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## A Comparison of Male Athletes with Teenage Peers in Popular Teen Movies

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A Comparison of Male Athletes with Teenage Peers in Popular Teen Movies

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A thesis submitted to the faculty of  
Brigham Young University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

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## ABSTRACT

### A Comparison of Male Athletes with Teenage Peers in Popular Teen Movies

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Teen films generally highlight typical high school stereotypes, with “jocks” being one of the most prevalent characters. Through a content analysis, this study seeks to determine the portrayal of male athletes in comparison with their fellow teenage characters in the top-grossing teen films from the 1980s through the 2000’s to help understand the role of films in reinforcing stereotypes. The study found that male athletes are significantly more likely to be portrayed as more physically or verbally aggressive, unintelligent and popular than their peer counterparts. They were not depicted to be any more sexually active, illegal substances users, or physically attractive than their male peers.

Keywords: Athletes, Male Athletes, Stereotypes, Jocks, Teen Films, High School Stereotypes

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## INTRODUCTION

As Cady walks into the cafeteria at North Shore High School in the movie *Mean Girls*, she passes several segments of society. Raised in Africa, Cady is quickly being introduced to the stereotypes that populate most American high schools. At each table sits a group with shared identity: Preps, Asian Nerds, Cool Asians, Plastics, Burnouts, Girls Who Eat Their Emotions, Wannabes, J.V. Jocks, and Varsity Jocks. Though a foreigner, Cady realizes wherever she sits is vitally important to her reputation, prestige, behavior, dress, and sociality.

Some of the most powerful stereotypical images of teenagers and youth appear in popular teenage films, which, since the 1980s, have created blockbuster after blockbuster (Shary, 2002 & 2005; Tropiano, 2006). Hollywood film makers continue to focus on the emotions and complexity of the high-school years—a period of teenage life full of anxiety and insecurity—in which some youth rebel, experiment with illegal substances and/or sex, and others are left wanting.

In such movies, film makers are limited in the amount of time they have to create a storyline; therefore, they rely on labeling and stereotyping individuals or groups of people in a certain way to portray a specific message or image (Signorielli, 2001). However, there are often detrimental effects of being the target of a negative stereotype. Scholars have stated that stereotypes are somewhat rigid and oversimplified opinions based off an uncritical judgment that wraps presumed characteristics around groups of people (Boskins, 1980; Hepburn & Locksley, 1983). The negative stereotype about a social group then leads to less than optimal performance by members of the group in regard to the stereotyped behavior (Beilock, McConnell, Stone, & Harrison, 2004).

The framing of such stereotypes in movies can lead viewers to acquire the symbolic culture norms depicted through media images. Repeated over time, such behavior is deemed not only acceptable, but a required behavior of that social group.

Despite such consequences, little research in the scholarly community has been done on youth film images and its affect upon society. Studies of other media have broached this subject. For instance, researchers have analyzed the coverage of teenagers in television broadcast reports and newspaper news reports, which found that teens were depicted primarily as criminals or victims of violence (Kunkel, 1994; Males, 1999).

Rather than exploring the themes of teenagers as a whole, this study focuses on one of the more common characters in teen films, the teenage male athlete, or jock—a segment of adolescent society known at most high schools to participate in a distinctive social code (Steele, et al. 2002). Teen movie scholars (Considine, 1985; Lewis, 1992; Shary, 2002; Tropiano, 2006) have noticed that male athletes in teen movies, grouped into the “jock” crowd, are considered elite to other classical high school groups. It is important to measurably understand how male athletes are being portrayed in comparison to their peers. This study will add to the body of knowledge by determining what stereotypes exist about male teen athletes in comparison to their peers in the most popular teen movies from the past three decades.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This paper will analyze the portrayal of male teenage athletes in contrast to their teenage peers. This literature review will explain the history of teen movies, teen films, and the use of stereotypes in those films, what the stereotypes of male teenage athletes and their peers are in the



existing literature. It will also look at the effects of stereotypes on the stigmatized group and analyze the appropriate theories.

### **History of Teen Movies**

From the 1950s through the 1960s teen movies cycled between horror flicks and summer beach parties, drawing meager box office results (Shary, 2005; Tropiano, 2006). But as the maturation and popularity of the teenage genre increased through the 1970s, teen films no longer remained just cheaply made B-films produced by independent filmmakers. Bigger studios, such as Twentieth-Century Fox, became more involved, and by the 1980s the teen film market took America by storm, going from farce to blockbuster (Shary, 2005; Tropiano, 2006).

Several factors played into the influx of teen films in the 1980s. Cook (2004) and Doherty (2002) point to the profitability of the late-1970s films targeted to a younger audience, such as *Star Wars* (1977; \$193.8 million), *Jaws* (1975; \$129.5 million), *Grease* (1978; \$96.3 million), and *Superman* (1978; \$82.8 million). The major success of these films, with their special effects appeal, convinced Hollywood moviemakers to aim at the youth market for profits. In fact, early 1980 statistics gathered by the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) revealed that individuals between the ages of 12 and 25 purchased 75% of all movie tickets in the previous decade (Phillips, 1982). In addition, the multiplex movement increased the demand for teen films and —gave teenage movie audiences at the end of the twentieth century a greater sense of presence in popular media, a deeper potential to be influenced by the films they saw, and a wider range of options from which they could construct and compare their sense of self” (Shary, 2002, p. 6–7).

In the mid 1990s teen films reached a new level of visibility as movie producers began addressing more controversial topics, such as sexual orientation, gender discrimination, crime, violence, drugs, and alcohol (Shary, 2005). As attending movies remain one of the most popular pastimes for American teenagers, Hollywood continues to stake a claim in this moneymaking market (Shary, 2002). The most recent and complete MPAA (2005) study on U.S. movie attendance, reported that 12–17 year-olds, although they make up only 11% of the total population, account for 20 percent of total movie theater admissions. Nearly half of teenagers (47%) say they attend movies at theaters at least once a month, compared with only 21% of adults (MPAA, 2005). In addition, past studies have indicated that teens watch films at home about three times per week (Rideout, Foehr, Roberts, & Brodie, 1999; Roberts, Henriksen, Christenson, 1999). “DVDs, the Internet, pay per view, movie networks, and television broadcasts further heighten teens’ access to movies, making it easier to view a film now than ever before in history” (Stern, 2005a, p. 333).

### **Movies and Stereotypes**

Some of the most powerful stereotypical images of teenagers and youth appear in popular teenage films (Shary, 2002 & 2005; Tropiano, 2006). An example of this, noted earlier, was used in the opening scene of *Mean Girls* to introduce Cady to the stereotypes that exist in teen films: Jocks, Preps, Asian Nerds, and Plastics just to name a few. Another example comes from the movie *The New Guy*, when they have a prison scene in which inmates are shown. One inmate is a heavily tattooed Hispanic man keeping with the stereotypes found by researchers that

–Hispanics are regularly portrayed negatively, if at all, as janitors, gardeners, gangbangers, and pregnant teens” (Devine & Elliot, 1995).

Additionally, researchers have found that exposure to films and movies will have an analogous influence on audience members’ attitudes and beliefs in regard to depictions of race, intelligence, and gender (Mastro et al., 2009). Studies have also shown that the media have an influence on creating perceptions and stereotypes in regard to race and class that carry beyond the screen and have an effect in the real world (Manusov et al., 1997).

### **Stereotypes of Male Teenagers**

As mentioned earlier, researchers who analyzed the coverage of teenagers in television broadcast reports and newspaper news reports found that male teenagers were most often portrayed as primarily criminals or victims of violence (Kunkel, 1994; Males, 1999). Signorelli (1987) also found male teens being depicted as engaging in antisocial behavior in her studies of teenagers in entertainment television shows, which often show them as defiant of authority, deceitful, committing theft, and having a reckless disregard for self and others. Other researchers (Allen, 1999; Heintz-Knowles, 2000) have noticed how males in television dramas are also depicted as being selfish, detached from their parents and involved in pleasure seeking behaviors. In a study that directly looked at box office movies and teenagers, Stern (2005a) discovered these same themes of antisocial behaviors, concluding that such repeated portrayals have skewed reality, leaving the public believing that teenagers are more deviant than actual statistics show. In a separate study, Stern (2005b) found that about 70% of male teen characters in the top grossing films from 1999–2001 were portrayed as active substance users of alcohol,

tobacco, and drugs. An additional content analysis study about the images of male teenagers in popular films found that male teenagers are frequently depicted as being self absorbed, violent, disconnected from their parents and disengaged in civic life (Stern, 2005a).

### **Stereotypes of Male Athletes**

Despite the obvious importance of sports in the lives of male adolescents and the popularity of Hollywood movies among Americans, researchers have yet to specifically analyze the portrayals of male athletes in teen films in a quantitative study. Shary (2002) concluded from his research that masculinity issues such as physical appearance, risk taking, alcohol consumption, and sexual prowess abound in all teen films about jocks. Some recent studies have undertaken a content analysis of sports programming, finding significant depictions of drug and alcohol use (Finley & Finley, 2004). Other studies looked at newspaper depictions of high school athletics (Pedersen & Whisenant, 2002) and movie depictions of physical education instructors (McCullick et al., 2003), concluding that athletes are shown as both revered heroes and unintelligent bullies. One particular qualitative study by Wallington (1993) looked at the stereotypical portrayals of athletes in a random sample sport films prior to and after the Vietnam War. Wallington concluded that athletes prior to the war were more revered, whereas later on they were portrayed more negatively as violent, unintelligent substance abusers and cheaters.

One study found the common American stereotype of a male athlete as being based on the beliefs that an athlete is muscular, yet slower in the brain and cannot carry on a conversation on any topic other than one relating to weight-lifting or exercise (Devine, 1989). The study further stated that the stereotype is attributed mostly to high school and college athletic

participants who form a significant youth subculture that sociologists have identified as socialites.

The male athlete stereotype is often used in the mass media to portray a relatively unintelligent and unenlightened, but nonetheless physically and socially well-endowed character. The stereotype is most prevalent in movies for teenagers such as *College*, *American Pie*, and *Revenge of the Nerds*. The stereotype extends beyond the high-school and collegiate age group, trickling down into media intended for younger audiences (Messner, 1990).

In the past two decades, some scholars have begun to argue that sports often create male hegemony, debase and objectify women, and encourage physical and sexual aggression (Gard & Meyenn, 2000). From this, concern about sports and violence began to emerge, culminating in a widely cited study that found male college athletes were overrepresented among their fellow students in reports to university judicial affairs boards for nonsexual assaults and sexual aggression (Crosset, 2007). Further studies found that males engaged in team sports were more likely to be violent, physically aggressive, psychologically aggressive, having sexist attitudes, sexually coercing a partner, and being unfaithful to their partner (Forbes et al., 2006; Miller et al., 2006; Wallington, 1993).

Other scholars responding to the aforementioned studies argued that these findings were inaccurate and cited evidence to discredit their conclusions. In doing so, they did extensive surveys and questionnaires that attempted to measure public perception of male athletes. They found that main stream society viewed these athletes as being alcohol and tobacco users, illicit drug and steroid users with low academic integrity (Beal, 1999; Lapchick, 1998; Lewis, 1998). Not all of the findings in these studies were negative, however; results also found that male

athletes were perceived as physically attractive, popular, heroes, and exhibiting team/school loyalty.

One study measuring perceptions about male athletes was conducted at an elite academic institution where faculty members were asked to list five adjectives that would describe the male athlete. In addition to listing a handful of positive adjectives, not one faculty member missed including one of the following words: dumb, violent, rapist, or drug abuser (Lapchick, 1998). Another study conducted by the National Opinion Research Center Survey, sponsored by the National Science Foundation for the University of Chicago, found that 56% of respondents believed athletes are more violent, and 53% think that they are less intelligent than their peers.

An additional study attempted to investigate the general beliefs of college students regarding stereotypes about college student-athletes at one midwestern university in regard to intelligence. The study found that 45% of the subjects felt that college student-athletes were not as smart as the average college student, 44% of the sample agreed that athletes had less academic integrity, and 37% believed that student-athletes were not as academically competitive as the average college student (Sailes, 1993).

A synonym for the male athlete that carries with it some negative stereotypes is the term "jock." The use of this term to refer to an athletic man is believed to have emerged around 1963 (Biernat & Vescio, 1983). Since then, the concept of a jock has become ingrained in American culture as a negative stereotype of athletic males. It is likely that the pigeonholed image of male athletes is a result of the reductionist notion, which essentially states it is easier for one to simplify life into stereotypes than accept its complexities. Jocks are often contrasted with another

negative stereotype, nerds. This dichotomy has been immortalized by countless references and themes in movies, television shows, and books.

### **Effects of Stereotypes**

Research has shown that knowledge about a negative stereotype of a social group leads to less than optimal performance by members of that group in the stigmatized domain (Beilock et al., 2004). Early research looked at the effects that prejudice had on members of the stigmatized group (Allport, 1954). One of the effects found was a self-fulfilling prophecy by which members of the group inadvertently conformed to what was expected of them through the shared beliefs of society (Allport, 1954). More recently, the model of Stereotype Threat has proposed that the activation of a negative stereotype regarding a group will induce anxiety about conforming to the expectancy, which, therefore, negatively interferes with the performance of the group members (Steele & Aronson, 1995; Spencer, Steele, & Quinn, 1999).

A study that demonstrated this used the generally held stereotypes that African-American athletes are more athletic than white athletes (Steele et al., 2002). On the other hand, white athletes are considered to be harder working and mentally smarter. In one such study, blacks performed better than their white counterparts when both groups were told that putting a golf ball was strictly an athletic ability. In another sample, whites performed better than their black counterpart when both groups were told that putting a golf ball was strictly a mental ability. From this, it was shown that each group's performance was connected to generally held attitudes and beliefs that impacted performance (Steele et al., 2002).

Impaired performance by a stigmatized social group has been documented for ethnic minorities (e.g. Steele & Aronson, 1995), women (e.g. Spencer et al., 1999), students from low socio-economic backgrounds (Croizet & Claire, 1998), and elderly people (Scholl & Sabat, 1997). The fact that performance can be impeded simply because of a stereotype about one's race, class, and gender has been well documented and overwhelmingly accepted (Davis et al., 2006; Steele et al., 2002). However, little research has been done to understand and measure widely held and accepted stereotypes outside of the above mentioned categories.

### **Teen Films, Teenagers and the Socialization Process**

The reason this study is focused on teen films is because teenagers view teen characters as their peers and role models. Teen film characters play the role of a socializing agent to their viewers. To understand the role of teen films or the mass media in the socialization process of adolescents, it is important to first understand what the socialization process is. Arnett (1995) describes socialization as the process through which an adolescent develops a self concept and a set of normative beliefs that guide their behavior through adult life. In other words, socialization is the way in which individuals learn the norms and rules of society and how we fit into it. This includes the development of one's identity and self-concept. There are four main aspects to socialization: self identity, autonomy or independence from primary socializing agents, achievement or the belief to succeed, and intimacy, which is the ability to build relationships with others (Arnett, 1995).

Adolescence is the period of time in which individuals actively develop and construct their identity and self-concept. Arnett suggests that the mass media plays an integral part in this



socialization process. In fact, he argues that the media is one of the primary sources adolescents utilize for identity formation. Therefore, teenagers can use the media's portrayals of male athletes to either identify themselves or others as the stereotyped characters portrayed in teen films.

### **Theoretical Framework**

For a study on youth films, scholars have found it necessary to not just stick to one particular theory, but to blend theories to gain a better understanding of movies' influence on viewer perceptions. Previous research and studies indicate that cultivation and social cognitive theories most logically apply for a content analysis on movies (Stern, 2005a, 2005b).

#### *Cultivation Theory*

Cultivation theory is a cumulative and overarching approach to this media effects question. Gerbner (1976) states that the media is the primary socializing agent for adolescents. Cultivation Theory suggests that the media creates a worldwide view that becomes reality simply because we believe it to be reality. In other words, the more interaction we have with the media, the more we believe it to accurately depict the real world (Gerbner & Gross, 1976) Cultivation theory in its most basic form, then, suggests that exposure to television, over time, subtly cultivates viewers' perceptions of reality. In 1968 Gerbner conducted a study to demonstrate this theory of cultivation. He placed television viewers into three categories; light viewers (less than 2 hours a day), medium viewers (2–4 hours a day), and heavy viewers (more than 4 hours a day). From this study he found that heavy viewers held beliefs and opinions similar to those portrayed on

television rather than the real world which demonstrates the compound effect of media influence (Gerbner, 1976).

This cultivation can have an impact even on light viewers of the media, because the impact on heavy viewers has an impact on our entire culture. Gerbner and Gross (1976) stated that the media ~~is~~ a medium of the socialization of most people into standardized roles and behaviors. Its function is in a word, enculturation.” In later research Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli (1980) argued that while religion or education had previously been greater influences on social trends and morals, now the media was becoming the source of the most broadly shared images and messages in history. They argue that the media cultivates from infancy the very predispositions and preferences that used to be acquired from other primary sources. This is because the repetitive pattern of the media’s mass-produced messages and images forms the mainstream of a common symbolic environment.

In regard to cultivation, the repetition of consonant film images with attached values, behaviors and attitudes can shape and reinforce what people might believe. This theory contends that repeated exposure to television’s stereotypical images cultivates beliefs, assumptions, and universal conceptions of societal facts, norms, and values in viewers, and that such exposure influences viewers’ conceptions of reality, thoughts, and behavior (Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1994). Therefore, it can be assumed that viewers who are exposed to stereotypical portrayals of male athletes in teen movies could have a distorted view of how they really are in society. This is especially true if their real-life experiences are not different from what they see in the movies. If media viewers are influenced by persistent

stereotypical images, as studies have suggested, then it is important to examine the content of these teen movies to determine what stereotypical images exist.

### *Social Cognitive Theory*

Similarly, Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory holds that viewers can learn a variety of attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors by observing modeled behavior in the media. Depending on the consequences shown in association with such values, the viewer decides whether to absorb or reject the modeled action. If no negative consequences are shown, viewers are more likely to adopt the mediated behaviors. In addition, Wells and Serman (1998) state that young moviegoers carry movie images and themes with them when they go to school, forming a basis for upcoming decisions.

To illustrate that people learn from watching others, Bandura constructed an experiment entitled "Bobo Doll Behavior: A Study of Aggression." In this experiment Bandura exposed a group of children to video featuring violent and aggressive actions. After the video he then placed the children in a room with a Bobo doll to see how they behaved with it. Through this experiment, Bandura discovered that children who had watched the violent video subjected the dolls to more aggressive and violent behavior, while children not exposed to the video did not. This experiment displays the Social Cognitive Theory because it depicts how people reenact behaviors they see in the media. In this case, the children in this experiment reenacted the model of violence they directly learned from the video.

Further development in social cognitive theory shows that learning will most likely occur if there is a close identification between the observer and the model. Identification allows the

observer to feel a one-to-one connection with the individual being imitated. Vicarious learning, or the process of learning from other people's behavior, is a central idea of this theory and emphasizes the role of observational learning and social experience in the development of personality. The main concept in social cognitive theory is that an individual's actions and reaction in almost every situation is influenced by the actions that individual has observed in others. People observe others acting within an environment, whether natural or social. These observations are remembered by an individual and help shape social behaviors and cognitive processes (Bandura, 1988). Therefore, it is important to understand what stereotypes, if any, viewers are observing about male teenage athletes in these films.

### **Relevance of This Study**

The majority of the studies cited above have attempted to study why athletes are engaged in the stereotyped behavior, in an effort to discover if there is something inherent in sports that produces this type of behavior. Few studies have actually attempted to understand what the culturally accepted stereotypes are and what type of relation or impact those stereotypes have on behavior

Some would argue that athletes are portrayed in popular culture movies, television dramas, and sports news coverage in both positive and negative ways. The positive stereotyping, where athletes are shown to have a great deal of popularity and social acceptance, minimizes the negative stereotypes. This is similar to the argument that it is acceptable to generalize women as unintelligent since they are also portrayed as loving and nurturing. Consistent with the previous

mentioned Stereotype Threat Model, any generally accepted negative stereotype of a social group will correspondingly negatively affect performance and behavior of that same group.

There has not been much research that attempts to statistically understand what the generally held social attitudes about athletes are, nor to understand the role of the media in cultivating these stereotypes and the corresponding effects on athletes. This study is attempting to understand how male athletes are depicted in comparison with their teenage peer characters in popular teen films. From this, we will better understand how they are portrayed, and if significant findings occur, then future research can attempt to understand what effect this might have.

## **HYPOTHESES**

H<sub>1</sub>: Male athletes will be portrayed more often than their peers as physical or verbal bullies, unintelligent, sexually active, and illegal substance users.

H<sub>2</sub>: Male athletes will be portrayed more often than their peers as popular and physically attractive.

## **METHODS**

### **Sample**

The sample of movies used in this study was selected through a three-step process. First, the Internet Movie Data Base (IMDB; [www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com)) and the Hollywood Teen Movies website ([hollywoodteenmovies.com](http://hollywoodteenmovies.com)) were used to identify the top grossing teen films from the 1980s through the 2000s. Teen movies were defined as having a lead character(s) representing

adolescents between the ages of 12–17, generally in a high school setting. The age range was selected due to the MPAA’s statistical analysis of this group. R-rated movies were eliminated from the study based on the fact that the target audience of teens, ages 12–17, is not allowed to attend such movies without adult supervision, leaving us with a list of movies with only G, PG, and PG-13 ratings. By basing the selection on the top grossing movies, it is assured that a large audience viewed the movies. In addition, box office sales are the best indication of a film’s popularity, which often follows with a high number of sales in non-theatre venues, such as video rentals and purchases, pay-per-view networks, and cable channels (Smith, 2003).

The second step was to select the top 30 teen films in accordance with our definition from the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s—to create a list of 90 films (see Appendix A). A total of 41 films (16 in the 1980s, 14 in the 1990s and 11 in the 2000s) in the sample did not portray or mention teen male athletes in any significant manner and were thus removed from the study. The study ended up coding for 49 films, 54.4% of our sample. According to assigned ratings, most of the films coded for were rated PG (n=24), followed by PG-13 (n=23) and G (n=2). Among the decades, the 1980s had the most PG (10) movies coded for, along with the least PG-13 (4). The 1990s contained fewer PG (7) films and more PG-13s (9). The 2000s had the same number of PG (7) films, the most PG-13s (10), and the only two G-rated film.

### **Reliability**

Four graduate coders (three males and one female) were used to code the movies, each received training on films similar to, but not part of the actual sample. This training consisted of every member coding the same five movies independently to prepare for accurate and consistent

coding. Each film in the study was viewed a total of two times by separate coders filling out coding sheets for every male teenage character (see Appendix C). To best limit any bias between coders that may have existed in the research, the data from each of the coders were compared in order to represent one final result. Any problems or inconsistencies between coders were discussed and then later corrected. Unavoidably, disagreements arose, and when they did, the coders reviewed the film and character together to reach a final coding decision.

Holsti's (1969) reliability formula was used to determine intercoder reliability for the scale ratios for substance use of male athletes (100% agreement), sexual measures (89% agreement), social measures (90% agreement), and physical measures (85% agreement). Overall reliability was tested on more than 10% (made up of five randomly selected films and 79 total characters) of the actual sample, in which there was an 89% agreement.

### **Unit of Analysis and Coding Scheme**

Due to the focus on the characterizing images of adolescent male teenagers and athletes in film, we did not code for children, females or adults in the study. Teens were identified ranging from 12–18 years old, using the following subjective criteria: (a) attending senior or junior high school, (b) an appearance of adolescent, (c) obtaining drivers license or not yet driving, and (d) son or daughter of middle aged parents.

#### *Teenage Male Athletes*

Male teen athletes were defined as a male who competes on varying levels of a particular sport, ranging from non-organized to organized competition (Martin & Koda, 1989). Since

teenagers identify groups by clothing, male athletes were also identified when wearing a type of athletic uniform, which consisted of, but were not limited to, a letterman's jacket, jersey, or other team apparel. Characters self-identified as being an athlete or "jock," or identified by another as such, were also considered part of the male teen athlete classification.

We coded for male teens in major and minor roles. Major characters were defined as those that were central to the film through dialogue or action and whose presence affected the direction of the film's plot or subplots. Minor characters were defined as characters who were central to a given scene through dialogue or action but whose presence held little or no bearing on the direction of the plot or subplots in the film (Stern, 2005a).

### **Coding Categories**

Apart from recording the basic demographics of each character such as race, athlete, sport, and name, we broke the coding down into five major categories and used operational coding definitions to identify them (see Appendix B).

#### *Illegal Substance Use*

The first category was labeled substance use, which included coding for substances that would be illegal for teenagers: alcohol, tobacco, ergogenic drugs (steroids), and illegal drugs (Stern, 2005a). Any depiction of a teenage male using any of those substances or reference that inferred they had used them would be coded as such.



### *Sexual Activity*

The second category focused on sexual activity, which looked at sexual intimacy and intercourse, either directly shown or implied in the film. “Sex on TV3” was used as the main source for coding sexual measures in the films (Kunkel et al., 2003). Kunkel et al. defined programs that include sexual intercourse-related content as those that included at least one of the following three elements: (a) talk about sexual intercourse that referred to “specific instances of sexual intercourse that have actually occurred,” (b) portrayals of intercourse implied (i.e., situations in which the act of sexual intercourse itself is not depicted on screen but the unfolding of events that immediately precede or follow it are portrayed and “clearly convey the message that sex has occurred,” and (c) portrayals of intercourse depicted (i.e., situations in which at least some portion of the physical act itself is portrayed on the screen).

### *Academic Intelligence*

The third category coded for academic intelligence measures, which included verbal or non-verbal depictions of grades or GPA, cheating in school, and comments by the teenage male or peer about their academic aptitude where used to code accordingly (Sapolsky & Kaye, 2005).

### *Physical or Verbally Aggressive*

The fourth category coded for physical or verbal aggressiveness towards peers, which included physical acts of shoving, punching, pushing with chest, or staring in a manner intended to intimidate another person. It also looked at verbal aggression such as use of profanity, yelling,

and speaking in a manner intended to intimidate (Scharrer, 2001). When it came to coding for behavior that occurred during competition, only instances when an athlete clearly crosses the lines of inappropriate behavior would it be coded as physical or verbal aggression. For example, in the movie *Orange County* an athlete is coded as physically aggressive when he punches a player in the back of the head while they are leaving the court for half time. Any acts that would be viewed as normal game behaviors like trash talking, pushing, shoving or acts of intimidation would not be coded as physical or verbal aggression.

#### *Popularity and Physical Attractiveness*

The fifth category coded physical and social measures. It looked at the physical attractiveness and the popularity. Physical attractiveness was coded based on features such as body build and shape, facial and hair features, and clothing. Coders determined for each character whether the average viewer will infer that he or she is appealing or not. An attractive character was considered well groomed, pleasing to look at, and healthy-looking. An unattractive character had unbecoming or disfigured features, such as poor hair and skin (Kunkel et al., 2003). Also taken into consideration were comments made about or by this and other characters about their physical appearance such as if one or more person in the film referred to the teenage male in either an affirmative or negative manner in regard to each measure.

For each of these categories listed above, each character was coded as either “yes” corresponding to one of the sub-categories, “no,” not corresponding to the sub-category, or “not applicable” meaning that there was not enough evidence to code a given sub-category.

## RESULTS

A total of 1,899 male teenagers were identified. 81% of the teenagers identified were Caucasian ( $n=1536$ ) followed African Americans ( $n=290$ , 15.3%), Hispanic ( $n=60$ , 3.2%), and Native Americans ( $n=13$ , 0.6%). Due to the lack of minorities, the different races were collapsed into two categories: Caucasian and other ( $n=363$ , 19%) characters. The lack of diversity in these films is comparable to previous studies, in which scholars have found that a disproportionately low number of minorities appear in films (Miller, et al., 2006).

Of this total number of male teenagers, a total of 157 teen athletes ( $n=157$ , 8.3%) were identified. White male athletes ( $n=132$ , 84.0%) were the most prevalent, followed by African American athletes ( $n=20$ , 12.7%), and Hispanic athletes ( $n=5$ , 3.3%). There were no Native Americans or Asian athletes represented. Due to the lack of minority athletes, the different races were collapsed into two categories: Caucasian and other ( $n=25$ , 15.9%).

The majority of the male teen athletes played a major role in the plot ( $n=100$ , 63.7%) in the films coded for, with the rest considered as minor characters ( $n=57$ , 36.3%). In separating the characters into different decades, it was found that male teen athletes increased with each decade, the most being portrayed in the 2000s ( $n=65$ , 41.4%) followed by the 1990s ( $n=50$ , 31.8%) and the 1980s ( $n= 42$ , 26.8%). This high number in the 2000s may have been the result of two of films produced in the 2000s centering on high school football (e.g. *Remember the Titans* and *Friday Night Lights*).

Football was the most popular sport ( $n=63$ , 40.1%), followed by basketball ( $n=21$ , 13.4%), baseball (3.8%), martial arts (3.2%), soccer (1.9%), hockey (1.3%), and gymnastics

(0.6%). The “other” sport category ( $n=51$ , 32.5%) included male teen athletes who were involved in athletics, though lack of evidence did not indicate which sport. For instance, in the film *10 Things I Hate About You*, a male in a letterman’s jacket pushes down a school nerd in the hallway; however, because he does not show up in the film again, there is no telling what sport he plays. He was still coded as an athlete, as were others that fit this model, because of their clothing characteristics that identified them as such.

The frequencies in which male teen athletes engaged in the coded behaviors or had the following characteristics are listed in Table 1. Cross tabulations and nonparametric tests (chi-square, with a standard .05 significance level) were used to answer each hypotheses.

**TABLE 1**  
**Teenage Male Athletes Engaging in Coded Behaviors in Popular Teen Films**  
**From the 1980s to 2000s**

Behaviors/Characteristics	Teenage Males	
	Athletes%	Peers%
Popularity	70.1	19.5
Attractiveness	69.4	57.0
Verbal Aggressor	66.9	17.7
Physical Aggressor	64.3	14.3
Unintelligent	38.2	12.4
Illegal Substance Use	37.6	32.4
Sexually Active	12.1	13.7

### **H<sub>1</sub>-Physical or Verbal Aggression**

The most frequently depicted negative characteristics of male teenage athletes were verbal and physical aggression. Physical and verbal aggression centered on proving and/or

maintaining masculinity or showing dominance over another peer (Barker et al., 2006; Phillips, 2000; Petersen, 1998; Fine & Johnson, 1984; Infante & Wigley, 1986; Rothwell, 1971; Selnow, 1985).

The majority of male athletes in the films were portrayed as being physically aggressive ( $n=101$ , 64.3%) and also verbally aggressive ( $n=105$ , 66.9%). In comparison, teenage male peers were less likely to be shown as physically aggressive ( $n=249$ , 14.3%) and verbally aggressive ( $n=308$ , 17.7%) In regard to  $H_1$  -verbal and physical aggression, male athletes were portrayed more often than their peers as being physically aggressive ( $X^2=9.019$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.004$ ) and verbally aggressive ( $X^2=9.051$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<.005$ ) with a high significance level.

### **H1-Intelligence**

The next hypothesized characteristic was in regard to academic intelligence. Male teen athletes were shown as being unintelligent ( $n=60$ , 38.2%) while their peers were less frequently portrayed as being unintelligent ( $n=216$ , 12.4%). In regard to  $H_1$ - Intelligence, male athletes were portrayed more often than their peers as being unintelligent at a significant level ( $X^2=5.479$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<.03$ ).

### **H1-Sexually Active**

Of all the male teen athletes, 19 (12.1%) were shown or implied to be engaged in some sort of sexual activity as compared to their teen peers who were relatively equal in being shown or implied to be engaged in sexual activity ( $n=238$ , 13.7%). In regard to  $H_1$ - Sexual Activity,

there was no significant difference between how male athletes were portrayed in comparison to their peers.

### **H1-Illegal Substance Users**

When it came to substance use that would be illegal to teenagers (alcohol, tobacco, steroids, marijuana or other illegal drugs), 37.6% of male teen athletes ( $n=59$ ) were either shown or implied to be using some sort of illegal substance. In comparison, 32.4% of male teenagers ( $n=564$ ) were shown or implied to be using one of these substances. The fact that just over one-third of all male teenagers in these films were depicted as using substances that were illegal to them seems alarming; however, there was no significant difference between how male athletes were portrayed in comparison to their peers.

### **H2-Popularity**

Looking at the second hypothesis, in regard to the characteristic of popularity, male athletes were portrayed as being popular ( $n=110$ , 70.1%) very often in contrast to other teen males ( $n=339$ , 19.5%). In regard to H<sub>2</sub>- Popularity, male athletes were portrayed more often than their peers as being popular with a high significance level ( $X^2=27.525$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<.001$ ).

### **H2-Physically Attractive**

When it came to physical attractiveness, the male athletes in the teen films were often considered attractive 69.4% ( $n=109$ ). The other teenage males in the films were also often coded as being attractive 57% ( $n=993$ ). Although it could be expected that a high percentage of characters in these films would be considered attractive, male athletes were considered to be

slightly more attractive than their male counterparts. Nonetheless, when it came to H<sub>2</sub>- Physical Attractiveness, there was no significant difference between how male athletes were portrayed in relationship to their peers.

### **Summary of Hypotheses**

From these findings, the first hypothesis was somewhat supported, in that male athletes are significantly more likely to be portrayed with the following characteristics more than their peers: physically or verbally aggressive and unintelligent. However, they were not depicted to be any more sexually active or abusive of illegal substances than their male peers.

The second hypothesis was also somewhat supported in that male athletes are significantly more likely to be portrayed as being more popular than their teenage male counterparts. On the other hand, they were not coded as being significantly more attractive than their peers. However, the male athlete characters were found to be physically attractive ( $n=109$ , 69.4%) very frequently, it was just not significantly more than their peers. This makes sense, given that a high percentage of characters in films would be considered physically attractive.

## **DISCUSSION**

Various forms of media, notably popular films, have the power to influence teen viewers during the impressionable stage in their lives with consistent and repeated messages. As the results of this study have shown, it appears that the portrayals of male teen athletes in popular films contribute to established views and stereotypes that persist in American society (Stern 2005a, 2005b). As this study found, male teen athletes were most commonly portrayed as being

more physically and verbally aggressive, unintelligent and popular than their fellow male teenagers.

As cultivation theory attests, such a symbolic reality may become part of a partially inaccurate worldwide culture view, which is often seen as reality simply because of its continued portrayal and representation (Gerbner & Gross, 1976). This research includes three decades of consistent messages and images. That said, accurate portrayals of reality in film may not always be the goal of Hollywood filmmakers.

According to social cognitive theory, learning will most likely occur if there is a close identification between the observer and the model. Identification allows the observer to feel a one-to-one connection with the individual being imitated. Vicarious learning, or the process of learning from other people's behavior, is a central idea of this theory, which emphasizes the role of observational learning and social experience in the development of personality. The main concept in social cognitive theory is that an individual's actions and reactions in almost every situation are influenced by the actions that individual has observed in others. People observe others acting within an environment, whether natural or social. These observations are remembered by individuals and help shape social behaviors and cognitive processes (Bandura, 1988). Therefore, it is important to understand that the male teenage athlete observer is finding the modeled behavior of those they identify with in these films as being physically and verbally aggressive, unintelligent, and popular.

This concept of a viewer who identifies himself as an athlete and adopts behaviors modeled in film becomes very interesting because the negative stereotypes could outweigh the positive ones. In addition, the consequences of the negative behavior are rarely shown to have any



harmful effects on the athletes, which makes it more likely that the behavior will be modeled. Since popularity was one of the most significant positive portrayals in the teen films that were coded, it would seem likely that some adolescent males would desire to obtain this popularity by adopting the observed behavior. Unfortunately, these same adolescents may also feel the need to absorb the negative characteristics as well.

In regard to intelligence or the lack thereof, nearly 40% of the male teen athletes were portrayed as unintelligent. Supporting social cognitive theory, other scholars (Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995; Spencer, Steele, & Quinn, 1999; Yopyk & Prentice, 2005) have found that these kinds of portrayals can have a devastating effect on those viewing these films, especially if they themselves are athletes. Yopyk and Prentice conducted a study on the link between athletic self identity and academic scores. The study showed a significant relationship between athletes' perceptions of their own intelligence or lack of intelligence and the opinions of others. If this is true, then male athletes who watch negative stereotypes in film or other mediums, face a very real danger of following suit, whether intentionally or unintentionally, and being impacted academically, psychologically, and socially.

*Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure* shows a classic example of the unintelligence stereotype. In one of the final scenes, all of the students are gathered in an auditorium listening to student history presentations. As the male teen athlete gives his presentation, he is shown rambling, clearly unprepared and uninformed on his subject. As the crowd is shown growing bored and weary, he quickly closes his report by yelling "San Dimas High School football rules!" to which he is met with applause and cheers, especially from his fellow football

teammates. This may seem like a harmless scene, but it is part of a bigger problem of the perception of athletes as being big and dumb but also being rewarded with popularity.

The results of this data also raised other noteworthy concerns, such as the lack of minorities in the films. Studies from 1997 showed that among professional sports, minorities in basketball made up 82% of all players, 36% of all baseball players, and 68% of all professional football players (Laison, 1997). Although these numbers have fluctuated in recent years, they are nowhere near the representation of minorities found in our sample of films. Furthermore, there was evidence of racial stereotyping among these athletes as they were portrayed as attending substantially more parties with alcohol or drugs present. Minority athletes were also shown as dressing provocatively nearly twice as often as their white counterparts, feeding the notion that they are more brawn than brain.

In all, this research supports previous studies on teenage depictions in films (Stern, 2005a and 2005b) and television (Signorelli, 1987; Kunkel, 1994; Males, 1999; Allen, 1999; Heintz-Knowles, 2000). If Hollywood continues to focus more on teenage athleticism, as film makers did in the 2000s with movies like *Remember the Titans* and *Friday Night Lights*, and as such characteristic trends continue, there is a risk of teen athletes in the real world taking upon themselves the “jock” stereotype and adopting the associated traits. In the meantime, the prominence of a symbolic reality will allow other teenagers who do not fit the jock label to continue to embrace false perceptions about teenage male athletes.

## Future Research

Some ideas that would be of interest for future research would be to measure the attitudes and beliefs of the general public against the portrayals that are occurring in these movies. In addition, it would be fascinating to also measure respondents' views in relation to how many of the movies in this study they saw. Data from this type of study could be analyzed from a cultivation effects perspective.

It would also be interesting to measure the attitudes and beliefs of teenage male athletes to understand how they view themselves and what kinds of beliefs and attitudes that they believe the general public has about them. Such data would elicit insights on teenage male athlete view the portrayals of their models in the media and what kind of impact those portrayals have on their behavior. It would also help show how teenage male athletes feel they are perceived by others as well as the effects those interpreted perceptions might have on expected behavior. Comparing this to the reality of graduation rates, criminal offenses, and other comparable data to understand the accuracy of such beliefs and attitudes could be surprising.

Another avenue of research that this study did not look at but would be of interest is the portrayal of athletes from different socioeconomic backgrounds. Other studies have attempted to look at this in newspaper and television news reports (Allport, 1979; Devine & Elliot 1995) and found that more severe negative stereotypes exist about these groups, but it has never been studied in regard to teenage male athletes in popular teen movies. In addition, other studies (Foley & Kranz, 1981; Gordon, 1986) found that members of different socioeconomic groups have developed the generally held belief that athletics is the main way members of these groups

can escape their current situations and obtain wealth and education. Based off of these attitudes and perceptions, it might be of interest to measure the views and beliefs of these different socioeconomic groups to compare and contrast what the views are within these groups. In addition, you could then look at the attitudes and perceptions of those who are self-identified as male athletes in these groups to understand what differences exist if any.

### **Limitations**

This study was limited in that it only coded for teenage male athletes and did not code for female athletes or male athletes either younger or older than teenagers. Also, this study did not code films that were rated-R because the majority of the teenage audience could not attend these movies without parent supervision. In addition, this study only looked at teen films and did not code other film genres.

### **CONCLUSION**

Male athletes are stereotypically portrayed in teen movies as being more popular, verbally and physically aggressive, and unintelligent than other male teenagers. These consistent depictions over three decades have created a cultural view, although possibly inaccurate, that has become reality simply because of its consistent portrayal and symbolic representation. Further, because of popular culture and mass media's powerful influence in shaping adolescents views, teenagers cultivate views of themselves or others within the framework of these stereotypes. The simple, distinct and repeated messages portrayed in teen movies can affect the schema of those who identify themselves or others as male athletes in negative ways.

While this study did not look at rated-R teen films, future research may want to include a sample of those films to better understand how male-athletes are being portrayed in comparison to their peers, especially since such films could contain more and stronger episodes of sexual conduct and substance use. In addition, this study did not include the portrayal of adult or female teen athletes. Future researchers may want to look at the depiction of male athletes in other movie genres, television programs and other sources of mass media. Also, while race was reported on and talked about in the discussion, it was not the prime focus of this paper. Several media effect studies can spring from this content analysis of teen films. Researchers can now begin to explore how audiences are affected by such standardized depictions of male athletes.

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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

Movies Viewed	Box Office Totals in Millions of Dollars
<b>1980s Films</b>	
1. <i>Back to the Future</i> (PG)	\$210,609
2. <i>Honey I Shrunk the Kids</i> (PG)	\$103,724
3. <i>Dead Poets Society</i> (PG)	\$95,860
4. <i>Karate Kid</i> (PG)	\$90,815
5. <i>Footloose</i> (PG)	\$80,035
6. <i>War Games</i> (PG)	\$79,567
7. <i>Ferris Bueller's Day Off</i> (PG-13)	\$70,136
8. <i>The Goonies</i> (PG)	\$61,389
9. <i>Bill &amp; Ted's Excellent Adventure</i> (PG)	\$40,485
10. <i>Pretty in Pink</i> (PG-13)	\$40,471
11. <i>Red Dawn</i> (PG-13)	\$38,376
12. <i>Taps</i> (PG)	\$35,856
13. <i>Adventures in Baby Sitting</i> (PG-13)	\$34,368
14. <i>Teen Wolf</i> (PG)	\$33,086
15. <i>Can't Buy Me Love</i> (PG-13)	\$31,623
16. <i>The Outsiders</i> (PG)	\$25,697
17. <i>Weird Science</i> (PG-13)	\$23,834
18. <i>Sixteen Candles</i> (PG)	\$23,686
19. <i>My Bodyguard</i> (PG)	\$22,482

20. <i>License to Drive</i> (PG-13)	\$22,433
21. <i>Say Anything</i> (PG-13)	\$20,781
22. <i>Young Sherlock Holmes</i> (P-13)	\$19,739
23. <i>Some Kind of Wonderful</i> (PG-13)	\$18,553
24. <i>One Crazy Summer</i> (PG)	\$13,431
25. <i>She's Out of Control</i> (PG)	\$12,065
26. <i>Just One of the Guys</i> (PG-13)	\$11,528
27. <i>Better Off Dead</i> (PG)	\$10,297
28. <i>Lucas</i> (PG-13)	\$8,200
29. <i>Girls Just Want to Have Fun</i> (PG)	\$6,326
30. <i>Hot Pursuit</i> (PG-13)	\$4,215

### ***1990s Films***

1. <i>Casper</i> (PG)	\$100,328
2. <i>She's All That</i> (PG-13)	\$63,366
3. <i>Clueless</i> (PG-13)	\$56,631
4. <i>Rookie of the Year</i> (PG)	\$53,165
5. <i>The Mighty Ducks</i> (PG)	\$50,752
6. <i>Little Women</i> (PG)	\$50,083
7. <i>The Brady Bunch Movie</i> (PG-13)	\$46,576
8. <i>Romeo + Juliet</i> (PG-13)	\$46,351
9. <i>Encino Man</i> (PG)	\$40,693
10. <i>Mighty Morphin Power Rangers</i> (PG)	\$38,187
11. <i>10 Things I Hate About You</i> (PG-13)	\$38,178

12. <i>Richie Rich</i> (PG)	\$38,087
13. <i>October Sky</i> (PG)	\$32,547
14. <i>First Kid</i> (PG)	\$26,491
15. <i>Can't Hardly Wait</i> (PG-13)	\$25,605
16. <i>Don't Tell Mom the Babysitter's Dead</i> (PG-13)	\$25,196
17. <i>Good Burger</i> (PG)	\$23,712
18. <i>Flipper</i> (PG)	\$20,080
19. <i>Drive Me Crazy</i> (PG-13)	\$17,845
20. <i>Buffy the Vampire Slayer</i> (PG-13)	\$16,624
21. <i>Mad Love</i> (PG-13)	\$15,453
22. <i>School Ties</i> (PG-13)	\$14,715
23. <i>Excess Baggage</i> (PG-13)	\$14,515
24. <i>Class Act</i> (PG-13)	\$13,272
25. <i>Little Big League</i> (PG)	\$12,267
26. <i>Drop Dead Gorgeous</i> (PG-13)	\$10,571
27. <i>Cry-Baby</i> (PG-13)	\$8,266
28. <i>Hackers</i> (PG-13)	\$7,536
29. <i>Dick</i> (PG-13)	\$6,262
30. <i>Mystery Date</i> (PG-13)	\$6,166

### ***2000s Films***

1. <i>Spider Man</i> (PG-13)	\$403,706
2. <i>Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire</i> (PG-13)	\$290,013



3. <i>Remember the Titans</i> (PG)	\$115,645
4. <i>Freaky Friday</i> (PG)	\$110,230
5. <i>The Princess Diaries</i> (G)	\$108,248
6. <i>Save the Last Dance</i> (PG-13)	\$91,057
7. <i>Mean Girls</i> (PG-13)	\$86,058
8. <i>Bring it On</i> (PG-13)	\$68,379
9. <i>Holes</i> (PG)	\$67,406
10. <i>Sky High</i> (PG)	\$63,946
11. <i>Friday Night Lights</i> (PG-13)	\$61,255
12. <i>Snow Day</i> (PG)	\$60,020
13. <i>Cinderella Story</i> (PG)	\$51,438
14. <i>Big Fat Liar</i> (PG)	\$48,360
15. <i>Fat Albert</i> (PG)	\$48,116
16. <i>Agent Cody Banks</i> (PG)	\$47,938
17. <i>Napoleon Dynamite</i> (PG)	\$44,540
18. <i>The Lizzie McGuire Movie</i> (PG)	\$42,734
19. <i>A Walk to Remember</i> (PG)	\$41,281
20. <i>Orange County</i> (PG-13)	\$41,076
21. <i>John Tucker Must Die</i> (PG-13)	\$41,011
22. <i>You Got Served</i> (PG-13)	\$40,636
23. <i>Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants</i> (PG)	\$39,053
24. <i>Clockstoppers</i> (PG)	\$36,989
25. <i>What a Girl Wants</i> (PG)	\$36,105

26. <i>She's the Man</i> (PG-13)	\$33,741
27. <i>Bend it Like Beckham</i> (PG-13)	\$32,543
28. <i>The New Guy</i> (PG-13)	\$29,760
29. <i>Stick It</i> (PG-13)	\$26,910
30. <i>Confessions of a Teenage Drama Queen</i> (PG)	\$26,331

## APPENDIX B

### Operational Coding Definitions

**Popularity:** Viewed as being at the top of a school or team status structure (Garner, et. al 2006). Admired by other students or peers. Having numerous friends. Well-liked, sought after, admired, and appreciated.

**Unintelligent:** Dull or stupid. Not academically inclined. Not academically competitive, not academically inclined whether by choice or by nature. Receiving poor grades, having a bad GPA, etc.

**Sexually active:** Intercourse or oral sex shown or implied.

**Physically attractive:** Charming, alluring, or sexually appealing.

**Illegal substances-alcohol:** Attempting to or purchasing alcohol. Being in possession of alcohol. Consuming alcohol with no visible effects (Finley & Finley, 2004). Being visibly affected by consumption of alcohol. Examples include staggering, slurred speech, being passed out, throwing up, etc.

**Illegal substances-tobacco:** Attempting to purchase or purchasing tobacco. Being in possession of tobacco. Actual use of tobacco. Examples include chewing tobacco, cigarettes, or cigars.

**Illegal Substances-drugs:** Attempting to or purchasing illegal drugs. Being in possession of illegal drugs. Actual use of illegal drugs. Examples include marijuana, cocaine, heroin, ecstasy, etc.

**Illegal substances-ergogenic drugs:** Purchasing or attempting to purchase ergogenic drugs. Being in possession of ergogenic drugs. Examples include steroids, painkillers, blood boosters, and other illegal drugs that eliminate fatigue symptoms.

**Male athlete:** A male who competes on varying levels of a particular sport, ranging from non-organized to organized competition. Can also be identified when wearing a type of athletic uniform, which consists of, but is not limited to, a letterman jacket, team apparel, and self identification.

**Character ages-child:** Age range 0–11.

**Character ages-teen:** Age range 12–17.

**Character ages-adult:** Age range 18–64, 65 and up.

**Psychologically/verbally aggressive:** Using words or ideas to hurt others emotionally. Examples include making fun, putting others down, and speaking condescendingly.

**Major role:** Listed in the credits as a major character. Including major role in multiple scenes with dialogue and action.

**Minor role:** Listed in credits as minor character with at least some dialogue or action central to at least one scene.

**APPENDIX C**

**Coding Sheet**

**Name of film:** \_\_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of release:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Character's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_\_ **Child** \_\_\_ **Teen** \_\_\_ **Adult** \_\_\_ **Senior** \_\_\_

**Role:** **Major** \_\_\_ **Minor** \_\_\_

**Race:** **Caucasian** \_\_\_ **Afri./Amer.** \_\_\_ **Hispanic** \_\_\_ **Asian** \_\_\_ **Native Amer.** \_\_\_ **Other** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sport:** **Football** \_\_\_ **Basketball** \_\_\_ **Baseball** \_\_\_ **Martial Arts** \_\_\_ **Hockey** \_\_\_ **Soccer** \_\_\_ **Gymnastics** \_\_\_ **Other** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Substances</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>No</b>
Alcohol use	_____	_____	_____
Ergogenic drugs	_____	_____	_____
Tobacco	_____	_____	_____
Illegal drugs	_____	_____	_____

<b>Social Measures:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>No</b>
Physically aggressive	_____	_____	_____
Verbally aggressive	_____	_____	_____
Unintelligent	_____	_____	_____
Popularity	_____	_____	_____

<b>Sexuality:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>No</b>
Sexually Active	_____	_____	_____

<b>Physical Measures:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Avg.</b>	<b>No</b>
Physically attractive	_____	_____	_____

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