweets about personal life were significantly more likely to have been posted by a female journalist.

This study indicates the results are consistent with prior research on mass media like blogs and microblogs about gender differences but opens up future research due to an important finding. "The few studies which have been conducted so far indicate that journalists mostly have 'normalized' these new media, that is, rather than adopt characteristics of new media that contest existing norms and practices journalists instead tend to adapt new media to these professional standards" (p. 412). Therefore when exploring new studies it can be assumed slight differences will be found due to gender but whether or not it is significant remains the most important question. The most interesting finding of the study was the significant difference in transparency. This noteworthy discovery opens doors for future research in this area. Female journalists provided significantly more openness and accountability in their Tweets than did their male counterparts (Lasorsa, 2012). This is so important because research suggest that transparency is emerging as a critical distinguishing feature of news media in the online environment.

In a recent study (2014), researchers Weathers, Sanderson, Matthey, Grevious, Warren, & Tehan set out to compare the Tweets of two professional sports broadcaster's — one female and one male —during the 2012-1013 football season, using Goffman's theory of self-presentation. The findings from this gendered analysis of professional sports broadcasters' self-presentation indicate Twitter puts societal expectations on sports journalists due to traditional boundaries in sports media. The study employed a content analysis, examining a total of 2,349 Tweets: every Tweet from the broadcasters from August 29, 2012 through January 30, 2013. Based on the statement, sports broadcasters can use Twitter as a platform to augment what viewers see during telecasts and facilitate connections with sports fans and other sports-media consumers, ten self-presentation strategy frames were created. Six of the frames are considered backstage strategy frames and four of the frames are front stage strategy frames. The six backstage frames include: the stylist, the conversationalist, the sports insider, the behind the TV persona, the super fan, and the source. The four front stage frames include: the analyst, the publicist, the acknowledger, and the image manager.

Results from the study reveal the female broadcaster's Tweets predominantly fall in backstage performance frames while the male's Tweets fall in the front stage frames. The backstage frames are related to promoting and the front stage frames are strictly about sports. This finding is consistent with Lasorsa's observations on journalists. The female journalist provides more openness than the male journalist. The female broadcaster promotes fashion sense and engages non-sport-related celebrities, while offering little in the way of sports insight and opinion. The male broadcaster focuses on game-related information and connecting with sports-related people, but offers very little about his personal life, popular culture or entertainment.

<u>Self-Presentation and Professional Athletes</u>

"Technology has shaped athletic culture to such an extent that digital technology has both strengthened traditional media–sport relationships and underpinned the rise of the Internet and social media as strategic communication platforms (Colapinto & Benecchi, 2014, p. 220). Colapinto & Benecchi (2014) used Goffman's dramaturgical model to discuss how a public persona's profile on social networking sites operates with special regard to the field of 'impressions management.' They link a scandal to the disruptions of the representation of self-portrayed by sports celebrities on Twitter. Evan Lysacek, an Olympic figure skater, is used for the qualitative content analysis. The researchers chose Lysacek because "from an economic and social point of view adopts something of a double role, being both the face of the country and that of a company (sponsorship)" (p. 220). The analysis included the official Facebook, Twitter, and website pages of Lysacek and his rival, Johnny Weir. All information during August 2010 is analyzed, coded, and identified into themes.

Consistent with the current research, Goffman is relevant. The authors note that Goffman maintains people perform different fronts; "self" is in some way fragmented into many different selves depending on the setting. When people interact through social networks, the same self is presented to a large number of people (even strangers) at the same time. Appropriately, Colapinto & Benecchi use Goffman's separation of disruptions: unintentional gestures, inopportune intrusions, and faux pas (p. 225). They classify their case study as "an unintentional disruptions, which consists of a series of faux pas" (p. 225). Lysacek replied to a fans Tweet, presenting his rival in a negative way. This "faux pas" was left on Twitter for 12 hours. A failed crisis management was engaged resulting in criticism of the Olympic skater. Results show that new technologies increase the opportunity for both the scandal subject and scandal audience to

receive information and present information and that "social media is both an explosive opportunity and disruptive change to the fundamental parameters of crisis management" (p. 321).

While crisis management is not included in the current study, it is important to remember all Tweets presented can be edited or deleted while doing a content analysis. Sports teams and organizations can be involved in a situation where immediate action must be taken. This also reinforces the importance of presenting teams in a desirable way so scrutiny does not occur. It is important teams know which form of self-presentation best suites them with their fans.

Lebel & Danylchuk (2012) do a gendered analysis on professional tennis players' self-presentation on Twitter. Due to Goffman's dramaturgical analogies and the online adaptation of the presentation-of-self theory, a coding protocol was developed specifically for this study. The researchers critically analyze and review tweets for emergent themes and then transform the themes into broader self-presentational frames, which later influence the work of Weathers et al (2014). Lebel & Danylchuk adopt six backstage performance frames and four front stage performance frames. The backstage performance frames include; the conversationalist, the sport insider, the behind-the-scenes reporter, the super fan, the informer, and the analyst. The front stage performance frames included; the publicist, the superintendent, the fan aficionado, and the brand manager.

The results entail both male and female athletes use backstage performance more often than front stage: female athletes at 76% and male athletes at 77%. The backstage performance frames are more intimate perspectives likely not appear in mainstream media.

The conversationalist frame is defined as the interaction with fellow athletes, celebrities, family members and personal friends. According to the results, 31.4% of all female Tweets and 27.8% of all male Tweets fell under this frame, making it the most frequently used frame by

professional tennis players. Both male and female athletes use the sport insider as their second most frequent frame, with 21.3% of all female Tweets and 24.6% of all male Tweets. This frame is defined as personal behind-the-scenes tennis info: travel, practices, matches, and general insight into tennis.

Marwick & boyd (2011) recognized that Twitter creates a new expectation of intimacy while maintaining important relationships. These results indicate that professional tennis players have also recognized this concept. A series of t tests was conducted to examine gender differences, discovering there were no significant differences in eight out of the ten frames. A significant difference did appear as a function of gender in the super-fan frame ($t = 2.3$, $p <$ .002), with men employing a greater attention to sports outside of tennis. A significant difference was also found in the brand-manager frame as a function of gender ($t = -2.8$, $p < .005$), with female athletes employing a greater amount of brand management in their self-presentation strategies. These results contradict the findings of Weathers et al, who found the female broadcasters to Tweet more back stage and the male front stage more often.

It is interesting that the behind-the-scenes reporter frame, with 17.3% of female athletes total Tweets and 10.8% of male athletes total Tweets, is used more by the female athletes. This frame is a backstage performance frame defined as candid reports of the person behind the persona: sightseeing, favorite movies, and extracurricular activities.

Consistent with Lasorsa's findings, (2012) males and females did not vary significantly in their Twitter topics or in expressing opinions. But like female journalists, female athletes are more open in their Tweets. Most importantly, significant gender variance was found in terms of the number of followers athletes were able to attract and the influence they have established as content producers—male athletes having the advantage in both. "These findings suggest that

despite the relative gender equity in the sport of tennis and the opportunities inherent in Twitter as an uncensored broadcast medium, hegemonic values appear to persist" (p. 473).

In *How Golfers and Tennis Players Frame Themselves: A Content Analysis of Twitter Profile Pictures*, Coche (2014) sought to fill the gap of research by examining the Twitter profiles and background pictures of gold and tennis players to determine whether a sexual difference exists in the way these athletes frame themselves via Twitter. A total of 234 Twitter profiles were coded and analyzed. Results show a significant difference in the context of the profile picture. While most athletes had a picture of themselves, the context varied. Men had more action shots, and woman had more photo-shoot pictures (Coche, 2014). These finding indicate that, visually, these female tennis players and golfers frame themselves as women first and athletes second while the men present themselves as athletes first. Interestingly, through their biographies, they do the opposite. The female athletes overwhelmingly present themselves as athletes through their biographies whereas male athletes present themselves as masculine or family-oriented through their biographies. The researchers presuppose both men and women are starting to challenge the traditional gender stereotypes of athletes through words rather than pictures. This study adds to the research that Twitter is very much a tool for self-presenting.

Professional Athletes and Twitter

A few other studies examine professional athletes' Tweets to understand the communications mechanism (Hamrick, Simmons, Greenhaigh & Greenwell, 2010; Frederick, Lim, Clavio, Pedersen & Burch, 2012). Like most research to date, the individual's performance on Twitter is analyzed in these studies. These are some of the most helpful studies, looking into the phenomenon of Twitter interaction between athletes and fans. Hambrick, Simmons,

Greenhaigh & Greenwell (2010) started off the research trend with *Understanding Professional*

Athletes' Use of Twitter: A Content Analysis of Athlete Tweets, to examine the content of

professional athletes' Tweets and explore the communicate exchanges between athletes and fans.

Stratified random sampling was used to ensure that at least 10 different sports were included in

the analysis. After analyzing 1,962 Tweets from 510 different Twitter accounts, the researchers

stated, "athletes may hold greater sway over their fans than other celebrities such as musicians

and actors" (p. 467). The analyzed Tweets were placed in one of six categories: interactivity,

diversion, information sharing, content, fanship, and promotional. The category with the most

Tweets was interactivity (671 Tweets, 34%). These results indicate that athletes use Twitter as a

medium for direct interpersonal communication with friends and fans. The category with the

second highest number of Tweets was diversion (545, 28%). Diversion is non-sports related

information provided by professional athletes. Unlike Lebel & Danylchuk, there was no

significant correlation between the number of followers and the way athletes Tweet. The study

found that those with the most followers had more interactivity Tweets.

This study set the groundwork for other studies exploring the content in which athletes

Tweet. The results are consistent in that athletes mostly tweet to acquaintances and/or fans or

about non-sports related information so the fans can feel connected to them. Until now no studies

have indicated Twitter predominately used for promotion. Organizations and teams have yet to

be studied. It is unknown whether these teams follow the same unwritten guidelines as athletes or

have their own.

Choosing Between the One-Way or Two-Way Street: An Exploration of Relationship

Promotion by Professional Athletes on Twitter is a unique study thus far. Frederick, Lim, Clavio,

Pederson & Burch (2012) examine whether professional athletes predominately promote social

or parasocial relationships via Twitter. PSI is one-sided and mediated interaction that takes place between a media user and a media persona. Following Hambrick et al., the website sportsin140.com was used to randomly select professional athletes from four sports: the NFL, the NBA, the MLB and the NHL. The 25 most recent Tweets from 48 athletes (1,200 total) were coded and analyzed. The six variables identified the athlete, the sport, the date of the Tweet, the type of the Tweet (i.e., social, parasocial, parasocial retweet, and social retweet), whether the Tweet was interactive, and the Tweet topic (i.e., general, personal life, sport life, pop culture, and combo). The type of Tweet is unique to this study. This variable indicates if the Tweet is an original or a direct response to another user. The Tweet topic was adopted and modified based on research conducted by Pegoraro (2010). Results of the study indicate that athletes promote both social and parasocial relationships relatively equally through Tweets. Parasocial Tweets outnumber social Tweets as a whole; very few athletes were heavy social users of Twitter. Contrary to the findings of Hambrick et al., 47.8% of total Tweets were interactive and 52.2% were non-interactive.

The variables used are very useful for future research. Most studies focus on one content variable and other descriptive variables. This study examines the type of the Tweet and the Tweet topic as two separate variables, making it possible for future researchers to highlight on one or repeat the same procedure. Also, the type of Tweet has not been demonstrated in any research thus far.

Scholars have also analyzed the use of Twitter to improve the branding of professional athletes (Pegoraro & Jinnah, 2012). These researchers emphasize that Twitter has both succeeded and failed in helping athletes attract sponsors. In this study professional athletes are looked at as brands, offering an experience that stands out from other athletes. The four mini-case studies

included New England Patriots wide receiver Chad Ochocinco (NFL), fourth line Phoenix Coyotes forward Paul Bissonnette (NHL), Ultimate Fighting Championship President Dana White, and recently retired NBA center Shaquille O'Neill. "Accordingly, sports teams, leagues and athletes have started catering to their fans' needs and wants and, more importantly, successful sports brands on SNS have taken the time to interact with and listen to their fans in order to improve their marketing and communications strategies" (Pegoraro & Jinnah, 2012, p. 86).

In conclusion to the analysis, O'Neill uses two essential facets: messages that prompt a two-way conversation and messages that give fans a rare glimpse into his day-to-day life. Ochocinco is similar to O'Neill; his Tweets are a reflection of commitment to his persona, brand, and his career. Bissonnette's tactic revolves around creating buzz through engaging content that provokes strong reactions, positive or negative, from his 115,000 followers. White has strong reply ratios and is known for his spontaneous tweet-ups and giveaways, where he Tweets his current location and asks fans to meet him there. All four follow the previously known data that an intimate self-image and behind-the-scenes- persona receives a lot of positive feedback on Twitter from fans. The study provides detailed research for professional athletes to increase their brand via Twitter.

<u>Other Sport Communication Research</u>

Instantly after Twitter began expanding, industries recognized it as a way to present their product or themselves. Researchers began looking at how different industries and organizations (Prestidge, 2014; Armstrong & Gao, 2010; Marwick & boyd, 2011, Colapinto & Benecchi,

2014), and students and student-athletes (Prestidge, 2014; Browning & Sanderson, 2012) were using Twitter to their advantage.

Although there is a nascent stream of research on athletes and Twitter, most has looked at professional athletes. In 2012, The Positives and Negatives of Twitter: Exploring How Student-Athletes Use Twitter and Respond to Critical Tweets, specifically focused on student athletes (Browning & Sanderson, 2012). Qualitative methods were employed to examine themes that emerged from semi-structured interviews with student athletes from a NCAA Division I university. The authors chose student athletes because of the strict monitoring they have compared to professional athletes. Student athletes can be faced with extreme consequences such as eligibility, where a professional athlete will most likely just be fined. College students have normalized inappropriate social media postings and therefore, putting student athletes in an interesting position. Browning and Sanderson found that all the responses from student athletes' about motivations for using Twitter fell into three categories: keeping in contact, communicating with followers, and accessing information. With accessing information, the authors found a theme similar to a theme found in their studies of professional athletes. Rather than steering followers to content, the student athletes solicit followers to obtain the data and report back to them (Browning & Sanderson, 2012). There was a diverse response to critical tweets, while most ignored the critical tweets, some athletes admitted to trying to delete them numerous times and some admitted to responding back. These results suggest that Twitter is a beneficial communicative tool for student-athletes but also presents challenges when fans attack them via social media platforms. Identity management is clearly an important factor that influences student athlete's motivation for using Twitter.

<u>The Audience</u>

While the motives and constraints of athletes use of Twitter remains the more popular research question, the motives and constraints of fans in regards to following athletes has slowly gotten more attention from scholars. Witkemper, Lim & Waldberger (2012) sought to identify which specific constraints limit participation in following athlete Twitter accounts, sport governing bodies, leagues, and individual team front offices to better decide how to change social media marketing strategies. Using convenience sampling, data were collected using undergraduate students at a Midwestern University. The sample of the study included both male (n=682) and female (n=442) participants ranging in age from 17 to 40 years of age. The overall motivation scale included four measures gauged by three items each (Entertainment, Information, Pass Time, and Fanship) (Witkemper, Lim & Waldberger 2012). In all four motivating factors, individuals report a high motivation to follow athletes, reasoning consumers utilize Twitter more for information and entertainment purposes. The researchers suggest sport organizations use social media to be more informative about their club.

This study is important for social media marketing strategies. While most teams and athletes most likely enjoy Twitter for personal reasons, their main objective is to market themselves or their organization. The more fan support they receive on social media, the more fan support they receive at games. Previous research developed reliable instruments with which they gauged consumer motivations for online consumption but this literature managed to measure motivation and constraints. While the study was beneficial, it does have its setbacks. In the information motive, the most common motive, "I follow athlete Twitter accounts because it provides quick and easy access to large volumes of athlete information" does not specify what

time of athlete information. This study looks at the information sports teams are providing via Twitter and if followers are responding to it.

Through a self-administered survey, Lebel & Danylchuk (2014) sought to discover audience interest in the self-presentation strategies of professional athletes on Twitter. The ten different athlete self-presentation strategies used by Lebel & Danylchuk (2012) were sent to a snowball sample of 405 golf consumers. The sport insider, the term used to denote the presentation of behind-the-scenes sport specific information, was the most reported strategy by the audience. According to the data, athletes might not need to divulge the personal details of their lives. Lebel & Danylchuk conclude athletes who cultivate their Twitter presentations around sport and cater content specifically to the sport fan experience will enjoy loyal Twitter followings and grow their brands based on the knowledge and skills that brought them their initial success (2014).

Researchers agree that self-presentation via Twitter is most challenging because it cannot vary based on audience. Everyone receives the same presentation at the same time. Twitter is unlike any other platform because it is asymmetric. Twitter gives celebrities a chance to interact with each other publicly, interact with fans, and update followers on daily activities. The perception of direct access to a famous person, particularly the "insider" information is a major appeal of Twitter and to fans on Twitter (Marwick & boyd, 2010; Lebel & Danylchuk, 2012). Professional athletes are some of the most common celebrities researched in this field because fans thrive for spontaneous sports updates. Marwick & boyd also propose that Twitter creates a new expectation of intimacy. This noteworthy discovery proved consistent among broadcasters, journalists, and professional athletes (Weathers et al., 2014; Lasorsa, 2012; Hambrick et al., 2012). Female journalists provided significantly more openness and accountability in their

Tweets than did their male counterparts (Lasorsa, 2012). Lebel & Danylchuk (2014) found that athletes might not need to divulge in the openness and expectation of intimacy. Through an online survey, they found that sports fans prefer the sport related behind-the-scenes information.

Lebel & Danylchuk found that although Twitter is seen as an uncensored broadcast medium, hegemonic values appear to persist. The fact that male and female professional tennis players are posting messages to Twitter in such a similar fashion is problematic in comparing the number of followers and relative influence each gender has established. The ten strategic frames employed by Lebel & Danylchuk and Weathers et al., are very useful for studies on self-presentation and Twitter. These few studies separate backstage and front stage when identifying the topics of each Tweet. "One of the main concepts related to Goffman's presentational self is the idea that people change between front stage and backstage performances during their daily social interactions" (Weathers et al, 2014, p. 6).

The results for Colapinto & Benecchi (2014) prove the opportunity for both the scandal subject and scandal audience to receive information has increased with the new technologies. Twitter is both an explosive opportunity and disruptive change.

Data remain inconsistent in sport communication research. Hambrick et al., was one of the first to explore professional athletes use of Twitter in regards to the content posted and interaction with fans. This study found most Tweets to be interactive (671 Tweets, 34%), indicating that athletes use Twitter as a medium for direct interpersonal communication with friends and fans. Contrary to the findings of Hambrick et al., Frederick, Lim, Clavio, Pederson & Burch (2012) found 47.8% of their sample Tweets were interactive and 52.2% were non-interactive.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Scholars have studied the growth of Twitter in the sport industry. "Sport communication researchers: Hambrick, Simmons, Greenhalgh, & Greenwell (2010) and Pegoraro (2010) have done this with Twitter by being some of the first researchers to investigate this innovation, examine the effects, explore Twitter's place within the body of sport communication knowledge" (Pegoraro, 2014) to determine whether and where Twitter fits into the theory and the field. Fan-athlete interaction via Twitter has been studied (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010; Hambrick, Simmons, Greenhaigh & Greenwell, 2010; Frederick, Lim, Clavio, Pedersen & Burch, 2012). Much of the current Twitter and sport research focus on the thematic analysis or "what" various sports stakeholders are communicating via Twitter. But not in regards to the University of Nevada, Las Vegas or relative to the Rebels' men's and women's teams sports teams, has research been done.

While many organizations are adopting Twitter accounts to interact with their fans, fans are also adopting Twitter to hear about athletes who "Tweet" or to read an article where the story broke from someone's Twitter account (Witkemper, Lim & Waldburger, 2012, p. 171). This research quantitatively analyzes content from UNLV men's and women's athletic teams' Twitter pages. Although previous research looked at differences in self-presentation strategies amongst professional athletes (Lebel & Danylchuk, 2012) and sports broadcasters (Weather et al 2014), very little research has been done on the differences between male and female sports teams.

This study replicated to some extent the methods used by researchers, including Lebel & Danylchuk (2012), Weathers et al (2014), and Frederick, Lim, Clavio, Pedersen & Burch (2012).

For the purposes of this study, the methods used will adapt an approach in Goffman's dramaturgical analogies and the online adaptation of the presentation-of-self theory. "It is often felt that control of the setting is an advantage during interaction," Goffman wrote. "In a narrow sense, this control allows a team to introduce strategic devices for determining the information the audience is able to acquire" (Goffman, 1959, p. 93).

With Twitter, the team or individual presenting the team has a lot of control in how they are presented, specifically as front stage or backstage performers. Twitter is now an essential part of the current day sport media experience as well a frame through which this media experience is filtered and understood (Pegoraro, 2014) The qualitative content analysis allows us to give a subjective interpretation of the content of Tweets through a classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005).

Seven of the UNLV sports teams were strategically picked for the analysis. Because gender difference is a major component, an even amount of men's and women's teams was selected. The specific sports teams that were analyzed were picked because of the time period the experiment took place. Teams that were already in their 2015-2016 season or were about to begin were preferred. All seven teams chosen are "fall" sports. The collecting of Tweets began in August. August was chosen because it is the start of the semester for all UNLV students, meaning all UNLV teams had to report back to school. The women's season began in August. The analysis included all Tweets from the beginning of August until the end of October. The analysis ended in October to give the researcher enough time to code and analyze the data. Soccer was sport first chosen. UNLV has two different soccer teams, men's and women's. Both teams began their season in August. Basketball was the next sport chosen. Basketball was chosen for a few reasons. UNLV has two basketball teams, men's and women's. Both seasons began in

November. Basketball was also chosen because of its popularity at UNLV. Men and women's golf were chosen as the final sport with both genders represented. Golf's season began in September. UNLV swimming and diving makes the seventh team. Swimming and diving was picked because although the men and women do not compete against the opposite sex, UNLV considers it a coed team. There is only one Twitter account that represents both. Swimming and diving began their season in October.

The researcher followed all teams' Twitter accounts. The accounts were all public. Every Tweet posted from August 1 to October 31 was collected. Each page would be brought up individually and every Tweet was photographed individually. Once photographed, the photo was saved into Google drive under the appropriate team name folder. The google folders were shared between the coders. It was easiest to save all pictures weekly. Each Sunday the accounts would be searched to discover new Tweets from the team. After taking photos of Tweets and uploading them to the appropriate folder, the pictures would be renamed based off the sport, number of Tweet from that sport and the date it was posted. For example the first Tweets were saved as "001_MBBALL_08.01.15," "001_WBBALL_08/01/15," etc. This process helped keep the Tweets organized for the actual coding. After all Tweets were accounted for, a spreadsheet was made for each team, using Microsoft Excel. The name of the picture was copied into the far left column. The rows include the variables found in the codebook. Once all seven excel sheets were completed, a master spreadsheet was made. Each team's separate spreadsheets were copied and pasted into the master excel, making sure all variables lined up correctly.

The teams' Tweets were analyzed and reviewed for emergent themes. The emergent themes of the teams' Tweets were then translated into self-presentational frames, which were ultimately a combination of the former researchers. The ten self-presentation frames used by

Lebel & Danylchuk (2012), and the ten self-presentation frames used by Weathers et al (2014) were thoroughly studied and compared.

Lebel & Danylchuk used six backstage performance frames and four front stage performance frames. The backstage performance frames included; the conversationalist, the sport insider, the behind-the-scenes reporter, the super fan, the informer, and the analyst. The front stage performance frames included; the publicist, the superintendent, the fan aficionado, and the brand manager. These ten frames were specifically made from themes the researchers found from professional tennis players' Tweets. The backstage performance frames are more intimate perspectives that would be unlikely to appear in the mainstream media. All Tweets that were interactions with fellow athletes etc., personal behind the scenes tennis information (travel, practice, matches), candid reports of the persona behind the persona (sightseeing, favorite movies, etc.), discussion of non-tennis athletes, general information sharing, and general statement of opinion (complaints, life, etc.) fell into one of the six backstage performance frames. Tweets about promoting (publicity regarding sponsorship, upcoming matches, etc.), presence maintenance (e.g. good morning), fan interaction, and formal acknowledgements associated with positive image fell into one of the four front stage performance frames.

Weathers et al (2014) used ten very similar frames. The study compared male and female sports broadcasters rather than tennis players and therefore the some changes were in order. The six backstage frames include: the stylist, the conversationalist, the sports insider, the behind the TV persona, the super fan, and the source. The four front stage frames include: the analyst, the publicist, the acknowledger, and the image manager. Tweets regarding the discussion of fashion (clothes, style, etc.), interaction (celebrities, family, friends, etc.), personal behind the scenes sports information (interviews, travel, etc.), candid reports of the person behind the camera

(dinner, favorite movies, etc.), discussion of sports figures or other celebrities, or general information sharing content links were placed into the appropriate backstage frame. Tweets about predictions or general statements of opinion related to sports, promotion (marketing/branding), initiating fan interaction, and formal acknowledgements associated with maintaining a positive image fit into one of the four front stage frames.

The analyst frame was the biggest difference between the two studies. In the study about professional tennis players the analyst was considered backstage, but in the study on sports broadcasters the analyst was considered a front stage performance. This works because broadcasters have to give general statements of opinion in their everyday jobs; therefore, that is a front stage self-presentation.

Following the prior research, 10 self-presentation frames were constructed. The six backstage frames for the current research are: (a) the conversationalist, (b) the sport insider, (c) the behind-the-scenes reporter, (d) the super fan, (e) the analyst and (f) the source; and the four front stage frames are: (a) the informer, (b) the acknowledger, (c) the publicist and (d) the image manager. Table 1 provides a description and illustration of each frame. This framework was used with hope to add to the function of gender specific to the online platform Twitter and self-presentation strategies of athletes, specifically athletic teams. Following Lebel & Danylchuk, the analyst is a backstage performance frame for sports teams. This is because Tweets that fall under the analyst frame are general statements about opinion, complaint etc., which is not an expected performance of a sports team. Unique to this study, the informer frame was moved to a front stage performance. This is due to teams Tweeting about live updates of games and matches and even play by plays. Goffman said that a team referred to any set of individuals who co-operate in staging a single routine. The updates of games or matches, play-by-plays and game results are

34

the single most important routine or stage that can be presented by a team and therefore was placed as a front stage performance.

A total sample of 1,217 Tweets was manually coded and analyzed into one of the 10 frames in a systematic and replicable fashion inherent to the method. Two independent coders analyzed a random 20% of the total number of Tweets, representing 20% of the total number of Tweets. Intercoder reliability was .94 calculated using Cohen's kappa. The primary researcher coded the remaining Tweets. Each Tweet was assigned to a single frame using Microsoft Excel as an organizational tool. Tweets were categorized based on the intention or goal of the tweet. Tweets that seemed to contain content consistent with more than one frame were placed into the frame that was thought to exemplify the most dominant theme of the message.

Research question: Building on prior research but tailoring to teams rather than individuals, the study explored how males and females "elect to present themselves to their audiences via Twitter" (Lebel & Danylchuk, 2012, p. 470).

R1: How do the UNLV men's and women's team's self-presentation strategies vary relative to gender?

Rationale: Lebel & Danylchuk (2012) developed a coding protocol specifically for their study. "In the spirit of Goffman's dramaturgical analogies and the online adaptation of the presentation-of-self theory," they analyzed and reviewed all athlete Tweets for emergent themes so they could establish broader self-presentational frames for athlete Twitter activity based on Goffman's definition: "Given their understanding of what it is that is going on, individuals fit their actions to this understanding and ordinarily find that the ongoing world supports this fitting. These organizational premises — sustained both in the mind and the activity — I call the frame of the activity" (Goffman, 1974, p. 247).

Table 1: Self-Presentational Frames

Backstage	
Conversationalist	Interaction with fellow athletes, teams, coaches, and personal friends
Sport Insider	Personnel behind the scenes, team info, travel, practices, general insights, "meet the athletes" if sport related
Behind-the-Scenes Reporter	Candid reports of the person behind the persona, i.e. Sightseeing, favorite movies, extracurricular activities other than their sport, birthdays of athletes and coaches, getting to know team members aside from their sport persona
Super Fan	Discussion of other sports, good luck or congratulations to other University teams
Analyst	General statement of opinion, complaints, life musings
Source	Keeping fans informed about alumni and former athletes
Front stage	
Informer	General information sharing, web links, current events with the team, play by play, wins and losses
Acknowledger	Fan interaction or presence maintenance, greetings, public addresses, "good morning"
Publicist	Promotion, publicity regarding sponsorship, upcoming events, autograph sessions
Image Manager	Formal acknowledgments associated with positive image while maintaining a positive image

In addition to self-presentation, five other variables per Tweet were analyzed. Whether or not the Tweet had a multi-media component attached was the first variable added. Armstrong & Gae (2010) found 34.1% of news organization Tweets were linked to a news story alone, 34.1% of Tweets were linked to a news story with photos, and 23% included links to multimedia presentations with video, audio, and/or photos. While these findings are from news organizations, it is assumed sports teams use Twitter as a media source and will include a media component as well. Twitter has also evolved since the prior research and therefore more than just news organizations are including links. Armstrong & Gae also found a significant difference in links to multi-media presentations, with TV news Tweets being more likely to link to multi-media content (55.2%) than were Tweets for newspapers (7.8%). For the purpose of this study there were five options for this variable; (1) picture, (2) video, (3) embedded link, (4) multiple, and (5) other.

Whether a Tweet was retweeted, received favorites, received a reply and the type of Tweet were the next four variables recorded. The retweet variable was added because the passing along of a Tweet may indicate value. Boyd et al developed a list of reasons for retweeting: distributing breaking news or information, endorsing opinions and validating that information, generating conversation around the Tweet or engaging with the community. Whether the Tweet receives favorites or replies, can also indicate value from the audience.

The type of Tweet used by Frederick et al., (2012) is adapted for this study to explain variable 9. The categories for the type of Tweet are social, parasocial, parasocial retweet, and social retweet.

A social tweet was defined as a tweet in direct response to another user (i.e., a tweet containing an "@" symbol at the beginning. A parasocial tweet was defined as a message

not appearing to be in direct response to any user (i.e., a broadcast or statement of events without an "@" symbol at the beginning). A parasocial retweet was defined as any message containing the RT symbol without user commentary prior to or following the material being retweeted. Finally, a social retweet was defined as a RT with user commentary prior to or following the material being retweeted. (Fredrick et al., 2012)

A social tweet is a reply to someone else's tweet. A parasocial Tweet is an original Tweet from the team. A parasocial retweet is a retweet. Lastly, a social retweet is a retweet quote. In the analysis by Fredrick et al., 20 athletes promoted social relationships (6 NFL, 4 NBA, 4 MLB, and 6 NHL), 20 promoted parasocial relationships (4 NFL, 6 NBA, 4 MLB, and 6 NHL), and eight promoted relatively equal relationships (2 NFL, 2 NBA, 4 MLB, and 0 NHL).

Descriptive data were collected about each team. The teams start and end date of their season and the team's sports information director (SID). The number of followers each team had, the number of Twitter accounts each team account followed, and the overall amount of Tweets sent at the time of the data collection and the amount of Tweets sent within the three months.

The SID was recorded according to the official website of the UNLV athletic department, www.unlvrebels.com. There are three SIDs for the seven UNLV teams being studied. Kory Blucas covers both women's golf and women's soccer. Mark Wasik covers women's basketball, men's soccer and men and women's swimming and diving. Andy Grossman covers both men's golf and men's basketball. "The key point here is regardless of who actually posts material on a Twitter account, it behooves professional athletes to ensure that they are represented in a positive light, and, ultimately, the onus of this presentation falls on the shoulders of the athletes" (Lebel & Danylchuk, 2012).

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The primary purpose of the research was to determine how male and female college

athletic teams present themselves to their audiences via Twitter. The findings reflect the

descriptive statistics of each team's Twitter presence and the frequency of which they use each

self-presentation frame. Other findings show how teams include other media besides text to try

to engage their audiences and whether or not these techniques work to get audience involvement.

Twitter Activity

The male teams have notably more followers than the female teams. The mean number of

followers for the three male teams was 1,604. Men's golf surprisingly had the highest number of

followers of the all the teams with 1,951. Men's basketball was only slightly under that with

1,905 followers. The mean number of followers for the women's teams was 715. The co-ed

swim and dive team had 356 total followers. Using an unpaired t-test, results indicate there is a

statistically significant difference in the number of followers between the men's and women's

teams ($t = .019$, $p < .0001$).

The teams in the sample manage their Twitter accounts not only to be followed but also

to follow other twitter accounts. The mean number of Twitter accounts male teams followed is

91.6. By contrast, the mean number of Twitter accounts female teams followed is 218.22. The

one extreme case detected was women's basketball, which follows 480 Twitter accounts. Swim

and dive only follow 45 other accounts.

The amount of Tweets sent from each team during the analysis varied. In total 1,217 (n=1,217) total Tweets were analyzed. The male teams Tweeted enormously more than the female teams. The mean number of Tweets for the male teams was 292.3 (SD=642.3); the mean number of Tweets for the female teams was 92.7 (SD=493.7). After running multiple t-tests, it was found that there is significant difference in the number of Tweets sent based off the gender of the team (t = 2.35, p = .019).

Team Self Presentation

Analysis revealed the majority of all Tweets analyzed were front stage (60.65%). But there was no connection between male and female teams and front and backstage performances. Although 76.67% of male teams' Tweets were front stage, the men's basketball team chose to use backstage performances more often (54.20%). Female teams' Tweets were 51.50% front stage and 48.47% backstage. Both women's golf and women's basketball used backstage performances more often at 73.70% and 60.20%, respectively. Because women's soccer had significantly more Tweets then the other women's sports (n=191), their front stage material skewed the mean percentages. The team that represented both men and women, UNLV swim and diving, used front stage 45.20% of the time, backstage 35.48% of the time and neither 19.4%. This was the only team who had Tweets that did not fit into any frames because they contained only a link, with no description of what it was.

Backstage Performances

The Conversationalist

This frame denoted interaction with fellow athletes, teams, coaches, personal friends and organizational Twitter accounts. Lebel and Danylchuk (2012) found that 31.4% of all female Tweets and 27.8% of all male Tweets fell in the conversationalist frame. Men's teams only used this frame 2.10% of the time and women's teams only 7.93% of the time. Swimming and diving used the conversationalist frame only 1.60% of the time. Consider this example wherein women's golf thanked a male rebel golfer for attending practice, "Look who showed up today ... Rebel Golfer and PGA Tour Player, Ryan Moore! Go Rebels!"

Sport Insider

All teams employed the sport insider frame to accentuate personal behind the scenes team information such as interviews with players and coaches, practice and training information, and sport related "meet the athletes" Tweets. Professional athletes used this to provide fans with access to information that traditionally was kept private (Kassing & Sanderson, 2010). Teams mimicked this same approach. Male teams used this backstage frame 13.30% of the time, female teams 14.47% and swimming and diving 16.10%. This was the most common backstage frame for men's teams. All three men's teams used sport insider more than any other backstage frame. Men's basketball chose sport insider 26.10% of the time. Women's soccer and swimming and diving also used sport insider more than other backstage frame. An example of this is men's basketball tweeting, "Stephen Zimmerman, Jalen Poyser and Derrick Jones putting on the 'Freshman 15' #UNLVbasketball."

Behind-the-Scenes

The behind the scenes reporter provided audiences with access to non-sports related details about the athletes and team including birthdays of athletes and coaches, and getting to know teammates through personal information sharing. The men's teams used this frame 4.63% while women's teams used it 16.17% of the time and swimming and diving 17.70%. Women's golf and women's basketball used this frame more than any other frame, backstage or front stage (26.30% and 20.60% respectively). Women's basketball informed followers of a birthday. "Help us in wishing @aley_bo_bally a very Happy Birthday!"

Super Fan

Teams to discuss athlete fandom of other sports or athletes used this frame. The men's teams used the super fan 1.50%, the women's teams used it 1.83% and swimming and diving didn't use the super fan at all. The men's basketball team Tweeted "Our team is excited about @UNLVfootball tomorrow vs UCLA."

Analyst

This was the least utilized frame. It categorized general statements and opinions provided by the teams. Five out of the seven teams didn't use this frame at all. Men's teams used this .27%, women's 1.77% and swimming and diving didn't use it. The only men's team to use it was men's basketball. The only women's team to use it was women's golf. An example of this frame from women's golf is "Beautiful view of the strip from Dragon Ridge Golf Course!"

Source

The source frame was used to discuss general information, web content and current events about former athletes/alumni of that particular sport. The men's teams used this frame 5.37% of the time while the women's teams used it 6.33%. The swimming and diving team did not use this frame once to self-present. The men's basketball team used it 11.60% of the time, making it their second most used backstage frame. The women's team used it 13.20% of the time, making it the third most used backstage frame. Men's golf retweeted a Tweet that stated "former @UNLVGolf star Derek Ernst making jump in web.com finals. Now looking good for @PGATOUR card." This is an example of the source frame.

Front stage Performances

Informer

This informer involved the teams offering general information about the team or current players, web links, current events with the team, play by play, wins or losses, and videos of the players that all pertained to their sport. All but one team (women's basketball) used this frame most frequent out of all front stage frames. The men's teams used this frame 55.10% of the time. The women's teams used it 35.23% of the time and swimming and diving used it 17.70% of the time. Men's golf used it most often at 80.90%. Next was women's soccer and men's soccer (72.80% and 65.50% respectively). On game days, teams would Tweet continuously to keep the audiences informed. Here is an example from men's soccer, "With 5 second[s] left in the game, Corey Ackley scores off a rebounded save, Rebels tie No. 20 UC Irvine tonight in Las Vegas. #RebelReign."

Acknowledger

Whereas the conversationalist was used to interact with other athletes or teams, the acknowledger frame was adopted strictly for fan interaction or presence maintenance. Greetings and public addresses also fell in this frame. Men's teams only used this frame 1.57%. Women's teams had a mean of 3.10%, because of women's basketball, which utilized this frame 8.80% of the time. Like women's basketball, swimming and diving used this frame significantly more than the other teams at 9.7%. The other five teams ranged from 3.2% to 0%. "Good morning from the Divers!" is an example of how swimming and diving used this frame to acknowledge their fans and audience.

Publicist

Women's basketball used this frame most often for front stage performance while the other six teams used it second after the informer. This frame included promotions, publicity regarding sponsorships, upcoming events and autograph sessions. The men's teams used it 12.13% of time, the women's teams 12.17% and swimming and diving 9.70%. Both golf teams (men's golf 5.60% and women's golf 5.30%) used it far less often than the other men and women teams. A Tweet such as "Our '15-'16 Schedule is here, with 16 games in Cox Pavilion & Thomas & Mack Center —x #UNLVwmbb" is placed in the publicist frame.

Image Manager

In this frame, the teams formally acknowledged events associated with a positive image. This was the least used frame of all the front stage frames, men's teams used it 2.10% and women's teams 1.03%. Swimming and diving used this frame 8.10% of the time, which still was

less often than the other three front stage frames. "Had some fun giving back to the community this morning after a big win last night! Loved hanging out" was tweeted from women's soccer as a way to uphold their positive image.

Tweets Origin

Besides coding the content of the Tweet into self-presentation frames, other factors were also studied. One of them was the origin of the Tweet. All team but one (men's basketball) sent more original Tweets than anything else. The men's teams sent original Tweets 69.47% of the time, the women's teams sent original Tweets 84.13% of the time, and swimming and diving sent those 98.40% of the time. Women's golf tweeted original tweets 100% of the time during the period of the analysis.

Frederick et al., (2012) adapted the type of Tweet as a variable in their study to measure the social goal of the tweet. The categories for the type of Tweet are social, parasocial, parasocial retweet and social retweet. A social tweet is a reply to someone else's tweet. A parasocial Tweet is an original Tweet from the team. A parasocial retweet is a retweet. Lastly, a social retweet is a retweet quote. With these definitions being applied to the current data, it would be implied that all teams are parasocial communicators via Twitter. Men's basketball is the only team that had more retweets than anything else did but retweets are still considered parasocial.

<div align="center">Multi-Media Components</div>

This research also looked at whether or not each Tweet included a media component. The data indicate that athletic teams include another media other than text more often than not. Only 20% of all Tweets coded were text only. The most popular media choice were pictures, 398

Tweets contained a picture (33.1%). Both men and women teams used pictures more than any other media. Men's basketball accounted for 154 Tweets with pictures out of the 398 total between all teams. The men's team had a total of 156 Tweets with no media. The women's teams had 84 Tweets and swimming and diving had only 1 without another form of media. Nineteen out of 19 Tweets from women's golf had another media attached. The men's teams used pictures 36.27% of the time and women's teams included a picture 35.97% of the time. A link to the women's team's Instagram or Facebook closely followed pictures at 34.33% for the most common choice of media. On the other hand, men's teams used videos second to pictures (25.13%). Swimming and diving used pictures only 1.60% of the time, 96.80% of their Tweets included a link to their Instagram or Facebook. The other men's teams included a link to another social media only 1.73% of the time while the three women's teams used this media in 34.33% of Tweets. Soccer, for both men and women, included a link to a website more than both golf and basketball teams.

<center>Audience Involvement</center>

Lastly, audience involvement was measured by obtaining the number of retweets and favorites for each tweet, as well as if there were any replies to the tweet. Men's teams received more attention than women's teams. The men's teams had a mean of 16.35 retweets and 23.11 favorites per Tweet while the women's teams had a mean of 3.17 retweets and 5.76 favorites per tweet. Men's basketball averaged 43.66 re-Tweets and 59.04 favorites per tweet, which increased the men's teams' audience involvement greatly. Women's basketball also had more interaction than the other women's teams with 6.04 re-Tweets and 9.94 favorites per tweet. Swimming and diving only had a mean of .29 re-Tweets and .34 favorites. Replying to a Tweet was relatively

uncommon for the sports teams. Men's teams had replies or a reply on 17.50% of Tweets. Basketball had significantly more replies than any other team, 41.80% of their Tweets received at least one reply. Men's golf, women's golf and swimming diving did not receive one reply throughout the time of the analysis.

When comparing the means of all men's teams to women's teams, it would appear that all teams self-present themselves the same on Twitter. But when you analyze each team individually, the results are completely different. Three of the seven teams used backstage frames when tweeting more often than front stage frames. These three teams were women's golf, women's basketball and men's basketball. This shows that there is no connection between self-presentation via backstage and front stage between genders of teams. The teams that had the most similarities were the teams of the same sport. The men and women's basketball team and the men's and women's soccer teams resembled one another when tweeting. Also, although the men's golf team has the most followers, the men's basketball team had the most audience participation. The men's teams significantly tweeted more than the women's teams. Also, all teams choice to use a multi-media component more than not. Only 20% of all Tweets coded were text only.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

While the emphasis has been on the comparison between men's and women's teams, it is important to look at each team individually to determine whether certain strategies are more efficient than others. According to the data, there is no definite pattern to whether a team with present themselves in a front stage or backstage frame. Out of all 1,217 Tweets, 60.65% fell in one of the front stage performances but some teams added to this percentage significantly more than others. Four of the seven had more Tweets with front stage performances. Men's golf, men's soccer, women's soccer, and swimming and diving all Tweeted used front stage strategies more often than backstage.

Men's Golf

Men's golf had the most Tweets out of any team (n=376). The Tweets were predominantly front stage (87.90%). Descriptive frequencies showed that most of their Tweets were categorized into the informer frame (n=304) because most of the Tweets were "play by play." Along with the play by play, the team tended to include a video (n=226). Surprising, although there was so much action on this Twitter page, 44.9% had no re-Tweets. The next frequent involvement was one retweet at 33.8% (n=127). This was also surprising because men's golf had the most followers (n=1,951). Men's golf didn't interact with their audience either, 89.6% of their Tweets were original, only 10.4% were re-Tweets, quote Tweets or replies (n=39). The page only followed 126 other Twitter accounts. The SID for the team is Andy

Grossman, the same SID as men's basketball. The golf season for men is the longest of all the sports analyzed, it began September 14, 2015 and ends around April 20th, 2016.

Women's Golf

Women's golf had the least amount of Tweets sent throughout the three-month period (n=19). The page also had significantly less followers (n=108) than any other team's Twitter page. They follow 96 other accounts. It is unknown whether the followers and accounts being followed are the same. Unlike men's golf, women's golf was predominantly backstage (73.7%), and almost evenly split into four frames. The three backstage frames the page favored were behind the scenes (26.3%), sport insider (21.1) and the conversationalist (15.8). The other backstage Tweets (n=2) were either the source (n=1, 5.3%) or the conversationalist (n=1, 5.3%). The 26.3% front stage was mostly in the informer frame (n=4, 21.1%) with one Tweet falling in the publicist frame (n=1, 5.3%). Similar to men's golf, women's golf favored one media, 89.50% of their Tweets had an attached link for their Instagram or Facebook pages. All Tweets were original. The most frequent audience involvement was one retweet (n=8, 42.1%). Followers did tend to give their Tweets a favorite, 89.5% had at least one favorite. The mean was 2.32. The SID for the team is Korey Blucas, the same SID as women's soccer.

Men's Soccer

Men's soccer was one of the four front stage teams, with 87.3%. Their Twitter page had 886 followers and was following 37 other people or accounts. Men's soccer had the second most Tweets coded (n=252). Like men's golf, most of the Tweets were categorized into the informer frame (n=165, 65.5%). The second most used frame was also a front stage frame, the publicist

(n=32, 12.7%). The most common media for men's soccer was no media (40.10%), followed by a picture (31.30%). Like golf, soccer mostly Tweeted "play by plays," sometimes adding a picture. The team's page had the third highest mean for favorites (8.32) and re-Tweets (4.39). No significant differences in the origin of the Tweets, 73.00% were original and 16.30%. The SID for men's soccer is Mark Wasik Mark Wasik is also the SID for women's basketball and swimming and diving. Men's soccer starts Aug. 16, 2015, and ends around Nov. 11, 2015.

Women's Soccer

Women's soccer was also a front stage team. The account had more followers (n=832), but followed less (n=79) than the other women's teams. A total of n= 191 Tweets were coded from the page. Very similar to men's soccer, majority of Tweets were self-presented as the informer frame (n=139, 72.8%) and the publicist was second (n=26, 13.6%). In total, 88.5% of women's soccer Tweets were front stage strategy.

Women's soccer also shared the tendency to Tweet with no media with men's soccer. These are the only two teams that had more Tweets without an extra media than with. A total of n=79 (41.4%) had no media, n=57 (29.8%) had a picture and n=44 (25%) had a link to a website attached. Again, most Tweets were "play by play" sometimes adding a picture. The team's audience involvement fell below average compared to all teams but average amongst women's teams (re-Tweets; n=2.57, favorites; n=5.03). They had a fairly high percentage for original Tweets (90.60%) and 94.80% of Tweets received no replies. The SID for the women's soccer is Kory Blucas, same as women's golf. Women's golf starts Aug. 21, 2015, and ends around Nov. 3, 2015.

Men's Basketball

Men's basketball had the second most followers (n= 1,905) and followed close to the mean (n=112). A total of n=249 Tweets were coded. The account had the most variety, 54.2% of their Tweets were backstage frames and 45.8% were within the front stage frames. Sport insider (backstage) was the most frequent frame used n=65 (26.1%). The next two most frequent were both front stage frames; the informer (n=47, 18.9%) and the publicist (n=45, 18.1%). The next two were both backstage; the source (n=29, 11.6%) and behind the scenes reporter (n=26, 10.4%). This was the only account that had more re-Tweets (n=119, 47.8%) than original Tweets (n=114, 45.8%).

Men's basketball also had the most audience involvement, 41.8% of the Tweets had at least one reply and their retweet and favorite means were far above the mean (re-Tweets; 43.66, favorites; 23.11). Pictures were most frequently used by men's basketball (n=154, 61.80%). Out of the 135 backstage Tweets, pictures were used in n=97 of those (71.85%). Only 19.93% of all Tweets had no attached media, 13.70% had a video, and 7.20% had a link to a website or Facebook/Instagram. The SID for the team is Andy Grossman, same as men's golf. The season for men's basketball is from Nov. 6, 2015, to about March 12, 2016, depending on how far they go in NCAA tournament.

Women's Basketball

Women's basketball followed remarkably more accounts than the other teams (n=480). The page had 621 followers and a total of n=68 Tweets analyzed. Similar to men's basketball, majority was backstage (n=4, 60.2%) but there was a lot of variety. Behind the scenes reporter (backstage) was the frame most used (n=14, 20.6%). The next two were equally used; the sport

insider (backstage, n=12, 17.6%) and the publicist (front stage, n=12, 17.6%). Only 7.40% of Tweets had no media attached. A majority of Tweets (67.70%) had a picture attached. Women's basketball had the second best audience involvement. The means for re-Tweets was n=6.04 and favorites n=9.94. Following men's basketball, women's also had the second most retweeted Tweets (33.80%). The SID for the team is Mark Wasik, same as men's soccer. Women's basketball starts November 9, 2015 and ends around March 7, 2016, depending on how far they go in the NCAA tournament.

<p style="text-align:center">Swimming & Diving (Men's and Women's)</p>

Following women's golf, swimming and diving had the second least amount of followers (n=356), and Tweets coded (n=62). The account followed only 45 other accounts. As mentioned earlier, n=12 (19.4%) of the team's Tweets could not be placed into a frame because they had no text and was just a link. Therefore, 45.5% were front stage and 35.4% were backstage. Behind the scenes reporter (backstage, n=11, 17.7%) and informer (front stage, n=11, 17.7%) were used the most, closely followed by sport insider (backstage, n=10, 16.1%). The other 29.1% fall in one of the other three front stage frames; acknowledger, image manager and publicist. Swimming and diving attached a link to their Facebook or Instagram accounts 96.80% of the time. The pages audience involvement was very poor, 0% of their Tweets had a reply, the retweet mean was n=. 29, the favorite mean was .34%, and 98.40% of Tweets were original. The SID for the team is Mark Wasik, same as men's soccer and women's basketball. The season is from Oct. 23, 2015 to about March 26, 2016.

CONCLUSION

This study explored self-presentation strategies used by sports teams on Twitter with attention focused on potential gender differences. Results showed that self-presentation strategies were not determined based off of gender. Men and women teams from the same sport tended to send Tweets similar to one another opposed to sports of the same gender. Two out of the three studied sports showed multiple similarities.

Men and women's soccer had numerous similarities. Both used front stage strategies remarkably more than backstage. They both also used no media or just a picture most frequently. It can be assumed that these two are so common because both were season during the entire three-month period the Tweets were analyzed, opposed to other teams starting in the middle or starting at the end of the research.

Men and women's basketball also had a lot in common. Both teams used backstage frames more often than front stage but also more even between the strategies than other teams. Both teams had the most involvement from fans and other Twitter users. They also retweeted other accounts' Tweets more than any of the other teams. It can be assumed that that helps them get more involvement on their personal Tweets. Both teams began their season after the research was over. This could explain why both have more backstage frames Tweets than front stage.

Men and women's golf were not the same like the other sports. Men's golf was mostly front stage, while women's golf was mostly backstage. They also had the widest range for number of followers and number of Tweets. Men's golf had the most followers and Tweets and women's golf had the least. It appears that women's golf is not very active with Twitter page. This could explain why there are so many differences between the two teams. Men's golf

supports the idea that while teams are in season, their Tweets will fall under front stage performance more than backstage.

It appeared UNLV swimming and diving was not very active on their Twitter page as well. They were also in season, but only had 62 Tweets in a three-month period. Although, they did have more front stage framed Tweets, possibly because they were in season during the research.

The most interesting thing found was the SIDs who ran each page. Each SID had two teams being studied but had different strategies according to each team. Whether or not the SID sent all the tweets or monitored the tweets is unknown. Each SID had one team that fell under front stage and one team that fell under backstage.

Media was definitely used more than expected. Most teams, besides the men and women's soccer teams, had some sort of media attached to every tweet. Data showed more interaction from fans and audiences with media attached opposed to just text. Also, men and women's basketball retweeted nearly half or over half of their Tweets and had the most involvement on their pages. All teams can be classified as parasocial via Twitter. It was very rare that teams replied to a previous tweet or retweeted with added text. Both of these two things would make the teams more social than parasocial.

Not all seven teams were in season during the analysis. That could have influenced the way the team presented themselves. Future research should study all university teams throughout the entire year. It would be beneficial to see how teams Tweeted preseason, during season and post season. Future research should also analyze retweets and how they might help increase account activity.

Lebel & Danylchuk (2012) found that both male and female professional tennis players use backstage performance more often than front stage; female athletes at 76% and male athletes at 77%. Weathers et al., found that the female sports broadcaster used backstage more often and the male sports broadcaster used front stage more. The current study found that UNLV sports teams differed in using front stage and backstage frames. While all teams had a variety and chose to use both for obvious reasons of connecting with fans, there were no patterns based off the gender of the teams. This leads to new research about sports teams. The informer overwhelmingly was the frame of choice by all teams. The informer is defined as General information sharing, web links, and current events with the team, play by play, wins and losses. This one frame is the main reason all teams had as many front stage tweets as they did. Out of 1,201 tweets, 678 of those fell into this frame. It can be assumed that most teams are tweeting to update their fans about their status regarding their team rather than giving them a look into the backstage process of it all.

APPENDIX

CODEBOOK

Variable 1: Team the Tweet came from (mark with an "X")

      Men's Basketball @therunninrebels   _____

      Women's Basketball @unlvladyrebels   _____

      Men's Soccer @unlvrebelsoccer   _____

      Women's Soccer @unlvwsoccer   _____

      Men's Golf @unlvgolf   _____

      Women's Golf @unlvwomensgolf   _____

      Men's/Women's Swimming @unlvswimanddive   _____

Variable 2: How many followers does the page have? (Hambrick, Simmons, Greenhaigh &

      Greenwell, 2010)

      0-999   _____

      1000-1999   _____

      2000-2999   _____

      3000-3999   _____

      4000 +   _____

Variable 3: Number of Tweets to date (Hambrick, Simmons, Greenhaigh & Greenwell, 2010;

      Frederick, Lim, Clavio, Pedersen & Burch, 2012)

      0-399   _____

      400-799   _____

      800-1199   _____

1200-1599 _____

1600 + _____

Variable 4: Self-presentational frame of Tweet (Lebel & Danylchuk, 2012)

A) *Backstage Performances*

1) Conversationalist _____

Interaction with fellow athletes, celebrities, and friends

2) Sport Insider _____

Personnel behind the scenes, team info, travel, practices, matches, general insights

3) Behind-the-scenes Reporter _____

Candid reports of the person behind the persona, i.e. sightseeing, favorite movies,

extracurricular activities

4) Super Fan _____

Discussion of other sports

5) Informer _____

General information sharing, web apps, content, links, current events

6) Analyst _____

General statement of opinion, complaints, life musings

B) *Front stage Performances*

1) Publicist Promotion _____

Publicity regarding sponsorship, upcoming events, autograph sessions

2) Superintendent _____

Maintenance, greetings, public addresses

3) Fan Aficionado _____

Fan interaction

4) Brand Manager   _____

Formal acknowledgments associated with positive image

Variable 5: Does the Tweet have a multi-media component? What kind?

a. Picture   _____

b. Video   _____

c. Embedded link   _____

d. Multiple   _____

e. Other   _____ (what kind?)

Variable 6: How many re-Tweets Tweets did it receive?

None   _____

1-3   _____

4-6   _____

7-9   _____

10-12   _____

13-15   _____

More than 15   _____

Variable 7: How many favorites did it receive?

None   _____

1-3   _____

4-6   _____

7-9   _____

10-12   _____

13-15 _____

More than 15 _____

Variable 8: Did anyone reply to the tweet?

1. No _____

2. Yes _____

Variable 9: Is the Tweet an original from the user, retweeted, or a reply? (Frederick, Lim,

Clavio, Pedersen & Burch, 2012)

Original (Parasocial Tweet) _____

Retweeted (Parasocial Retweet) _____

Retweet quote (Social Retweet) _____

Reply to someone else's tweet (Social Tweet) _____

KEY

Information

- Coder: Name of coder;

- Sports Team: Team's page the Tweet comes from "UNLV Men's Basketball," "UNLV

  Women's Basketball," "UNLV Men's Soccer," "UNLV Women's Soccer," "UNLV

  Men's Golf," "UNLV Women's Golf," or "UNLV Swimming & Diving";

- Number of Tweet: The number of Tweet per sports team. Must include the appropriate

  abbreviation for team and date the Tweet was sent.

Abbreviations: MBBALL, WBBALL, MSOCCER, WSOCCER, MGOLF, WGOLF, S&D.

  Example: "001_MBBALL_08.01.15," "001_WBBALL_08/01/15";

Team's Twitter Name

- @therunninrebels: UNLV Men's Basketball

- @unlvladyrebels: UNLV Women's Basketball

- @unlvrebelsoccer: UNLV Men's Soccer

- @unlvwsoccer: UNLV Women's Soccer

- @unlvgolf: UNLV Men's Golf

- @unlvwomensgolf: UNLV Women's Golf

- @unlvswimanddive: UNLV Men's/Women's Swimming

Number of Followers the Team Currently Has: Listed at the top of the page.

_____

Number of Tweets to date: Listed at the top of the page.

_____

Self-presentational frame of Tweet

Backstage Performances

Conversationalist: Interaction with fellow athletes, celebrities, and friends

      Sport Insider: Personnel behind the scenes, team info, travel, practices, matches, general

            insights

      Behind-the-scenes Reporter: Candid reports behind the persona, i.e. sightseeing, favorite

            movies, activities

Super Fan: Discussion of other sports

Informer: General information sharing, web apps, content, links, current events

Analyst: General statement of opinion, complaints, life musings

Front stage Performances

      Publicist Promotion: Publicity regarding sponsorship, upcoming events, autograph

            sessions

      Superintendent: Maintenance, greetings, public addresses

      Fan Aficionado: Fan interaction

      Brand Manager: Formal acknowledgments associated with positive image

Does the Tweet have a multi-media component? What kind?

      Picture: Any photo or animated picture.

      Video: Any video; includes YouTube and vine.

Embedded link: Anything that directs to another page, usually has http: or .com.

Multiple: Will either be a picture and link or a video and link (please specify)

Other: Anything that doesn't fit in the four categories above;

How many retweets did it receive: Located at the bottom of the Tweet. It is the number next to

the double arrow;

_____

How many favorites did it receive: Located at the bottom of the Tweet. It is the number next to

the heart;

_____

Did anyone reply to the tweet?

No: There will be no comments before the tweet.

Yes: There will be at least comment before the tweet.

Is the Tweet an original from the user, retweeted, or a reply?

Original (Parasocial Tweet): a message not appearing to be in direct response to any user

(i.e., a broadcast or statement of events without an "@" symbol at the beginning)

Retweeted (Parasocial Retweet): any message containing the RT symbol without user

commentary prior to or following the material being retweeted.

Retweet quote (Social Retweet): a RT with user commentary prior to or following the

material being retweeted.

Reply to someone else's tweet (Social Tweet): a tweet in direct response to another user

(i.e., a tweet containing an "@" symbol at the beginning)

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