About the Author: 1. I’m Adam. I’m a senior here at the University of Illinois. My major here is Kinesiology. After graduation, I hope to attend Physical Therapy school. I was interested in this class because I am interested in the human body and overall health and fitness. I thought that this class would be a great opportunity to not only learn more on topics about bodies on campus, but also share in what I know and help discuss with my classmates on certain topics.

Keywords: Student athlete, perception, academic integrity, stereotypes, pressure, stigmas

Abstract: Student athletes on this campus are perceived differently based on their athletic prowess. As long as the players continue to be glorified and celebrated throughout the community, the division will most likely remain. People support athletics and athletes in an attempt to build community and camaraderie. This forms a hierarchy in which athletes are automatically inserted into once they become part of the team. However, not all of the athletes are perceived accolades or scrutiny. Most of this attention is placed on “money athletes”, or the “basketball and football” players. These athletes attract the eye of the public interest. Public interest and TV contracts cast these students as more than athletes’ representatives of the university. Are there different perceptions by the student body towards the athletes? Do athletes feel pressured by these stigmas placed on them, and how do they deal with those stereotypes? Is the public’s perception related to the division of athletes? Is this linked to performance? Athletes are targeted by different populations on campus because of their reflection of the university; these athletes deal with these pressures with different levels of emotion.

Response I: Adam Latarski KIN 442 The two readings from Howson describe the role of one self’s individualism and the way we regulate our body. The third chapter deals with how a person feels shame or embarrassment with their body. The civilizing process of the body shows how society categorizes people. For example, one who washes him or her self symbolizes clean and purity, whereas one who doesn’t has a negative outlook on him or her. The body is described as sacred and pure. Having dirt means pollution, which then translates to out-of-place in this society.
This chapter also has a lot to do with self-restraint. This specifies people in public settings who restrain themselves from behaving in a manner that's not normal in society. The 5th chapter summarizes Foucault's approach to power. One example that goes into great deal of power is the invention of the toothbrush. This is a symbol of power because the modern art of dentistry extends out from not only dentists, but to everyone who can help clean and protect their teeth from bacteria. This chapter also focuses on the surveillance and monitoring of populations in order to correct behaviors that society would place as abnormal. In chapter three Howson preaches about the idea of self-restraint. It talks about how people restrain from doing impolite behavior in public, and sanction their private life to their homes or other private settings. People not only restrain themselves from physically participating in disorderly conduct, but also stray away from discussing it publicly. He then goes into how a child’s self restraint sometimes depends on adult control. An example of this is at school when a child cannot get up and use the restroom. Instead, he or she has to depend on the adult’s approval. This permission from adults extend into high school and even college. My question or critique to this is why should a person have to be under someone else’s control for something that we our taught as infants to control ourselves. I do respect society’s views in that it is respectful to the teacher to ask and not just get up and leave. But at the same time, I believe one should be able to leave class whenever he/she wants in order to participate in his or her self-control. I believe that that is more important than missing 2 minutes of class. It is not just in school where people are subject to someone else’s control. So I believe that Elias’s ideas kind of overlap or contradict each other. Sometimes people cannot control even themselves what they can do with normal bodily functions that only pertain to themselves. It is not his fault for stating this. Society can sometimes put one self’s control out of reach.

Response II: The two chapters that I read were Aerobics and NAAFA by Debra Gimlin. In the Aerobics chapter, an emphasis was placed on women and their body ideals here in today’s society. The author observed two workout groups, one that had a gym membership and one that didn’t. She compared the two, with things like moderate to vigorous activities. In this chapter there were many testimonials on women being scrutinized on their appearance, leaving them to feel insecure, unconfident, and unhappy. It seemed as if this was the main reason for most of the women to try and get into shape. Aerobics provided them an escape from such scrutiny, and also helped them feel better. The NAAFA...
chapter was based on a clinic NAAFA, that recognized fat women to be attractive and beautiful. This was a means for women who were overweight to meet men. It for once made women feel sexually attractive, and boosted their self-esteem. After visiting the NAAFA clinic, most women felt better about themselves in almost every aspect.

These two readings left me with many questions to discuss. First off, I'll start with the positives. I think the author used lively animation with her style of writing, and I enjoyed reading it instead of the traditional boring college reading material. However, I did have a couple concerns. It felt like I was reading a feminist rights book. I don't think she mentioned anything about a male once. Does the author think that men don't feel the same pressures as women to look good? It's 2008. She also portrays a negative bias against men. The comments that women say come from their husbands are very harsh and definitely overexaggerated. She'll even throw in how "my brother never felt pressured" with a negative approach. She overused the point that women are feeling low and bad about themselves. I don't know if the author was trying to uplift women with the aerobics class and the NAAFA clinic, but I just thought she was a little redundant. I could've stopped reading halfway through because I already knew what she was going to talk about. It felt like a broken record.

My last question pertains to the women who are feeling guilty or bad because of their significant other's comments. Even though I know the men weren't saying those comments and they were being drawn out of text, I think women should feel some pressure to look attractive for their partner. It's like being nervous for a test or basketball game; it shows you care, which is good. Some will not hurt. The author acts as if men aren't pressured by their wife or girlfriend. It might not be looks but rather job security and not feeling like a loser. Men feel just as much pressure but in different ways. My conclusion in short is that you deal with it, and overcome it. If you don't it's your own fault.

Proposal Pitch: The UIUC offers many employment opportunities on campus. However, many of these opportunities are limited to students based on one factor: appearance. In this proposal I want to discuss, evaluate, and hopefully solve this problem. Many jobs offer tasks which students are capable of, but they simply do not get hired (or fired) based on their physical appearance.
I'm sure many or all of us have been accepted and denied a position at an interview at some point in our lives. But, did you ever ask yourself why you were hired or rejected? Was it because of your looks or even race? In most cases you'll never know because the employer will not reveal that information to you. On this campus, specifically with a young environment, looks play a tremendous factor in deciding the fate of one's job.

To further investigate this issue, I interviewed students whom I did and did not know. I already had past experiences of students that I knew who could relate to this issue. I did not ask students about their appearance, but rather questions like what their interviews consisted of and who their employers were. My next step is to speak to those employers, specifically those in charge of hiring, and ask questions pertaining to employment. I'll guarantee that looks are not on them.

**Group Proposal/Plan:**

**Sports Culture: The Perception of the Collegiate Athlete**

Today’s student-athlete experiences many situations foreign to the everyday student. Often times it is forgotten that these athletes are actually students. Constantly balancing the pressures of the court and the classroom weigh heavily on the athlete’s minds. In addition, they have to deal with the environment and stigmas that come along with sports culture. Based upon performance, athletes can become the 'Big Man on Campus' or be the butt of scrutiny.

An interesting aspect of sports is the informal connections fans make with the athletes based upon little more than performance. Few jobs in college are watched by thousands, even millions, of spectators. Public interest and TV contracts have cast these students as more than athletes, rather representations of the university. These 'money sport' athletes are under much more of a spotlight than other athletes. For them, the pressures are heightened. Other athletes, especially females, can run around in relative ambiguity, while ‘money athletes’ are constantly in the public eye. For better or worse, the public construes perceptions of these athletes from an outsider’s perspective often times based on little more than athletic prowess.

Do students perceive athletes differently?

Do students perceive ‘money athletes’ differently than other
athletes?

How were these perceptions formed?

How do athletes deal with the stigmas?

Are there any myths that athletes wish to dismiss?

What can be done to change such stigmas?

Do athletes feel they are socially targeted or typecast?

Is there a difference in athletes’ demeanors on and off the field?

How much does their on-field behavior carry over to public perception?

Do athletes feel pressures from the student body and public?

How does this public perception change with performance?

**Data I:** For my option, I chose to observe a basketball game at IMPE. The reason I chose this was because for my group topic we are doing student body athletes, and since I couldn’t observe any of the athletes’ practices, I chose to observe not only the game being played, but also anyone watching the game. I chose a basketball game because men’s basketball is arguably the most popular sport here. For my observations, I wanted to look at the way the players treated each other, the way one idolized another player, and also the way the audience or crowd reacted to the players’ effort and performance. I was lucky that it was an intramural game with a set time and score so that it was more related to a collegiate game, instead of being a pick-up game. This was a good opportunity to relate what I saw to what goes on the college level. I
believe a player’s performance plays a great part in deciding how one is treated.

For the first 10 minutes of the game, I wanted to basically observe the people and the setting. There were obviously 5 players on each team, with about 5 players on each bench. The teams played two 20 minute halves, with an intermission between each half. There were roughly 10-20 fans or other spectators including myself at the game. These people were mostly students, if not all. Most of them were probably frat and sorority kids. They were mostly friends of the players. After the initial 10 minutes, I started paying more attention to the game. I watched the flow of the game and how each player moved throughout the game. I focused my attention on one player for a few minutes of the game to record certain key characteristics of this observation. I looked to see how the other players would react or treat this player after a made shot or a good play. My expectations were true. Every time the player made a field goal, the other players would congratulate him by either high-fiving him or telling him nice shot. It was interesting to see how they would treat him if he missed or made a bad play. The next time down he made a basket again, but this time I looked in the crowd for a reaction. They too applauded his work. So now I couldn’t wait for him to mess up, even though that sounds bad I needed to see the other side of things. So after a couple of minutes the guy finally missed a shot. After this, I immediately looked over to the players to see their reaction. Most
of them didn’t say much or if they did they just said things like don’t worry about or keep shooting. The next time he missed I looked at the crowd and saw that none of them had much emotion on their faces. By the end of this I had concluded that so far the players and fans had respect for the guy and that’s why he received no boos or bad feelings. I was anxious to see the reaction if he kept missing.

Over the next several minutes, I looked at how the players matched up or guarded the other players. I found that most of the big or tall players were evenly matched with tall players, and if a smaller player got mismatched on a bigger player, he was very intimated or frightful for his team’s performance level. I paid notice to how the players treated the bigger and stronger players. You could see how they played less aggressive against them. I definitely noticed this maybe while others did not, simply to the fact that I played basketball and could relate to that issue. That’s a very critical issue because if you’re not aggressive like you are to the other players, it can have a negative effect on your team’s outcome. The taller and stronger players seemed to be dominating the game early, and again this was due to the fact that the other players simply weren’t playing as tough or aggressive as they would if they were matched up against smaller or weaker players.

Throughout the game, I continued to keep an eye on the same player before. I noticed that he started to miss some of his shots and wasn’t performing like he was earlier. He was missing more and more
shots and wasn’t making the easy ones like he did earlier. He was also making bad plays defensively. I started to notice the way the other players would react or treat him. They too, began to get frustrated. I could notice that they didn’t want to say anything to him personally, but he was making some inexcusable plays. So after he missed another shot, one of the players told him to pass to him because he was open. Another player said aloud “stop taking bad shots” but didn’t say it directly to him. It was interesting, also, to see the fans. They were way worse. I heard them talking negative things about the kid when he started missing more frequently. They were saying things like “get him outta there,” or “he sucks why is he shooting?” As the game wore on, the team that I was focusing on started to lose by more and more. By doing this, their attitudes kept getting worse as well. The rest of the players stopped passing to the kid that kept missing. They played lazy on defense, and started losing control completely. They made some inappropriate shoves or fouls. It was very intriguing to see the way their emotions completely changed throughout the game.

For this observation, I was glad I chose the team with animosity. This was perfect with connection to my project. It was a clear description of how athletes are treated based on their performance. It showed the highs and lows of a particular player. It showed how great and positive a player or crowd’s reaction can change in the total opposite direction of a game. The interesting thing about this is that this guy was
friends with these kids. It was amazing to see how negatively they
turned on him based on a game. It brings up point. Are sports, not only
on a collegiate level, but as whole, taken too seriously? I do realize that
sports play a great deal in almost every citizen’s life, but we do have to
remember one thing, especially ion college sports: these athletes are
students, kids basically. I think critics forget to realize that they are
human too. They are put on such a high pedestal, that we forget to cut
them some slack sometimes. However, I am not fully bashing sports as
being to overpowering. I think they provide a lot for this country. The
main thing it provides, in my opinion, is an escape from the war. It takes
our mind off of from what’s really going on in the world. It is a great
form of entertainment. But I also believe that there are more important
things to worry about, or be completely hatred of, then sports or a player.

This observation was very successful in that it allowed me to get
a better knowledge on my project. It allowed me to further draw
conclusions about what I want to talk about on student athlete bodies.
Athletes are a big deal here on this campus, and it is an issue that should
be addressed and further researched. I think that the first step in
correcting this problem lies in the people. I think that yes, sports and
being active are important, but so are lots of other things like school. I
think that if there were more commercials on school or famous people
sponsoring it, then more kids would look up to it and want to engage in
school and get a good education. Instead, they see athletes on T.V.
sponsoring who knows what, and most of these athletes end up setting a bad example for these kids. So these kids are left thinking they’re going to be professional athletes, when in reality they’re going to be in the everyday workforce. I think that looking at sports more lightly might enable viewers to critique with less harm.

Data II:

Group Analysis: Sports Culture: The Perception of the Student-Athlete Adam Latarski Eric Anderson KIN 442 analysis Athletes are targeted by different populations on campus because of their reflection of the university; these athletes deal with these pressures with different levels of emotion. The student athletes are perceived differently based on their athletic prowess. In addition, the division of athletes here on campus influences the way spectators view them. Are there different perceptions by the student body towards the athletes? Do athletes feel pressured by these stigmas placed on them, and how do they deal with these stereotypes? Is the public’s perception related to the division of athletes? From this hypothesis, the goal of this project was to research and find just exactly if these assumptions were true regarding the athletes and whether any bias did in fact exist. Through our observations and interviews, the data should show a clear reflection of the different perceptions on athletes and also the athletes’ perceptions and thoughts on this issue. This topic was construed for a variety of reasons. It is an issue that many people, if not all, can familiarize themselves with here on campus. There is a long history of an equivocal balance between athletes and perceptions from the media and fans. It becomes an even bigger issue when you are at a big Division I school, because of the dollar signs involved. The fact is that the athletes are representatives of the school and people like to identify with groups in order to form bonds. Athletics is a prime example of this. People support athletics and athletes in an attempt to build community and camaraderie. This forms a hierarchy in which athletes are automatically inserted into once they become part of the team. However, many of these perceptions and pressures are not placed as highly on ‘other’ lesser known, ‘Olympic sport’ athletes, at least as far as the media and campus community is concerned. As public figures, athletes are placed under a spotlight that can shine brightly or in a flash, cast a dark shadow. The public at large enjoys placing labels onto groups in order to create an easier way to form descriptions. This leads to a
stereotyping of athletes under an often times undeserved umbrella. The use of television, broadcasting, and advertisement has a strong influence and can determine the way outsiders view athletes. Many of the less recognized sports do not gain a lot of notoriety. This can lead to an unfair bias on some of the athletes who do receive more attention. Through observations and interviews, data has been collected to enhance the knowledge of the perception of athletes here on campus. In the first observation the purpose was to get a rough draft on the correlation between not only athletes, but people in general and the communication between them when dealing with sports. In this observation, a basketball game took place between two intramural teams. One player was looked at closely throughout the game to monitor his performance and the reactions of the spectators. What was seen was a positive attitude towards him when his level of play was high, turned into a negative attitude when he was not performing as highly. He would get cheered when he did well, and even booed when he performed poorly. These findings lead me to support my hypothesis that an athlete's performance determined the reaction or bias he would receive from certain populations on campus. Another observation took place at one of the most vaunted locations on campus. The Assembly Hall has long been a landmark of Illinois basketball and the University of Illinois itself. It was a Senior Night vs. Minnesota, and a special game for a lot of people in attendance. The three senior ballplayers, the senior managers, the senior members of the band, cheerleading, and dance squads, and the seniors in the Orange Krush student section were all a part of their last home basketball game as a member of the University of Illinois student body. Senior Night is a special night in which the players and the fans get to thank one another one last time in a special tribute to their services and contributions to the community and the team. It’s always filled with a lot of emotion and reflection developed over the last four years. This day was no exception. As the pregame festivities were about to begin, there was a different feeling in the arena than had been present in my previous three attendances of Senior Night. The stands were not filled; in fact the seats were barely half full. Gone was the mystique from Illinois legends. In its place was a rather maligned, exhausted crowd ready to move on and put this season behind them. Nevertheless, the crowd of around 7500 that was in attendance displayed gratitude towards the seniors and their accomplishments along the way. Even then, the jeers were toned down to a point where it seemed as though the crowd as a whole was doing little more than paying lip service to their respective seniors. Why has there been such a change in the
response over the last 4 years? Was it the people being honored? Or was it a simple fact of wins and losses and the related fallout? In the third observation, some of the basketball players here on campus were observed through practice and also from a tour with senior citizens. In this study, the goal was to observe the relationship between athletes and fans and also differentiate the relationship between the athletes and older adults and the athletes and the students. Through this observation the athletes’ relationship between them and the older adults was different than from the students. The players were quicker to show more respect to the adults, while some of the students they might have seen as friends. It was an intriguing note about power in society with position among age. A lot of the older adults could make a couple rude comments here and there and get away with it; whereas, the younger students would refrain from saying something ignorant because of their age and power in society. Also, one of the adults was a huge fan of one of the past players, while a couple of the students hardly knew any players or even cared. This showed the differences in the way people on and off campus treat or glorify athletes. It also put a perspective on some of the fans here on campus. In addition, four interviews were conducted to see how different perspectives see the issues of perception. The interviewees included a male student, a female student, a male basketball manager, and an athlete on the varsity men’s basketball team. Again, it became obvious that where they happen to stand is where they would stand on an issue. When interviewing the athlete and from personal experiences around the basketball team, there was a distinctively different approach to the questions. Obviously, they encounter more interviews, however the proceeding arrogance, or confidence if you will, shown through in both the cookie cutter responses, and the attitude towards their place upon the campus hierarchy. Overall, the interviews revealed the fact that yes, there is a perceptual difference between athletes and the general student body, a division amongst athletes themselves, and stigmas around campus that reflect upon them. Students also called into question the academic integrity of the university when admitting athletes. It is an issue that is seen within many major sports programs. Should athletes receive lower standards of admittance? There is a tradeoff that is seen by the department heads which allow this to occur. In order for services beneficial to the university, the athletes are allowed to enter with lower scores than normally acceptable. These findings in this data led us to believe that athletes are indeed perceived differently by different populations; some based on performance while others still unknown. Another finding in this study was that even though the
gym facility was separated equally from men and women's basketball, the women's side was hardly looked at. The men's were almost exclusively looked at and received a great deal of review, while the women's were almost unseen. This raised a number of questions. Not only was the division of athletics shown, but also the differences in male and female sports. Once again, this can be traced back to the fact that higher advertisement contributed to more attention or emphasis being placed on the athletes. These findings from our data were very crucial in supporting our claims. Being able to view the athletes was important in developing a sense of communication, verbal and nonverbal, between the athletes and their fans. We were able to look closely at how the fans view the athletes, and how the players respond. The data also showed how performance plays a dramatic role in determining a player’s stereotype. Also, these finding spoke a lot about this university. If you're watching a game on T.V. you see how many crazy fans are at the game and you quickly jump to generalizations everyone’s beliefs and actions. However, from one of the observations it was clear that that is not the case. Many of the students failed to name 2 of the players, whereas the older adults knew almost all of the players and were a lot more enthused with the tour. A key component of this observation was that the basketball athletes were able to be observed. This was crucial because basketball is arguably the most popular sport here at this university. This is where the highest levels of critique would take place. Another important finding outside of this data is from another observation with senior citizens. A different tour was taken at the golf facility. At this event, many of the older adults were less excited or interested in the trip. This drew a connection between the more popular sports on campus, compared to the less recognized or appreciated. Little is known about some of the less popular sports on campus, because they don’t have the same exposure opportunities as some of the highly notarized ones. They don’t receive a lot of media or television time, so the common fan cannot necessarily draw the same interest as for example, football or basketball due basically to the TV contracts and money involved. Either way, much of the criticism is not fair to the athlete and shouldn't be tolerated. In order for things to change the way they are about this issue, a great deal would first have to change. For one, if the athletes feel too much pressure and don’t like the situation they are in then they shouldn’t be playing because they’re not the ones who are going to be able to take action. The main source comes from the television network. Some of these athletes shouldn’t be glorified as much on T.V. because this can lead to a high disregard from their peers. The
less notoriety the athletes receive, the less criticism he or she is
going to take. However, this will also lead to less positive
attention as well, which many of the athletes would not choose to
have. Again, there are other cases in which athletes thrive on
attention and become local legends and community
ambassadors. So, it is really a two-way street, and it is a part of
the coaching staff’s duties to prepare their players for such
situations, and definitely influences the staff to evaluate players
based upon their character and emotional makeup when
recruiting. The main proposal or future plan for this has to come
with coming to the sense that athletics are a sport, a game.
Sports are great in that they generate athletes so many
opportunities. They provide a platform for the select student-
athletes to receive free educations, see other cultures, and
experience emotions that are hard to duplicate outside of the
sports realm. But it is important to keep a perspective on these
kids. The competitions are not a war, not politics, not education;
they’re a game. More emphasis in school should be focused on
education, while sports should be looked at more as a game and
physical activity. This may seem harsh, but the common fact
comes down to that 98% of the players are not going pro, so
people should invest in something else to benefit their life. Sports
are indeed very important for fans in that they take their mind off
of stress and are a great form of entertainment, and that’s what
they should be seen as. Ideally, this would lead to a lesser bias
among divisions in athletes. This would also contribute to less
scrutiny towards the athletes, which a negative effect that they do
not deserve. In simple, they deserve to be treated as people and
not figures. Abstract: Key Words: Student athlete, perception,
academic integrity, stereotypes, pressure, stigmas
Student athletes on this campus are perceived differently based on their
athletic prowess. As long as the players continue to be glorified
and celebrated throughout the community, the division will most
likely remain. People support athletics and athletes in an attempt
to build community and camaraderie. This forms a hierarchy in
which athletes are automatically inserted into once they become
part of the team. However, not all of the athletes are perceived
accolades or scrutiny. Most of this attention is placed on “money
athletes”, or the “basketball and football” players. These athletes
attract the eye of the public interest. Public interest and TV
contracts cast these students as more than athletes’
representatives of the university. Are there different perceptions
by the student body towards the athletes? Do athletes feel
pressured by these stigmas placed on them, and how do they
deal with those stereotypes? Is the public’s perception related to
the division of athletes? Is this linked to performance? Athletes
are targeted by different populations on campus because of their reflection of the university; these athletes deal with these pressures with different levels of emotion

**EUI Links:**

The reading by Kristin Bolston called Illinois Physical Education: Separation to Unification made an important connection to my research project. This reading focused on physical education and the department of Kinesiology and dealing with women involvement. Both the men and women had similar approaches to teaching, and this led to a merger between the two in 1970. However, the drop back to this was that a lot of the women felt like they were not being treated as highly as the men or felt that in the near future they would be. Most of the women’s physical education focused on health, dance, and recreation while the men focused on speed and strength activities.

This article played an important role in my project because in one of my observations I observed a bias between the men and women teams here on campus. I went on a tour that lasted about an hour and 50 minutes of the tour focused on the men’s team. This is something that happens not only on campus, but around the world, especially when dealing with sports. This is a subject that women are still relatively new to, whereas the men have a long history of sport involvement. Many of the women in the same department as men may fail to gain higher status in their job positioning because of this bias that does exist.

**Reflect:**

I enjoyed working with the EUI research process. I thought that this process was helpful for me because it not only gave me further research
on my topic,

but it also provided other topics that were related to mine, and helped me

compared the two. Working in an online environment was good for two

reasons. For one it allowed my peers to view my work and make corrections if

need be, and also it was another way to submit your work instead of the

traditional hard copy. I thought that it was an overall positive experience.

**Recommendations:**

The recommendations that I would make pertain to the findings I found in my reading on physical education among the different genders. One suggestion is to relate their findings and research on the roles of the women in that department to the roles of women in other departments. Women are held back in position in many job roles, not just physical education. This recommendation should show significant research that backs this claim up. An interview with employees of different jobs would be a good start. Also observations at work can show the gender roles in the workforce.

Another recommendation is towards the moodle webpage. I think that a suggestion should be to limit the student and group research pages to just one. If the students have to provide your data in almost both all the time, there should just be one. This would save a lot of time and would be a little easier and more organized. Also, it would be easier for the teacher to organize.

The last recommendation would be on the research phase. I think that more time in class should have been presented to work on our data together with our group members. I think that this would be more helpful since we do not get a whole lot of time in class, and outside of class it’s sometimes it’s difficult to meet with each other’s conflicting schedules. This is time that the students need to work on in order for the project to be presented the way we want it. Overall, the research process was a success.