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The Thin Body, The Able Body, and The Student of Color Athlete: Physical Capital in University Viewbooks

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THE THIN BODY, THE ABLE BODY
AND THE STUDENT OF COLOR ATHLETE:
PHYSICAL CAPITAL IN UNIVERSITY VIEWBOOKS

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by

Grace Lavin

2018

Dedication

For my mom, whose love for books and learning has led me to this very moment. Thank you for the endless trips to the public library and the support and sacrifices over the years.

Te quiero mucho, mommy.

THE THIN BODY, THE ABLE BODY
AND THE STUDENT OF COLOR ATHLETE:
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by

GRACE LAVIN

THESIS

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Abstract

University and college brochures and pamphlets provide high school students with the first images and insights into a prospective college. The images of the campus and the students portrayed within them help college-bound students decide whether the institution is a fit and if they can picture themselves on campus. In order to meet the current demand for diversity representation, institutions have capitalized on campus diversity as a marketing strategy to pull in both white students and students of color to their institutions. Previous literature has shown that there exists an overrepresentation of Black and Asian students, but studies have yet to examine what body types are emphasized and excluded in visual representation. This study includes a Bourdieusian qualitative content analysis of college viewbooks from tier-one universities in Texas and California. I determined that there exist preferences along dimensions of ability, class, weight, and sports. This study seeks to contribute to the current literature on campus diversity representation by examining how physical capital, social class distinctions, and athleticism are core ideologies of institutions of higher education.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

University and college brochures and pamphlets provide high school students with the first images and insights into a prospective college. The images of the campus and the students portrayed within them help college-bound students decide whether the institution is a fit and if they can picture themselves on campus. In order to meet the current demand for diversity representation, institutions have capitalized on campus diversity as a marketing strategy to attract both white students and students of color to their institutions.

Some of these efforts have made headlines. For example, a 2000 admissions booklet from the University of Wisconsin was found to have been doctored in an effort to showcase the campuses' diversity. The admission booklet featured a doctored photograph of a Black student's head photoshopped onto the cover of the admissions booklet (National Public Radio website, 2013). Research has shown that these stories are not isolated cases. In their study of more than 10,000 photographed images from college recruitment brochures and pamphlets, Pippert et al (2013) found that institutions over-represent Black students in their materials.

Thus far, research on college recruitment materials often only focuses on racial diversity (Pippert et al, 2013; Hartley & Morpew, 2008; Dishman, 2016) this over emphasis on racial diversity can prove to be problematic, as other aspects of students' identities has yet to be explored.

Furthermore, given that the previous literature (Pippert et al, 2013) on representation within college recruitment materials has focused solely on quantitative measures, an attempt to look past numbers needs to be made. Though research has focused on how many students of color are represented in these materials, we have yet to include an analysis that focuses on how students are represented within recruitment materials. A study that instead focuses on context and what ideals of representation, size, and ability are subsequently communicated through photographs

needs to be made. By looking past numbers of students represented on said materials we can instead begin to learn how students are being represented and what ideologies are perpetuated within higher education.

In addition, current research has yet to explore the representation of under-represented student populations outside of boundaries of race and ethnicity. Studies that examine the representation of students with disabilities¹ and the context in which these students are pictured within university viewbooks, brochures, and online images have yet to be included within academic literature. This is a striking oversight in the literature given that students with disabilities account for 11% of the undergraduate student population in American colleges and universities (nces.ed.gov). Thus, while research has identified who is over-represented in college recruitment materials, we have little information about who is rendered invisible in these representations, such as students with disabilities.

This study is a Bourdieusian content analysis of materials gathered from eleven tier-one universities in Texas and California. I will employ Pierre Bourdieu's (1978) concept of physical capital to analyze how physical capital is represented and reproduced within university viewbooks. I will first be utilizing Bourdieu's conceptualization of social class distinctions and taste as a means of examining body size and the over emphasis on thin and self-disciplined bodies within the recruitment materials. Secondly, I will also use physical capital to explore how ability and disability are represented. Lastly, I will utilize Bourdieu's understanding of social class and sports (1978) to examine how student of color athletes are represented within recruitment materials.

¹ In acknowledging different preferences in communities with disabilities, I alternate between person first language and identity first language.

Chapter 2: Background

BOURDIEU AND PHYSICAL CAPITAL

Pierre Bourdieu's conceptualization of class distinction, or the process by which individuals acquire aesthetic tastes based on their social class, has had a profound impact on sociologists' understanding of inequalities. Bourdieu was primarily interested in how social class becomes embodied and reproduced in physical, social and cultural forms. Within his seminal work *The Forms of Capital* (1986), Bourdieu conceptualized social capital as an economic and cultural capital in which individuals gain capital by way of the social networks they have cultivated. These types of social networks can result in a transfer of resources or social goods. Bourdieu also explained cultural capital as a form of capital in which the social assets a person gains, often due to the social class the individual is born into, such as level of education, style of dress, language, and intellect can directly impact the social mobility the individual has in their professional and academic lives.

Bourdieu's theories also had a profound impact on sociologists' conceptualization of domination and power. He described symbolic violence as "...the violence which is exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity" (Bourdieu, 1992, p167). In other words, marginalized people frequently receive messages that they do not belong or are not welcome in dominant spaces. These groups so regularly and continuously receive these powerful symbolic messages that they in turn internalize their oppression and opt out of opportunities and spaces. Further, this self-opting of opportunities and spaces causes a further perpetuation of oppression as well as lack of representation of marginalized people in places which would otherwise benefit from a milieu of voices and experiences. Within this conceptualization of domination, power, and violence Bourdieu was especially focused on the impact domination has on individuals. He directly critiqued how power often gave way to even further self-imposed forms of oppression

and exclusion. He posits that domination and oppression can often become internalized and perpetuated out of one's own will.

Colleges and Universities are often spaces in which middle and upper-class students are rewarded mostly due to the cultural and social capital they possess (Armstrong and Hamilton, 2013; Soria and Bultmann, 2014). Higher education institutions are often believed to be spaces that can be an equalizer for any and all students despite their backgrounds, yet, findings have shown that in fact universities and colleges are places where in actuality inequalities are reproduced (Archer et al, 2007). Students who fare better during college and after graduation are from middle and upper-class backgrounds in which the cultivation of academics is begun during grade school. These students also do better in university settings due to the parental resources, such as money, social connections, cultural understandings, and educational aspirations, that their parents passed onto them (Armstrong and Hamilton, 2013). Literature has shown that middle and upper class undergraduate students experience the least amount of trouble interacting with professors and authority figures (Armstrong and Hamilton, 2013). While in contrast, low-income undergraduate students experience difficulty speaking with authority figures and often withdraw from them (Jack, 2016).

Though explored less often than cultural capital, Bourdieu conceptualized “physical capital” as an embodied form of capital that is “an integral part of the person... [and] cannot be transmitted instantaneously (unlike money, property rights, or even titles of nobility) by gift or bequest, purchase or exchange” (Bourdieu, 1986). This type of capital posits that we extract social rewards for having particular types of bodies that can perform particular types of accomplishments.

Having a fit body often requires time and resources that are often linked to middle and upper-class status. The ability to pay for a gym membership, healthy food and having the time to go to a gym and prepare the healthy food requires energy and money that poor and working-class people often do not have. For this reason, a thin and fit body is often seen as a middle and upper-class body (Atkinson and Deeming, 2015).

Stirrup et al (2015) suggest that physical capital is taught and cultivated by middle-class parents seeking to keep their kids active. These intensive parents often enroll their children in private after-school activities in an effort to provide developmental opportunities to their kids and teach self-discipline. The cultivation of physical activity from an early age leads to an acquired physical capital that goes on to follow these children well into adulthood. Though studies of college life have focused primarily on cultural capital, physical capital also plays a major role in shaping the norms and values of universities. For example, women's appearance, expensive grooming habits, and the amount of time spent on leisure are found to be important status markers in college social life (Armstrong and Hamilton, 2105). Although Bourdieu did not, at the time, include the experiences of people with disabilities in his conceptualization of physical capital, scholars have begun to include disability/ability into discussions of physical capital. Academics have used the notion of physical capital to study the medical delegitimizing of people with disabilities and their bodies. Often, people with disabilities are delegitimized because of their assumed inability to produce in the capitalist economy. This is further perpetuated by medical professionals and the medical field that often further other people with disabilities (Edwards and Imrie, 2013).

Bourdieu's (1987) original conceptualization of physical capital has grown to include literature that explains both the de-legitimization of people with disabilities and their bodies and

experiences, as well as, the cultivation of physical capital that can be taught and passed down by middle and upper-class parents. Yet, studies have yet to explore how physical capital is cultivated and perpetuated within higher education recruitment materials. How do higher education institutions present physical capital? Are bodies that lack physical capital subjected to othering within this context?

THE FIT BODY

Fat representation and acceptance have for long been ideologies that have seldom been discussed and explored in research concerning students in higher education institutions. Due their age, the default body size of undergraduate students is often assumed to be thin and fit. Yet, these ideologies about thinness and age can also be connected to middle-class standards and ideologies concerning the ideal and disciplined body. Susan Greenhalgh (2015) describes the inception of fat hatred as “Beginning around 1900, fatness became a sign that one was inherently incapable of withstanding the pressures and pleasures of modern life, including the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship; one must be thin to be civilized”. Often fat people are forced to consider extreme dieting, physical activity and weight loss as “normal” forms of weight loss that a fat individual must subject themselves to in order to be considered a “good American bio-citizen and contributing to the collective physical health and mental health of the nation” (Morgan, 2011).

Fat bodies have social class implications tied to them, thin bodies are often seen as the markers of a responsible, self-disciplined, middle or upper-class body (Lupton, 2012) while fat bodies are seen as the antithesis of these ideologies. As Bourdieu (1984) explains, cheaper and fatty food are thought of as being consumed by poor and working-class individuals that cause an effect on body size. It is middle and upper-class individuals who have the means to consume

better quality foods and invest time and energy into exercise that benefit the socially accepted “thin” body. Therefore, body size and fatness are loaded with assumptions about social class, food consumption, and self-discipline.

Fat activists’ call for fat acceptance began as a counter movement to the stigma and medicalization of fat individuals that often-reduced them to diseased, undisciplined and irresponsible people. Beginning around the 1960’s fat activists began re-appropriating the term fat in an attempt to distance themselves from medical terms such as obese or morbidly obese that were often used in negative bio-medical models (Duncan, 2008). Fat activists began holding protests known as Fat-Ins where they burned diet books and photographs of skinny celebrities and held protest signs that read “Cure Emaciation”. In 1969 the National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance was founded to further combat fat-phobia. Recently, fat activists have broadened their efforts and have moved on from their original call for fat acceptance and have now begun to call for fat representation and inclusion in clothing, legislation, and media (Cooper, 2016). Thus, examining whether, and how, fat students are represented in university recruitment materials is of importance.

Throughout this analysis, I use the word “fat” because it is a term that has been re-appropriated and is now preferred by fact activists. The term “overweight” carries a judgment about the normative thin body as well as biomedical roots.

ABILITY AND ABLE BODIEDNESS

College and university campuses are often portrayed as spaces wherein diversity, academics, athletics, Greek life, and student organizations are at the helm of the college experience, yet, many of these activities place great emphasis on athletic ability and leave little consideration for students with certain kinds of disabilities. Disability is often regarded as an

individual status rather than a diverse identity within a growing number of students. Often students with disabilities are relegated to depend solely on their campuses' accessibility and accommodation department as a source of community within their campus (Collison et al., 2012). Centers for diversity and multiculturalism, academic courses, festivals and awareness campaigns that attempt to celebrate or create a sense of community for marginalized identities and readily welcome race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality as identities often discount the disabled community (Shallish, 2015). University and colleges' diversity rhetoric fails to consider disability as an empowering identity (Davis, 2011) and in effect completely overlooks it. When considering the lack of acknowledgment for the disabled community in college campuses we must also take into consideration how this negligence affects students with disabilities perception of themselves and the perception that non-disabled students have of them. How has the erasure of students with disabilities in campus organizations impacted the amount of representation that students with disabilities have?

Given the lack of on campus activism and student lead disability organizations that exist in college and universities, students with disabilities are often overlooked and ignored within their campuses. The lack of on campus presence that students with disabilities seem to have brings into question how and whether students with disabilities are being represented within college recruitment materials. In their study of more than 10,000 photographed images from college recruitment brochures and pamphlets, Pippert et al (2013) found that institutions often over-represent Black students in their materials. Yet, despite the ever-present focus on diversity that currently exists in universities, institutions have done very little to better represent their growing population of students with disabilities. It seems that the current focus on diversity representation overwhelmingly focuses on racial diversity rather than diversity along other

dimensions such as ability or class. The lack of representation that currently exists for students with disabilities leaves little space for prospective students with disabilities to picture themselves on campuses. Research has yet to investigate how disability and ability are represented on college campuses despite students with disabilities making up 11% of the undergraduate student population (nces.ed.gov).

A few studies have found that photographs of disabled and dyslexic students were rarely visually represented and they often “rarely presented the experiences of disabled students, and instead [used] standard logos, generic [photos] of a university campus, or ones showing local tourist [sites], such as a cathedral or castle” (Collinson et al, 2012). As cited above, past studies have found that Black and Asian students are vastly over-represented within recruitment materials, subsequently findings also suggest that disability is a deeply devalued status, even within a context where diversity is valued. Still, past research has focused on who is represented on college brochures and viewbook images, but studies that delve into how students are represented have yet to be explored.

Higher education institutions failure to provide accurate representation of students with disabilities calls into question the implications these faults in visual representation of non-white and disabled students communicate to prospective students and what this says about the institution’s ideals concerning diversity and the ideal student.

SPORTS, CLASS AND RACE

Bourdieu conceptualized sports as a central acquired taste by which social class distinctions are reproduced and maintained by those in elite groups (Bourdieu, 1978). He suggested that elite sports are created and maintained by the elite. Places in which elite sports, such as rugby, football, swimming, are played at and maintained are in spaces that are only

accessible to the elite. He also maintains that those that are able to attend sports possess a higher position in the social hierarchy than those that view it on television who tend to belong to a lower-class. Chris Schilling (2012) extends Bourdieu's original conceptualization of physical capital by suggesting that often sports careers can be a form in which people in lower or middle-class positions can transform their physical capital into a form of economical capital, by way of college scholarships or successful professional athletic careers.

Yet, Bourdieu and Schilling fail to also consider race when conceptualizing sports and social class. Often individuals that take part in lower class forms of sports, such as football and basketball, are black athletes while white athletes tend to dominate higher classed sports such as golf and tennis (Carrington, 2010). Ranikko, et al (2016) posit that these higher forms of sports, often referred to as leisure or lifestyle sports that include skateboarding, longboarding, parkour, and roller derby, are seen as alternative forms of sports that emphasize inclusivity. In reality, leisure or lifestyle sports seem to only be inclusive of white, muscular, masculine, and able-bodied individuals. Spaces in which higher forms of sports, such as swimming (DeLuca and Andrews, 2016) and rugby (Light and Kirk, 2001) are often perceived as elite and exclusive spaces in which literal membership must first be acquired. These forms of sport are difficult to find in working class and poor communities given the lack of funding for pools and golf courses that exists. Ultimately, those that can afford to participate in leisure activities are middle and upper classed individuals.

Chapter 3: Methods

A qualitative content analysis of images within viewbooks gathered from official online university websites was conducted in order to provide a more in-depth exploration of the representation of physical capital in university recruitment materials. Moving beyond quantitative analyses, this investigation also provides a contextual understanding of how students are portrayed within images found in recruitment materials.

This study involved a content analysis of a total of 93 images gathered from eleven total recruitment materials collected from 11 research-one universities in California and eight research-one universities within Texas. I have chosen to stay within Texas and California so that geographic location and population remains similar between the institutions. The images were gathered from online university websites that offered online downloadable versions of campus viewbooks. Schools were chosen based upon their classification as a tier-one university given by the Carnegie Foundation (carnegieclassifications.iu.edu). After the Universities in Texas and California that are classified as tier-one universities were found, this list served as a reference for the request of recruitment materials from university websites and the “request more information” sections within them. In total, requests for recruitment materials were made from eleven tier-one universities within Texas and California. Schools were chosen on the basis of their location within Texas and California, as well as, their status as a university.

The analysis of images from the gathered recruitment materials were counted for the total number of images contained within the viewbooks from each corresponding university. A total of ninety-three images were collected. The images were then analyzed qualitatively. An emphasis on how students were portrayed and the contexts in which they were portrayed was made during the process of coding and analyzing. All web-based images gathered from the viewbooks were saved

using screenshot and stored onto Atlas.ti. The program was also used to analyze the images. Images were coded and grouped according to their respective university and the themes found within them.

Race was coded throughout the sample. In addition, students with physical disabilities and invisible disabilities were both considered. The context in which students with visible disabilities were placed were also considered and accounted for. Given Collinson et al's (2012) findings, the representation of students with invisible disabilities were also analyzed to account for students' physical presence and non-personing by use of logos and symbols.

Social class markers were analyzed including class signifiers such as body size, occupational representations and classed activities such as participation in leisure or lifestyle sports like hiking, skateboarding, and yoga. The presence of such signifiers was also accounted for and analyzed according to context.

Coding for athleticism was also conducted. Students in athletic contexts such as group and individual sports were accounted for. The type of sport the student was playing was also considered. Due to the social class implications that are often connected to sports (Carrington, 2010) sports such as football, basketball, water polo, rugby, tennis, and golf were especially considered.

Coding for body size was also done. Students that were considered fat or thin were coded. Coding for non-white and white students was also done.

Coding for academic contexts was also considered. Images of students reading with or without professors or other students were also accounted for. This was done in an effort to compare the number of non-white and white students that were represented engaging in intellectual contexts.

Although these codes were based on subjective perceptions, given the focus on representation, special consideration was given to how students would be read by the general public rather than focusing on correctly identifying students' actual identities. Due to my positionality as a thin, able-bodied, working class, Xicana, my findings also directly reflected my personal experiences and perceptions.

Chapter 4: Findings

Of the total ninety-three images gathered, 72% featured students participating or engaging in a sport. Twenty-one featured photographs of white students partaking in leisure activities such as hiking, rock climbing, riding bikes, and playing golf. Although two photographs of students of color playing higher classed sports were found, an overwhelming number of photos showed students of color engaging in lower-classed forms of sports such as basketball, football, baseball, soccer, and track existed.

There also existed noticeable differences between the number of representation of student of color athletes between Texas and California. Student of color athletes were more often represented in tier-one universities in Texas, there were 12 images that featured black and other student of color athletes, while California featured eight images of student of color athletes. In terms of images of leisure activities, Texas had 11 images of students engaging in leisure activities while California had eleven as well but they featured two images of students of color engaging in leisure activities.

In terms of number of images that featured students taking part in academic activities such as reading, California featured 20 images while Texas had 10. Of those images, the California viewbooks contained 9 images of students of color reading and 11 of those images featured white students reading. In Texas, of the 10 images found, seven of those images featured students of color reading and three images featured only white students reading. There existed a stark difference between the number of students of color reading in Texas and California. California featured much more images of white students reading while Texas featured more images of students of color reading. Not all universities contained images of students reading, of the eleven tier- one universities in California only six showed images of students

reading, while out of the eight tier-one universities from Texas only four universities included images of students reading. The difference in the amount of representation of students of color and white students reading between Texas and California is startling and telling of the ideologies surrounding academia. More images of student of color athletes were found, and these images were much bigger in size, compared to the number of images that were found that showed students of color engaging in intellectual activities such as reading.

Table of Findings

Activity	Texas	California	Total
Total Images	58	35	93
White students in leisure activities	11	9	21
Students in athletic images	36	18	54
Student of Color athletes in images	12	8	20
Students engaging in reading	8	16	24
Students of color reading	7	9	16
White Students reading	3	11	14

FIT BODIES

Throughout the images gathered, an oversaturation of fit students existed and no images of fat students were found. From the 93 images, 54 images pictured students engaging in athletics. Both viewbooks in Texas and California pictured students on campuses, in group and individual settings, partaking in athletic and artistic contexts that focus on thin students partaking in able-bodied activities. Students in these images were pictured playing basketball, football, water polo, hiking, rock climbing, working out, riding skateboards and bicycles to class, jogging, and doing yoga. All of the students featured within these images were traditionally fit.

One of the images gathered from The University of California at Berkley (Figure 1) shows a group of several women, mostly dressed in white, with their arms stretched out while a black female yoga instructor holding a microphone guides them through their yoga lesson.



Figure 1

A second image found within a viewbook from Stanford University (Figure 2) shows a thin, white woman, her hair is pulled back into a bun. She is wearing a rather expensive looking pink workout top and black tights. She has white headphones, and she is jogging with a picturesque cloudy green field in the background.

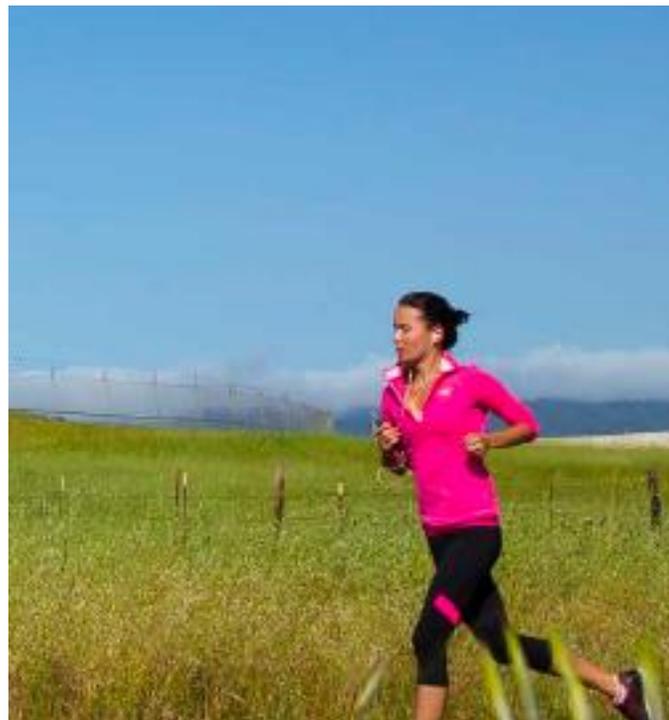


Figure 2

Lastly, an image found within a viewbook from Texas Tech University (Figure 3) features a thin, white, female student ballerina in a black ballerina outfit, her hair pulled back into a bun, with her arms stretched out to her sides and her left foot outstretched towards her back.



Figure 3

Images such as these suggest that for the ideal university student, athletics and discipline extend outside of campus and academic settings. These images suggest that the ideal student who belongs at the university is fit, disciplined, and has the resources and the time to engage in leisure activities and athletics.

SYMBOLIC VIOLENCE AND THE ERASURE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Given that students with disabilities are comprising an increasing proportion of the college student body (nces.ed.gov), I was interested to see whether, and how, disability was represented in campus recruitment materials. The story I found is one of erasure. Among all 93 pamphlets, images gathered only one image of students with visible disabilities was found (Figure 4). The image was very small and was found within The University of Texas at

Arlington's viewbook. It features three male students in wheelchairs in a well-lit school basketball court reaching up into the sky to catch a basketball. All three students featured are fit and muscular. Two of the students appear to be white while the other appears to be Latino. The photo was found within a collage of larger photos that featured students playing basketball, tennis, baseball, softball, and track. In this instance, these athlete students with disabilities are engaging in athletics which symbolizes a sort of physical capital that the students possess in this context despite their disability. Due to their fit bodies, the students pictured possess a physical capital that allows them to take part in the social milieu that has been created in the pages of the viewbook despite their disability. Within all images gathered no images of fat or fat and disabled students were found which suggests only thin and athletic students are deemed fit enough to be pictured and represented. Though multiple viewbooks and images were gathered throughout the data collection process this one image summed up the representation that exists for students with disabilities on university and college campuses.



Figure 4

Through the erasure of students with physical disabilities and the emphasis placed on athletics and bodily exertion, university campuses have created a context in which deviant bodies are

rendered invisible. Throughout the viewbooks, in both Texas and California, students are placed in able-bodied contexts that extend outside the realm of athletics and into the campus itself.

One such image from California Institute of Technology (Figure 5) shows two South Asian male students on bikes, riding down a campus path with trees in the background talking to each other. The students are well dressed, the student on the left wears a maroon tight fitted shirt, light washed jeans, and sandals. The student on the right wears a bright green polo, red shorts, sandals, and a messenger bag.



Figure 5

A second image from The University of California at San Diego (Figure 6) shows a male student carrying a surfboard on his side as he walks down a beach at sunset. It is difficult to see what he is wearing as the sunset has blocked the light in his direction, but he appears to be wearing a crown



Figure 6

Lastly, an image from Texas A&M (Figure 7) shows six students volunteering painting a house, one student holds a ladder while the other rests at the top painting the white house. They all appear to be wearing a green volunteer shirt with white lettering in the back and jeans and shorts.



Figure 7

A normalization of students taking part in activities that rely on physical prowess has been perpetuated and oversaturated within these materials. Meanwhile, students with visible disabilities are not featured also taking part in these activities further pushing them to the margins of campuses. Able-bodied students appear to take center stage in these representations and it appears that again a middle-class ideology is at the heart of these images. The ideal student is depicted as one who is able to volunteer in after-school activities and beach surfing. These are classed and able-bodied representations emphasizing physical capital, as ideal students are able to take part in leisure time outside of school hours.

PHYSICAL CAPITAL AND THE IDEAL ATHLETIC STUDENT OF COLOR

While prior research has established that students of color are over-represented in university materials, I also found that many of the images found within the viewbooks feature

students of color in athletic photographs. The students who are featured are in shape, and in the California viewbooks, are pictured playing upper-class sports such as water polo and rugby. These images suggest that students of color are vastly over represented in athletic images of lower classed sports such as football, basketball and track as well as higher classed sports such as water polo and golf. Students within these photos are contextualized as both able bodied, fit, and are constantly in motion. Exertion, in both lower and higher classed sports, seems to be at the forefront of these images. Three photos in particular touch upon this notion of an “Ideal Athletic Student of Color”.

One example of a student of color engaging in a higher classed sport is seen in figure 8. In this image found in a viewbook from California Institute of Technology a female, South Asian, dark skinned muscular student of color rises up from a pool of water with a water polo ball in hand. Water polo is a typically higher classed sport due to the elitism that exists within clubs and gyms that have a pool (DeLuca and Andrews, 2016). It is often difficult to find a club or gym that has a readily available pool therefore it is often only people from a particular class background that are familiar with and play the sport.



Figure 8

In a second photo from Stanford University (Figure 9) a female, Black student is pictured playing golf. She stands with a golf club raised above her, as if she's in the middle of a stroke, she's wearing a white baseball hat, a white glove, a navy blue fitted polo shirt, white shorts, and Nike golf shoes. Golf has for long been a point of contention in athletics, it is typically seen as the most exclusionary sport for people of color. Black golfers have especially struggled the most to integrate the sport (Dawkins and Farrell, 2008) and despite their best efforts, black and other golfers of color are still vastly underrepresented in professional golf. Of the 25.7 million golfers in the United States, 20.3 million are white, 1.3 million are Black, 3.1 million are Latino, and 1 million are Asian (Bamberger, 2013). Golf is often classed as an upper-class sport due to the exclusivity of golf courses and clubs that typically consist of middle and upper-class players. It is often difficult for a poor or working-class person to pay for a membership to a golf club or

course and it is even more difficult to purchase the equipment that is used in the sport, such as a set of clubs, course or club membership, and appropriate wear. Because of this golf has remained a sport that is typically seen as exclusive to middle and upper-classed people.



Figure 9

In a second photo, from Berkley University (Figure 10), a dark skinned, Latino, thin, male student is shown in motion running. The words “Athletic Movement. Cal’s world-class reputation extends far beyond the classroom- from the gridiron to the pool, the university boasts a lasting legacy of student-athlete success” are seen behind him in a white textbox.

Athletic achievement

Cal's world-class reputation extends far beyond the classroom — from the gridiron to the pool, the university boasts a lasting legacy of student-athlete success.



Figure 10

In an image found within a Rice University viewbook (Figure 11), a black muscular female student athlete can be seen in-motion long jumping with her arms and feet stretched out in front of her. A track field can be seen behind her. Among the fifty-four total images representing students participating in sports, twenty involved students of color engaging in sports.



Figure 11

There is no shortage of images that feature students of color partaking in group and individual athletics, but what most of these images show is the emphasis that is placed on black

and brown bodies to be in constant motion and exerting energy. A pronounced physical capital seems to be placed on students of color who can partake in athletics.

CLASSED LEISURE ACTIVITIES AND RACE

There seemed to exist a difference between the sports played by students of color and the activities that white students were found engaging in outside of school. The photographs found of students partaking in leisure activities outside of an educational or non-competitive context, such as hiking, rock climbing, and golf featured mostly white students. These images also suggest that middle and upper-class leisure time activities are mostly associated with social class distinctions and race. For example, three images were found that illustrate such findings. Figure 12 features a photo found within a viewbook from the University of California at Santa Barbara. The photo shows two students, one male and one female, scaling an in-house rock climbing wall. The female student wears a blue fitted shirt, green cargo pants, and green rock climbing shoes. Her hair is worn in a ponytail. The male student wears a white loose-fitted shirt, red baseball shorts, and red rock climbing shoes.



Figure 12

A second image found from Texas A&M University (Figure 13) shows two thin female students on a green golf course with mountains behind them in the background raising their hands to high five each other with their golf clubs in hand. The two girls wear white and blue skirts, lady's polo shirts, and white baseball hats.



Figure 13

Lastly, an image from The University of California at Davis (Figure 14) shows a female white equestrian rider. She is seen close-up in midair on horseback riding through what appears to be a course. The horse she is riding is light brown and she is seen wearing black riding boots, light tan khakis, a black fitted shirt and a black equestrian riding helmet. Horse riding has for long been an upper class and prestigious leisure sport. Those in the upper class and the aristocracy are often the only ones that can participate and view the sport due to the high cost that is entailed in the breeding, raising, promoting, and racing of horses. During the 19th century, racing was also used as a means to move up in social status (Pinfold, 2008).



Figure 14

The representation of leisure time activities that have been included within the viewbooks oftentimes included activities that are highly classed and white. A precedent for how students are expected to spend their time outside of class is set within these images. An ideology of social class expectations is clearly maintained by including images that show highly classed activities such as rock climbing, golf, and horse racing. Also, the students that are featured within these images are mostly white. What expectations are being set here for non-white students? How are students of color expected to spend their leisure times outside of class? How are college and universities further perpetuating the division of class and sports that Bourdieu (1978) conceptualized?

Chapter 5: Discussion

Through this content analysis, I have explored how physical capital, size, and athletics are represented in higher education materials. Having focused primarily on representations of the fit body, the able body, and students of color with physical capital. The literature on diversity representation shows that there has yet to be a study that analyzes photographed diversity beyond race. Analysis of college viewbooks that focuses on non-normative bodies will provide even further knowledge of the current state of diversity within American colleges and universities. The findings show that there exists an overwhelming amount of representation of thin and active bodies.

An emphasis on fit students of color taking part in lower class forms of sports, such as basketball, soccer, football and track seems to exist. While, in comparison, white students were typically more often pictured engaging in leisure time activities associated with the upper classes, such as hiking, horseback riding, yoga classes, and rock climbing. This draws upon Bourdieu's (1978) conceptualization of sports and social class, in which he suggests that sports are deeply classed in order to meet a demand for expectations, interests and values that players and spectators bring to the field. In this context, a highly classed expectation for which students are expected to partake in certain sports is further perpetuated because of the societal expectations and values that each player, spectator, and institution brings to the field. The findings suggest that there exists a great distinction for what students are expected to engage in lower classed forms of sport such as soccer, basketball, football and track. While white and upper-class students are more often expected to engage in leisure time activities that reinforce and reaffirm their social class position.

Within all 93 images gathered, no representation of fat students was found. This finding leads to questions about how bodies are connected to ideologies surrounding discipline and mobility on college campuses. The ideal of the fit body is typically loaded with assumptions of discipline, thinness, and mobility within the broader society. The stigma surrounding fat individuals as irresponsible and uncivilized has perpetuated into higher education institutions in which fit students are over-represented and fat students have fallen by the wayside. Higher education institutions have seemingly fed into the stigma surrounding fatness and have chosen to solely represent fit students that may also be read as “disciplined”, “thin”, “healthy”, and “civilized”. The stigma surrounding undisciplined bodies is further reinforced by images that showcase fit students on bikes, touting surfboards, taking part in yoga classes, and group hikes. By showcasing fit students, universities are undoubtedly making a statement about what students they wish to recruit to their institutions- those that are responsible and disciplined enough to have a “fit” body and mobile enough to “belong” in middle and upper-class circles.

Although one image of students with disabilities was found, the image was considerably small compared to the other numerous photographs of able-bodied students. The lack of representation of students with disabilities found in this study touches on the erasure and underrepresentation of students with disabilities on university campuses that too commonly occurs. Although one image of students with disabilities athletes was found, the image compared to the numerous and very large photos of able-bodied students found was too small to provide any sort of nuanced representation of students with disabilities and student with disabilities athletes.

The findings on the overemphasis of student of color athletes brings about difficult questions as to how students of color fit into academic institutions. Often, students of color were

shown exerting energy and ideal body sizes, yet, in the California viewbooks there seemed to exist a lack of attribution and representation of intellectual and academic success to these same students. Previous literature shows that often Black student athletes are stereotyped as lacking intelligence, academic integrity, and academic competitiveness when compared to white athletes (Wiggins, 2014). By overemphasizing student of color athletes on their recruitment materials, institutions are further perpetuating and playing into the stereotypes surrounding student of color athletes and students of color in general. Are college and university viewbooks communicating a message to their prospective students that students of colors' value on academic campuses depends solely on their ability to engage in athletics and possess a fit body?

A deep limitation in this study is that there existed only one coder throughout this process. Future research could involve a study in which a focus group of students is created so that students utilized to establish perceptions of students and their identities within viewbook images.

This study also points to new avenues of research that have yet to be explored within the areas of ability, size and representation. For example, though this study focuses on the representation of students with disabilities, fat students, and student of color athletes on college recruitment materials, a study that focuses on the experiences of said students' needs to also be conducted in order to provide a fuller picture of students' experiences on college and university campuses. Does the erasure of these groups in recruitment materials reflect actual experiences of invisibility on campuses? Does this erasure perpetuate into symbolic violence in which prospective students decide against going to university or college because of the lack of representation that exists and instead exclude themselves from higher education in general? Do fat students and students with disabilities explicitly experience physical capital on their campus?

How do they navigate able-bodiedness and physical capital in their daily lives? Although numerous studies that focus on queer and disabled people's experiences exist, little research into the representation of queer and disabled students exists. Further research that addresses how queer and transgender students with disabilities experience fat-phobia and physical capital might also provide further knowledge into how students with intersecting identities experience representation on their campuses. What do they feel their institutions could do to provide a better experience for them? These questions warrant future scholarly attention.

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Vita

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