

MPC MAJOR RESEARCH PAPER

Strong is Beautiful(?): A Multimodal Analysis of Strength and  
Beauty in Female and Male Sports Commercials

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### Abstract:

Taking inspiration from Naomi Wolf's *The Beauty Myth*, this major research paper examines the ways in which strength and beauty are constructed in female and male sports commercials. Building off of themes such as the sport-media complex, encoding and decoding models of communication, media representations of women and post-feminism, this paper is concerned with exposing the disparities between media representations of female and male athletes. Using the Women's Tennis Association's "Strong is Beautiful" ad campaign in tandem with AT&T's "Paul George Strong" ad, the questions that guide this major research paper are:

- *How does strength act as a reductive concept?*
- *How is the word "beautiful" encoded in the "Strong is Beautiful" ad campaign?*
- *At what level (i.e. connotative or denotative) do the words "strong" and "beautiful" operate in the "Strong is Beautiful" television commercial?*
- *At what level does the word "strong" operate in the "Paul George Strong" television commercial? And finally, what does the "Strong is Beautiful" television commercial and the "Paul George Strong" television commercial communicate about the beauty myth in sport? What do these commercials say about post-feminism in sport?*

Employing social semiotic theory and multimodal analysis, this paper concludes that strength is applied universally to the female athletes in the "Strong is Beautiful" commercial which solidifies the term as a male standard. As a result, the term has an oppressive connotation when used to describe female athletes thereby contradicting the very notion of what a female athlete should be: empowered.

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## Introduction:

Despite being written twenty-five years ago, Naomi Wolf's *The Beauty Myth* (1991) has proven to be a seminal text for understanding the relationship between women's liberation and female beauty as the book is still at the top of university course syllabuses and has been referenced by many in their own work on female beauty (Armstrong, 2013, McCracken, 2014). In *The Beauty Myth*, Wolf (1991) argues that as women gained more power and rights in the 1970s, a myth of attainable beauty was circulated in order to keep them in their inferior position. As women broke through economic, political, educational and social barriers, images of beauty became harsher. Plastic surgery became a popular medical field, eating disorders rose exponentially and pornography became a huge media industry (Wolf, 1991). Although women today appear to be better off than their mothers and grandmothers in regards to political, educational and social rights, when it comes to beauty and concerns regarding their physical appearance, they seem to be worse off (i.e. eating disorders, plastic surgery, makeup and fashion complexes). Believing there is an attainable standard of beauty that one can achieve is the core of women's oppression and reveals more about men than it does about women. The beauty myth is a direct backlash; a political weapon used to respond to the liberation of women (Wolf, 1991). Wolf's ideas in this seminal text mark a starting point for my research, as I endeavor to expand on her work by applying it to the field of female sports. Although a book, the "beauty myth" will be referred to as a concept throughout this paper. I define the beauty myth as an obsession with physical perfection that confines women into a never ending cycle of self-consciousness, guilt and hope as they try to fulfill Western contemporary's social standards pertaining to female beauty. The beauty myth manifests itself via mass media images that are constructed with hegemonic gender norms in mind. Essentially, the beauty myth convinces women that beauty is a



quantitative term that is measurable and thus that there is an objective standard of beauty that they should seek to embody.

Since the beauty myth is disseminated via media images, I have chosen to analyze sports commercials, as they are a form of constructed representation that convey meaning and messages to audiences. Brace-Govan (2010) states that representations put forth in sports commercials are significant cultural resources as they communicate messages about what an active body looks like. These messages have effects on audiences, even if audiences themselves are not physically active. Ultimately, sports commercials teach audiences how to think about athletes and their bodies, making them an important media form to analyze when researching the field of sports.

For this paper, I have selected the Women's Tennis Association's (WTA) "Strong is Beautiful" television commercial as the primary text for my research. For comparative purposes, I have also selected AT&T's "Paul George Strong" television commercial, which features a popular basketball player: Paul George (PG). Herein, I will analyze these ad campaigns to see how the beauty myth and the concept of strength are expressed in female sports commercials.

Analyzing the beauty myth within the context of the sporting world is not random, but purposeful. As a sports fan, I have recognized the lack of attention paid to women in this context. Moreover, I believe that there is a false sense of equality within the realm of sport. Since women are more involved than ever in sports (Fink, 2015), there is a belief that women have achieved equality in this regard. However, I do not believe that quantity equals quality, as negative media images and attitudes surrounding women in sport are still present and felt by many female athletes. Therefore, this paper seeks to expose these disparities and raise awareness about these issues in hopes of changing the media images that are circulated about female athleticism.

## Literature Review:

### The world of sport and the sport/media complex

Although the beauty myth can be explored in various facets of everyday life (i.e. the workplace, school, health etc.), as mentioned previously, this paper will examine the beauty myth within the world of sport. To start, this paper begins by examining the cultural relevance of sport. Understanding the cultural relevance of sport is paramount for examining how sport transmits messages about women to audiences. At a fundamental level, sports function as a way to bring people together; they evoke a sense of unity (Jhally, 1984). Moreover, the act of watching sports has become a ritual in Western contemporary society and as a result, a major vehicle in which meanings are made and communicated (Parente, 1977). In a culture where the Superbowl is the most watched television program each year, ticket prices and sales to sporting events continue to break records and where sports are emphasized in education, it is no wonder that they play a fundamental role in shaping and changing the cultural and material processes of Western contemporary society. Although sport has been praised for its ability to evoke a sense of community by bringing together different races, religions, sexes, ages and cultures, what is less explored is that it is a vehicle for cultural transmission. Less recognized as a tool of domination and more recognized as a form of play, Hoch (as cited in Jhally, 1984) argues that sport is used as a way to transmit dominant ideas and world views in what he calls “an increasingly anti-human society.” Much like any other cultural institution, sports have become a mere reflection of the society in which they reside. As a result, racism, nationalism, competitiveness and most importantly, for this paper, sexism are all ideologies that are inherent in sport. In order to further understand sport as a mode for transmitting dominant ideas in Western contemporary society, the next section discusses the symbiotic relationship between media and sport and how this

relationship effects the way women in sport are framed.

*The Sport Media Complex:*

This subsection explores the intersection between sport and media. Understanding this relationship is crucial for determining how sport upholds the beauty myth and conceptions of strength and how sport functions in accordance with media values. Despite its role as an arbiter of cultural and material processes of Western society, sport is a capitalist venture (Jhally, 1984). Sports are concerned with securing profits and many sports teams are privately owned. Sports produce commodities that are sold and then bought. Therefore, understanding sport as a capitalist institution invokes discussion about another fundamental feature of the sporting world: the media. Sport and media have a symbiotic relationship. Without each other neither would exist. The interdependence of sport and media has become so profound that scholars have coined the term “sport media complex” (Jhally 1984; Kane et al, 2013) to refer to this relationship. Therefore, the mass media plays a crucial role in the way groups of people, thoughts and ideas are communicated and represented through sport. Specifically, the sport media complex plays a vital role in the way women are framed in sport; whether it is through live events, commercials, interviews or commentary. Furthermore, the sport media complex, as identified by numerous scholars, is a vehicle for maintaining male power and hegemonic masculinity (Segrave, McDowell & King 2006; Kane et al. 2013). Moreover, Kane et al. (2013) argue that the media reflect dominant ideologies that position sport as a male terrain which trivializes, marginalizes and ignores the athletic achievements of women. More alarming, however, is how sport chooses to represent women. As identified by Kane et al. (2013), women are showcased in a way that emphasizes their sexuality and femininity over their athletic ability. Many scholars have echoed these findings stating that the language the media use to describe women and women’s sports

contributes to a culture of devaluation of women's athletic ability (Segrave et al., 2006; Fink, 2015). Therefore, although women are participating in sport in record numbers (Fink, 2015), the close relationship with the media and the ability of sport to transmit dominant ideology to audiences means that women are often represented in a way that maintains the status quo. The status quo is maintained through the beauty myth, as the beauty myth is a vehicle through which the sport/media complex communicates ideas about what a female athlete should look like (Wolf, 1991). As a result, the female athlete is left with the paradox of being feminine in order to secure media attention, but also being outstanding at their sport in order to be taken seriously by their male counterparts. While this section explores how sports maintain the existing social order, the following section explores how the beauty myth is upheld in sports ads by exploring how codes are used to construct meaning.

### Encoding and Decoding: A Page from Stuart Hall

Stuart Hall's classic writing, *Encoding/Decoding* (1980), is extremely important for determining how messages about women's athletic ability and beauty are constructed. Despite the ability of producers (encoders) to impose their own ideologies and social contexts into messages, Hall (1980) advocates against a linear model of message reception. Rather, Hall (1980) believes that messages can be decoded in various ways by audiences, depending on one's own social, cultural or political position. Moreover, he argues that the receiver of a given message has the ability to effect the encoding of a message. For instance, if a message is not decoded in the way a producer had intended, they might adjust their messaging in order to have their message perceived in the intended manner. However, understanding the encoding and decoding of media texts becomes complicated when analyzing televised content. Hall (1980) notes that television complicates the encoding/decoding process because signs are both visual

and aural in this medium. Therefore, signs do not refer to their actual concept. He uses the example of a dog in a film to illustrate his argument. While a televised image of a dog can bark, it cannot bite (Hall, 1980).

Hall (1980) also argues that although reality exists outside language, reality is consistently mediated by language. What we know is produced through discourse; making discursive knowledge an articulation of real conditions of language. Essentially, discourse makes knowledge. Hall's arguments suggest that our understanding of the world around us is mediated by language and produced through discourse; as a result, what we see on television is not real, but rather a constructed representation of the real. Gruneau (1989) provides insight on how television constructs representations of the real by analyzing live sporting events. He notes that although a sporting event appears live and unstructured, the medium of television *is* structured and as a result, ideological viewpoints and assumptions become entangled within sports coverage. Just like Hall (1980), Gruneau (1989) agrees that television complicates things because of the combination of visual and aural codes. Specifically, within the sporting world, visual codes have a large effect on meaning making, as close-ups, time manipulation, action shots and split screens combine to create a "preferred meaning" that is unachievable by static images or words alone (Gruneau 1989). Applying this knowledge to female sports, it is no surprise that women are typically framed in ways that agree with hegemonic gender ideologies. For instance, Segrave et al. (2006) note that there are many linguistic conventions via television that can be attributed to the devaluation of women in sport such as gender marking, highlighting of aesthetics, subcultural language and naming differences. These visual and aural codes are all used to subtly reinforce and or highlight certain things about women's athletic-ness that would not be possible when attending a game live.

In order to understand the encoding tactics used in both the “Strong is Beautiful” and “Paul George Strong” ads, the word “strong” requires further examination. This paper is concerned with exploring the semiotics of “strong” as a gendered descriptor in male and female sports commercials. “Strong” is tied to the male gender and is generally described in physical terms such as having big muscles or being able to complete physically demanding tasks such as lifting weights. Since “strong” is recognized as male standard, the analysis in this paper focuses on the issues that arise for female athletes should the term have a universal application in both the “Strong is Beautiful” and “Paul George Strong” commercials. To further understand the semiotics of “strong”, the next section examines how meaning is constructed in media texts.

*Connotation and Denotation: How the Same Words/Images Can Have Different Meanings:*

This section examines how the same signs can have different meanings depending on the social context in which they occur. When analyzing the status of women in sport, the denotative and connotative levels are crucial for understanding how words and visual signs are used to construct a particular image of athletic women. To do so, this section uses Hall’s analysis of denotative and connotative meanings of a sign. Denotation refers to the literal, dictionary meaning of a sign while connotation refers to the changeable, less obvious and secondary meaning of signs. What is interesting however is that Hall (1980) notes that the connotative level of a sign is where ideology intervenes in language. Thus, connotative meanings can operate on the level of myth and create hidden meanings behind the more apparent (denotative) meaning. Within the advertising industry, Hall states that “every visual sign...connotes a quality, situation, value or inference, which is present as an implication or implied meaning depending on the connotation positioning” (1980, p. 133). For instance, at the denotative level, a rose always

signifies a flower. However, at the connotative level, depending on its context and how it is encoded, it could represent love or Valentine's Day or the reality television show *The Bachelor/ette*. Therefore, the connotative level of a sign is not fixed, rather it is open to many different meanings. Despite the ability of a sign to have multiple meanings, Hall (1980) notes that in any given culture, social life is organized into different discursive domains which result in a preferred meaning. Preferred meaning does not mean there is a biased process that determines how everything will be represented on television. Rather, preferred meaning refers to the "work required to enforce... and command as legitimate a decoding of the event with the limit of dominant definitions in which it has been connotatively signified" (1980, p.135). Therefore, additional "work" must be done by encoders (i.e. producers, editors, television executives etc.) in order have their preferred meaning established among audiences. Gruneau (1989) notes that this additional "work" is done through the use of codes. These codes can be political, technical, cultural, social or organizational. He uses the example of the 1982 World Cup, where encoding tactics were used in television coverage to highlight the war between Argentina and the UK (Gruneau, 1989). It is important to note that the correspondence between encoding and decoding is never guaranteed; there is always some form of reciprocity between encoder and decoder of a message, otherwise communication would be fundamentally distorted. However, this reciprocity is not given but rather constructed (Hall, 1980). Returning to Segrave et al. (2006) argument that linguistic codes serve to contribute to the devaluation of women in sport, we can see that additional "work" is done in order to have a preferred meaning recognized. For instance, Fink and Kensicki (2009) found that while participating in sport, women were commonly described by the media, in ways that highlighted their femininity/gender (i.e. "little ray of sunshine" "china

doll” “mother of two”) rather than their athletic power. Therefore, constructed codes, such as gender marking, are used to enforce dominant gender ideology and feminize female athletes.

Hall’s encoding and decoding model of communication is valuable for studying the relationship between women’s liberation and beauty in sport given that women’s sports commercials are constructed forms of communication. Examining the language in these media forms are crucial for understanding the messages that are circulated about women’s athletic ability and beauty. Furthermore, recognizing that connotative meanings of a sign are not fixed but rather have a polysemic value will be important for determining how the word “strong” can have various meanings depending on the context it is placed. Additionally, Hall (1980) and Gruneau’s (1989) writings are crucial for interpreting how messages are encoded and decoded in sports advertisements. What ideologies are constructed in these ads for audiences to decode? What constructed meanings are encoded within the ad? These are just some questions that will be of aid when analyzing the relationship between women’s liberation and female beauty. The next section reviews how women are typically represented in the media in Western contemporary society.

### Media Representation and the Beauty Myth:

Examining the ways that women are represented in the media is important for understanding the oppression that women in sport face. As mentioned previously, the beauty myth is a story that uses images of beauty to keep women believing that there is an objective standard of beauty that one can achieve should they work hard enough. Wolf (1991) argues that the beauty myth has no biological or historical underpinnings; rather the beauty myth is about particular power structures that seek to stage a counter-attack against women’s new found



liberation. The primary way in which the beauty myth is currently upheld in Western society is through visual and textual representations of women in the media. For instance, Lazar (2011) notes that via television shows, commercials, print ads, music videos, movies etc., women are taught to “do” beauty and work towards a “conventional” standard of beauty. In addition to teaching women how to “do” beauty, media also represent women in a manner that Laura Mulvey (1975) calls a “to-be-looked-at-ness” (1975, p.172). Essentially, Mulvey (1975) argues that through their representations of women, the media cast women as passive images and men as an active bearers of the look (Mulvey, 1975). Therefore, women in media texts are displayed and looked at in a way that is coded with strong visual and erotic impact. Furthermore, women in media are not only objects of desire for their male co-stars (be it in a movie, ad or music video), they are also objects of desire for men who are *watching* that movie, ad or music video. As a result, the media constructs content with the male gaze in mind, even when their target audience is women (i.e. fashion and beauty ads). Since images of women are constructed via male ideals, this means that media representations of women lack diversity and erase those who fail to meet the hegemonic ideal (white, heterosexual, slender, beautiful) (Krane et al., 2004). Therefore, in order to live up to the media representations of their gender, many women engage in what Butler (1990) calls performative tactics. Performative tactics include dressing a certain way, choosing a particular hairstyle, makeup choice, language choice, tone of voice etc. These performative tactics are used by women in hopes of appearing more socially desirable to others. However, it is important to note that performative tactics are not natural, but rather a purposeful attempt to display one’s femininity so as to align more closely with idealized conceptions of beauty that are put forth by the media. The following section explores how the beauty myth manifests itself via media representations of women in sport.

*The Media, The Beauty Myth and Women in Sport:*

Now that a context for understanding how the media represents women has been established, this subsection examines the false dichotomy women in sport face: having to be beautiful in order to garner media attention but also being strong and excelling at their sport in order to be taken seriously. The world of sport presents an interesting challenge for sportswomen, as Krane et al. (2004) found that in order to be successful in professional sports, women must embody what are traditionally considered male qualities such as strength, power and competitiveness; all qualities that disrupt hegemonic femininity. Moreover, while women are expected to model themselves after male defined conceptions of strength, they are not able to forego hegemonic femininity entirely. For instance, Smart (2002) found that for men in sport, athletic power was the main arbiter of earning ability whereas for women, it was sexual attractiveness that secured lucrative media attention and sponsorship deals. As a result, women in sport are faced with fulfilling two contradictory ideals. Women cannot simply be good at their sport like their male counterparts, rather they must be athletic while also making sure the male gaze is satisfied. In order to satisfy the male gaze, women in sport become hypersexualized and feminized by engaging in performative tactics (Butler, 1990). Women in sport must dress in a gender appropriate manner, they must style their hair and fix their makeup and they must exploit their sexuality (Smart, 2002) or risk being ignored. Moreover, female athletes have little help from the media, as Ward and Harrison (2005) note that media images of female athletes are often stereotypical and sexualized which serve to transmit the notion that women, including athletes, are sexual objects to be viewed by men. Based on the conclusions of the authors in this section, it seems as if the entry of women into the world of sport comes with unspoken rules and regulations that are focused on restricting their appearance. The next section uses discourses of

post-feminism to analyze a false sense of liberation that is commonly celebrated as a result of women's increased participation in sport and public interest.

### The Beauty Myth and Post-Feminism:

To believe that sportswomen are liberated is an illusion as female athletes are still expected to adhere to old beauty ideologies (i.e. beauty myth). The common misconception that women are liberated because they are able to participate in sport is an example of the post-feminist discourse that will be debunked in this section. Many scholars have lamented that a false sense of liberation is not always apparent in media forms because the beauty myth is often constructed as a celebration of women rather than as an oppression of women (Wolf, 1991; Lazar, 2011). The celebration of embracing one's femininity is marketed as a right to be beautiful (Lazar, 2011) and is often referred to as post-feminism. McRobbie defines post-feminism as "that (feminism) which can be taken into account, to suggest that equality is achieved, in order to install a whole repertoire of new meanings which emphasize that it is no longer needed, it is a spent force" (2004, p.255). Therefore, post-feminism uses feminist ideas as if they are a given or already assumed, while displacing feminism as something that is no longer needed. Lazar (2011) notes that post-feminist discourse suggests that the beauty myth is null and void because women are now liberated and therefore have a right and a choice to be beautiful or not beautiful. This right is generally expressed via advertising, as Lazar (2011) found that beauty ads play on women's perceived liberation by suggesting that choosing a certain product will free them from whatever issue they are currently facing (i.e. "free your skin from blackheads"). Since post-feminism believes that equality has already been achieved, following hegemonic femininity

is not seen as oppressive, but rather as a conscious decision to own one's femininity. However, opting out of overt femininity is easier said than done for the female athlete.

*The Beauty Myth, Post-feminism and Sport*

The conscious decision to choose beauty is not necessarily one that the female athlete is afforded. Previous research suggests that choosing to deviate from femininity norms and avoiding overt displays of femininity can have costly results for female athletes. For instance, Slack and Amis (2004) found that female athletes who are not as attractive are unable to secure the same types of lucrative sponsorship deals than those who are deemed attractive. Additionally, a recent study found that women's sporting events receive as little as 1.6% of all sports coverage (Fink, 2015). Furthermore, the sport that receives the most coverage is women's tennis because it adheres so rigidly to the beauty myth, as Smart notes, "the unremorseful emphasis on good backsides as well as good backhands has done wonders for women's tennis, cementing its status as the world's most popular and financially successful women's sport" (2002, p.180). Moreover, leading up to the 2012 summer Olympics, there was serious consideration to require female boxers to wear skirts, as an attempt to feminize athletes who participate in an overwhelmingly male dominated sport (Schweinbenz, 2012). These findings suggest that while women are granted admission into the world of sports, the realities they face regarding their appearances and attire create for an oppressive experience. Choosing to be beautiful is less of a choice and more of a survival tactic for female athletes. Therefore, post-feminist discourses such as the "right to choose beauty" are merely an illusion, as women have *no* choice but to accept gendered notions of strength and beauty in order to be successful in sport.

### Research Questions:

By exploring previous research on the sociology of sport, the encoding and decoding of media, the media representation of women and the beauty myth and post-feminism, a foundational context has been established for my research. While there have been numerous studies on women in sport, there has been little completed on women in sports commercials. A majority of the research focuses on live sporting events or print publications such as *Sports Illustrated*. Moreover, there are few studies that compare women's sport commercials with men's. Additionally, much of the research that focuses on women in sport relies on feminist theories or critical feminist theories. Although feminist theories (Wolf, Mulvey, Butler, Lazar) will be important for my research, it is Hall's encoding and decoding theory of cultural texts that will separate my work from that of previous studies. Specifically, my research will focus on the how the terms "beautiful" and "strong" are used in television commercials to convey particular meanings. Therefore, the focus of this paper is on meaning and what it reveals about the beauty myth in sport and how this results in different understandings of men in sport and women in sport. Based on these themes, the research questions that I have formulated are:

1. How does strength act as a reductive concept?
2. How is the word "beautiful" encoded in the "Strong is Beautiful" ad campaign?
3. At what level (i.e. connotative or denotative) do the words "strong" and "beautiful" operate in the "Strong is Beautiful" television commercial? At what level does the word "strong" operate in the "Paul George Strong" television commercial?
4. What does the "Strong is Beautiful" television commercial and the "Paul George Strong" television commercial communicate about the beauty myth in sport? What do these commercials say about post-feminism in sport?

### Data Collection:

For my research, I collected data from one primary television ad campaign that focuses on women in sport. In addition to this primary television commercial, I also used a male commercial to compare and contrast my findings. As previously stated, I have selected the WTA's "Strong Is Beautiful" ad campaign, as my primary ad. For the male ad, I have selected AT&T's "Paul George Strong" television commercial. This television commercial has parallels with the "Strong is Beautiful" commercial because it features an already famous athlete from a specific sport: basketball. The purpose of the male commercial in my research is to examine whether or not there are differences in the way female and male sporting commercials are encoded and constructed for audiences. While women's tennis and men's basketball are two different sports, the purpose is not to compare the sports, but rather to reveal the problematic nature of constructing only women's sports and female athletic ability in terms that are meant to highlight beauty (i.e. "Strong is Beautiful"). It is also to reveal the problematic nature of solidifying strength as a male standard.

There is no tool that aided in my data collection, as it was done manually via tables which included a screen shot of a major instance (for visual modality only) and all necessary codes. Instances (episodes) were selected for detailed analysis. Determining which instances to select was dependent on the research questions. For example, instances where gender norms were played out were of importance. Only one commercial was analyzed for each gender. Collecting data from a comparable men's television commercial was crucial for helping to answer my research questions because I was able to see how the same signs are employed in different situations when featuring different groups. The multi-modal nature of television commercials helped me to understand how text, images, and sound are all used implicitly and explicitly to

construct specific messages. I evaluated the different modes in each commercial to see whether or not they produce a coherent message/meaning about women in sport and men and sport or if they produce different meanings/messages about women in sport and men in sport.

### Method of Analysis:

A content analysis was used to collect my research. More specifically, a discourse analysis allowed me to analyze the vocal, written and image based information that was communicated via the commercials. I was able to examine the ways in which language was used to construct meaning. Furthermore, since I compared a women's and men's ad, this method of analysis allowed me to examine meaning at both the denotative and connotative levels. In order to examine meanings at both these levels I used social semiotic theory. Harrison's (2003) social semiotic theory was important when analyzing my data because it aided in understanding how signs are used to construct social life, group structure and ultimately community. Moreover, since I analyzed how meaning is created in the female "Strong is Beautiful" commercial *and* the male "Paul George Strong" commercial, social semiotic theory allowed me to answer my research questions in numerous ways. For instance, I was able to determine how the same signs are used differently to represent a specific community (i.e. female sporting community vs. male sporting community) and how meanings are altered and shifted depending on their use (Harrison, 2003). The data collected in each television commercial is qualitative as my analysis focuses on words, images and sound instead of numerical values.

The most difficult part of analyzing my sample was addressing the multimodality of the "Strong is Beautiful" and "Paul George Strong" television commercials. Heath, Hindmarsh and Luff (2010) note that analyzing a video as a whole is impractical, as the researcher must be

selective in their analysis. As a result, researchers must select instances/fragments that are influenced by the objectives of their research (Heath, Hindmarsh and Luff, 2010). Therefore, I selected instances/focal points that directly pertain to my research questions. Each instance for the visual and vocal modalities lasted 5 seconds. For the aural modality, instances were 10 seconds in length. I transcribed information for each mode in every instance separately then evaluated whether or not they work together to create the same messages/meanings. Deciding what elements to code for was a crucial part of the research. The elements that I coded each modality for were dependent on my research questions.

In regards to the visual modality, Heath, Hindmarsh and Luff (2010) note that there is no standard or generally accepted method for transcribing visual content in video analysis. However, they do note that it is important to transcribe visual content in relation to vocal content (Heath, Hindmarsh and Luff, 2010). Therefore, visual content was recorded along with time stamps so as to determine if there was an overlap between vocal and visual content. Focusing on instances was important for this modality, as subtle changes can occur in visual elements making it difficult to transcribe all that is happening. Therefore, as mentioned previously, I selected focal moments that pertain to my research questions. Initially, content was screened for attire, activity, and physical appearance. However, once data collection was underway, it became apparent that there were other important elements that did not fit into any of the existing codes. This is a common occurrence in content analysis, especially when analysis is video based. Therefore, the following elements were added to coding: setting and camera view. Below are the definitions of each element that was coded when analyzing the visual modality.



**Table 1-Elements and Definitions for Coding Visual Modality**

<b>Element</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Attire	Refers to the what the main character in each instance is wearing. Also makes notes of any significant skin exposure. Example: Male wearing blue jeans and a sleeveless shirt.
Appearance	Refers to the physical appearance of the main characters in each instance. Includes hair, makeup, accessories, and overall hygiene, muscles and body shape. Example: Male is over-weight and unkempt with messy hair.
Setting	Refers to where the instance takes place. For example: Takes place in a park during the daytime.
Physical Activity	Refers to the activity in each instance. For example: main character is driving a car, main character is walking down the street.
Camera View	Refers to what the camera is capturing. Is it a close up or is it a full shot of everything happening in the instance? For example: close up on face, close up on puck etc.

For the vocal modality, Heath, Hindsmarsh and Luff (2010), note that these elements are important for determining how meaning is created, as they develop the characteristics and context of which the participants in a fragment engage in. Therefore, the following elements that both commercials were coded for were: references to gender, references to beauty, references to strength and finally, addressing the audience. Below are the definitions of each element.

**Table 2-Elements and Definitions for Coding Vocal Modality**

<b>Element</b>	<b>Definition</b>
References to gender	Words the denote either female or male gender such as girl, woman, boy, man.
References to beauty/physical appearance	Words used to describe a female or male's looks, appearance or physical attractiveness. Examples include: sexy, handsome, sugar.

References to strength	Words that describe one's physical power, strength or activity. Examples include: muscular, power, sweat etc.
Addressing the audience	Main character or narration clearly address a general audience or asks a question. Example: "listen up," "what's different about speed-stick clear gel?"

While the visual and vocal modalities are considered the most important in my analysis, both commercials were also screened for aural and textual elements. These modalities are considered to be secondary modalities as they are supplementary to the visual and vocal modalities. The aural mode is separate from the vocal mode as this mode focuses on sound effects and music. Saz-Rubio and Pennock-Speck (2009) found that the use of music in television commercials is extremely important to a commercial as a whole, as it can sometimes convey an unconscious feeling about the stimuli presented in an ad. Therefore, it is important to evaluate how this modality creates meaning in sports commercials. Aural elements in both commercials were screened for: tempo, volume, genre and instruments. Below are the definitions of the codes.

**Table 3-Elements and Definitions for Coding Aural Modality**

Element	Definition
Tempo	Refers to the speed at which a passage of music is played. For this study, there are three options in which aural elements can fall into: fast, medium and slow.
Volume	Refers to the degree of loudness of aural elements. Is the sound/music loud and noticeable? Or is it soft and more of a background element? There are two subcategories within this category: loud and soft.
Genre	Refers to music characterized by similarities in form, style and or subject matter. For this study, the subcategories in which aural elements can fall into are: hip-hop, rock, classical, and pop. For clarification these genres have been defined below

	Hip-hop: characterized by an electronic backing and stylized rhythmic sounds
	Rock: characterized by loud guitars, drums and bass. Usually upbeat.
	Classical: characterized by that which is serious and distinctly different from popular music forms such as jazz and pop
	Pop: characterized by short, catchy, simple and melodic sounds.
Instruments	Refers to the main musical instruments being used to create the aural elements. The most prominent instruments should be transcribed. Examples include: piano, guitar, electronic mixer, drums etc.

Finally, I also made note of any text that appeared on screen along with the colour and size of the text. Since colour and font are commonly understood terms in Western society, definitions were not used when coding for the modality.

Although these modes are inextricable from one another, I will be evaluating how they work together to produce coherent messages regarding the athletic ability of women and how the word “strong” is employed in different social contexts (i.e. women’s sport ad vs. men’s sport ad). The following section details the findings from the “Strong is Beautiful” and “Paul George Strong” ads.

### Findings:

As previously mentioned, the coding was based on the end goal of being able to evaluate the content in regards to whether or not the different modalities combine to produce coherent messages about women and men in sports commercials. The data collection process yielded some compelling results that are explored in following sections.

### Visual Modality:

As stated previously, it is impossible to analyze everything that occurs visually when conducting video analysis. Therefore, both commercials were split into 5 second instances. The focus of this modality was visual representations of strength and beauty. Everything from the colour of the athletes' attire, to their hair and facial expression were analyzed so as to determine the main visual message of each instance.

### Attire:

Throughout the 30 second "Strong is Beautiful" commercial, there were eight different female characters who all wore different outfits. Seven of the eight wore dresses. The first character, who appears in the first instance (0-5 secs.) wore a red dress. A second character also appears in this instance and wears a purple and black dress with a yellow scarf cascading down her right shoulder. In the second instance (5-10 secs.), there is a new female character who wears a beige draped dress with dark green shorts underneath since her dress is extremely short. In the third instance (10-15 secs.), two new female characters are introduced to the audience. The first wears a spaghetti strap black dress that has a plunging neck line. The other character wears a short, one shoulder blue dress. In the fourth instance (15-20 seconds), the first new character wears a sparkly silver dress. The second character, who does not wear a dress, wears a coral pink crop top and blood red short shorts, revealing her midriff. The fifth instance features a new character who wears a black one shoulder dress along with the sparkly dress character, who was previously mentioned. The final instance features the character with the sparkly dress.

With the exception of the character who is not wearing a dress, every dress each athlete wears is extremely short and resembles a "going out" dress or an evening gown. The dresses are

fancier and not typical of the traditional dresses or sports wear worn during tennis matches or during physical activity. As a result, the attire featured in the commercial evokes elegance and exudes femininity as it goes above and beyond what is typical for athletes.

In the “Paul George Strong” television commercial, there was one male character, PG, who wore the same outfit throughout the whole commercial. In the first instance, PG wears typical gym clothes. He has a black hoody, with black basketball shorts and running shoes. In the second instance, PG removes the hoodie and is wearing a black long sleeve muscle shirt along with the same basketball shorts he wears in the first instance. In the third, fourth, fifth and sixth instances, he is seen in the same outfit. Overall, PG’s attire fits with traditional workout gear. His attire is not a main feature of the commercial.

#### *Appearance:*

The section details the results of the physical appearance of the eight female characters in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad and the male character in the “Paul George Strong” ad. In the first instance of the “Strong is Beautiful” ad, both the characters are well put together. The red dress character has soft, medium length curls and the purple dress character has long pin straight hair. Both appear to have on light makeup. In the second instance, the beige dress character has short straight hair and has light makeup. For the third instance, the black dress character has soft curls and the blue dress character has long straight hair. Additionally, the black dress character has a designer watch on. In the fourth instance, the sparkly dress character has soft curls and light makeup. As for the crop top and shorts character, her face is not visible to the audience, but her hair is pin-straight and audiences can see that she is sweaty. For the fifth instance, the black one shoulder dress character has curly hair but it is messier than all the other characters that have

been featured. She was also extremely sweaty. The sparkly dress character appeared the same as the previous instance and appears the same in the final instance. Overall, every female character has a slender body type and was well put together with their outfits, hair and makeup all carefully planned out.

In the initial instance of the “Paul George Strong” commercial, it is hard to evaluate his appearance as the shot is zoomed out and the lighting is dark. In the second instance, the audience is able to see Paul George’s face and body. It is apparent that he is a muscular and fit individual, who is well groomed. Audiences are able to tell that he is fit due to the muscle definition from the tight workout shirt he is wearing despite it being long sleeved. PG’s appearance does not change throughout the following four instances.

#### *Setting:*

The setting in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad is unclear for most of the 30 second commercial. The female characters are viewed against a black foggy background with glitter that floats throughout the air. There are only two times a character does not appear in this black foggy background. The first is in the 10-15 second instance; the black strappy dress character appears against a burnt red background. However, it is still unclear where the setting actually takes place (i.e. park, gym etc.). The other instance that differs from the foggy black background is during the 15-20 second mark. The only character who is not wearing a dress (coral crop top and red short shorts) appears to be on a tennis court. The tennis court is recognizable due to white lines. This is the only character to appear in a clear setting and in a typical setting for athletes (i.e. gym, tennis court). Although this character appears on a tennis court, the black foggiess that is present throughout the rest of the commercial remains.

From the first second of the “Paul George Strong” commercial it is apparent that it takes place in a gym. The setting is recognizable due to the multiple workout machines that are highlighted by the wide camera angle. Each instance that follows the initial one takes place in the gym but in different areas. The second instance takes place mainly in the treadmill area of the gym. The third instance takes place by the weights and leg press. In the fourth instance, the setting takes place by the chin up machine and in the fifth instance, there is a recap of all the major stations PG visited throughout the commercial. The final instance takes viewers back to where the commercial began, as it shows the gym as a whole.

*Physical activity:*

Each 5 second instance of the “Strong is Beautiful” and “Paul George Strong” ads were also analyzed for physical activity in order to determine whether or not there were differences in the ways women’s and men’s physical activities were represented. In the first instance of the “Strong is Beautiful” ad, the red dress character appears to be hitting something, but the camera cuts to another character before the audience can determine what it is. In the same instance, the black and purple dress character hits a ball with her racket. The motion of the black and purple dress character continues into the second instance where there is also a close up of feet moving as a player waits for the ball. Finally, the beige dress character is shown performing a back hand hit and there is visible strain on her face. In the third instance, the strappy black dress character is seen performing an overhand serve. Her racket is in the frame, but no ball is ever shown. The blue dress character is also shown hitting a ball in this instance. The next instance features the sparkly dress character hitting a ball that explodes into glitter; there is visible strain on her face. Also in this instance is the crop top and shorts character, who has visible strain on her face as she

is hitting a ball. Her ball explodes into blue fog when she hits it. She also appears to be sweaty, but this is only noticeable at the end of the frame when the camera zooms in. In the fifth instance, the black one shoulder dress character hits a ball and shows extremely evident strain on her face. She is also extremely sweaty in the commercial. Furthermore, her arm muscles are noticeable and highlighted in this instance. In the final instance, the sparkly dress character is in a resting position simply posing with her racket beside her face. Overall, the physical activities in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad lack diversity as all the female characters appear to be doing the same thing-hitting a ball. All movement is in slow motion, which takes away from the incredible power that is required to hit a tennis ball. Additionally, there were only four times a character showed strain on their face when completing physically demanding tasks. Finally, evidence of a “good workout” was only noticeable on two characters who appeared to be sweaty (crop top and shorts character and black one shoulder dress character).

Throughout the 30 second “Paul George Strong” commercial, PG engages in a variety of physical activities. Unlike the “Strong is Beautiful” ad, all activity is in real time and not in slow motion. In the initial scene, PG is seen walking into the gym and skipping rope. In the second instance, he moves to the treadmill where he is running. There is visible strain on his face as he runs and his arm muscles are noticeable. The third instance continues with PG running on the treadmill, however he increases the speed as he hears the television anchor say “Will Paul George ever be the same again?” After increasing the treadmill, he breathes heavily from the exhaustion of the workout. The third instance also includes PG picking up weights and using the leg press. His leg muscles are prominent during these activities. Paul George’s physical activity changes once again, as he does chin ups and yells “AHH” mid-workout to show how physically demanding the activity is. There is noticeable sweat on his face at this point and his arm muscles



are extremely noticeable. PG also tweets to his fans in the fourth instance. In the fifth instance, PG completes a number of physical activities. He lifts weights, he drops his weights after successfully completing his rep and he uses the leg press. During all of these activities, his body parts and muscles are highlighted and his face is only seen at the end of the instance when the camera zooms out. PG appears very sweaty, especially on his legs and the audience sees him exhaling deeply while using the leg press. In the final instance, PG is skipping rope just like he was in the first instance. Throughout the commercial, PG completes six different physical activities (skipping, treadmill, leg press, chin ups, lifting weights and lifting different type of weights while sitting). He also shows signs of physical strain in three different ways: yelling, sweating and heavy breathing. Finally, his muscles are defined at least once in almost every instance. Overall, PG's physical activity was diverse and it was apparent that they were difficult and demanding.

#### *Camera Angle:*

Camera angle was included as a code in order to determine what was being highlighted in each instance. In the first instance, of the "Strong is Beautiful" ad, the camera was a close up of the red dress character and the purple and black dress character. The camera highlighted the face and hair of the characters and was shot from a side view. In the second instance, there was a close up on feet that did not show any leg muscles, as well as a full body shot of the beige dress character. The next instance featured a close up of the strappy black dress character. The focal point was on the characters face and attire. Her cleavage was noticeable and a tennis ball never appeared in the frame. Also in this instance, was the blue dress character. The camera was zoomed out so that the audience could see her full body. Since the camera shot was full body, the

audience was able to see how her whole body is used when hitting a ball. Her leg muscles were most noticeable in this frame. The fourth instance featured a close up of the sparkly dress character. The strain on her face and her arm muscles were a focal point in this frame. The crop top character was initially viewed in a zoomed out frame, which allows the audience to see a tennis court for the first time. At the end of the frame the camera zooms in so that the audience sees the facial strain and sweat from her physical activity. The fifth instance features a close up of the black one shoulder dress character. The close up allows the audience to see her sweat, muscles and facial strain. The scene cuts to the sparkly dress character who is posing with her racket beside her face. The camera remains focused on this character until the end of the commercial.

In the first instance of the “Paul George Strong” commercial, there were three main camera views. The first was a close up of Paul George’s hands, the second was a wide view to let the audience know where the commercial was taking place and the third was a close up of PG skipping rope. His face is not included in the shot of him skipping rope as it is a close up of his legs and feet as they skip. In the second instance, the camera view is from the thigh up as PG runs on the treadmill. The camera focuses on PG’s face, arms and upper body as he runs. The third instance features close ups of PG’s feet as they run, his arms as he picks up weights, his muscles as he lifts the weights and his legs and face while he uses the leg press. In the fourth instance, the camera, for the first time features a head on close up of PG’s face. The close up happens when PG yells and the audience is able to see his forehead sweat. There is also a mid-view of PG as he tweets and then finally a close up of his legs as he lifts weights. The close ups continued in the fifth instance as the camera zooms in to catch the weights fallin. In this instance,

the camera also zooms in to view PG's leg muscles as he uses the leg machine. In the final instance, the camera zooms out to view the whole gym as PG skips off to the right corner.

After analyzing the visual modality for attire, appearance, setting, physical activity and camera angle there were a few revealing pieces of data that will be explored in greater depth in a later section of this paper. The first being that there was only one instance in which a female tennis player appeared in a typical setting: a tennis court. Additionally, it was quite interesting that seven out of eight characters appeared in dresses that were fancier than traditional tennis wear. Moreover, the lack of evidence of physical activity (i.e. sweat and facial strain) on the characters during the commercial was also an interesting and unanticipated result from the "Strong is Beautiful" commercial. In contrast, the "Paul George Strong" commercial featured one male character, who participated in a variety of physical activities that were physically demanding. The audience was able to see his facial strain, muscles and sweat multiple times throughout the 30 seconds. The setting and PG's attire made it obvious that he was an athlete who was training, unlike the "Strong is Beautiful" ad that may have left audiences confused about what was happening. The following section reviews the data collected from the vocal modality.

#### Vocal Modality:

The vocal modality was also split into instances lasting 5 seconds each. Each instance was screened for terms that pertain to beauty, strength and gender. Coding the vocal modality for these elements was important for determining the type of language used to describe female and male professional athletes.

*References to gender:*

Throughout the 30 second “Strong is Beautiful” commercial gender was mentioned in two of the instances. The first (0-5 seconds) and the fifth (20-25 seconds). In the first instance the narrator asks “what are **little girls** made of” and in the fifth instance she says “that’s what **little girls** are made of.” However, there are no little girls in the commercial as all characters are adult women.

Throughout the 30 second “Paul George Strong” commercial there were no references to gender or PG’s gender.

*References to beauty:*

In the “Strong is Beautiful” ad there was one instance where a reference to beauty was made. In the second instance, the narrator says “they’re made of **sugar and spice**.” This statement is the first response to the question “what are little girls made of.” Sugar and spice comes from the 1820 song “What are Little Boys Made of?” In the second part of the song, it asks what are little girls made of? and answers the question by stating “sugar and spice and everything nice... that’s what little girls are made of.” Therefore, sugar and spice, in Western culture, has been a way to mark the difference between boys and girls by regarding girls as being sweet and concerned with all things nice. Jan Forth-Finegan (1992), notes that in a society that holds traditional gender norms in high regard, those who do not fit the “sugar and spice” ideal are shaped until they look like they do. Therefore, outwards displays of femininity (dress, hair etc.) become paramount and female appropriate behaviours (i.e. being kind, being quiet etc.) are positively reinforced. By stating that little girls are made of sugar and spice, the commercial

reaffirms the idea that women can be good at sports just as long as they're still made of sugar and spice.

Throughout the 30 second "Paul George Strong" commercial there were no references to beauty or physical attractiveness.

*References to strength:*

In the "Strong is Beautiful" ad, references to strength appear in two instances- the third and the fourth. The references to strength are stated in response to the question "what are little girls made of?" In the third instance the narrator states that little girls are made of **sweat** and **fury**. In the fourth instance, the narrator states that little girls are also made of **grit** and **strength**. These are typical adjectives used to describe athletes and in particular, male athletes.

In the "Paul George Strong" commercial there was a reference to strength in every instance except one (second instance: 5-10 seconds). In the first instance, PG states "**strong** can lift you from your lowest points." In the third instance, he states that "**strong** can silence the doubters." In the fourth instance he claims that "**strong** can push you even harder." In the fifth instance he says "think what **strong** can do for you." In the final instance, he compares being physically strong to AT&T's network stating "AT&T's network now has the **strongest** 4G LTE signal." Unlike the "Strong is Beautiful" commercial, this commercial explicitly uses the word strong to describe PG and the product: AT&T's mobile network. Emphasizing the word "strong" in this ad solidifies it as a gendered descriptor-a point that will be explored more in following sections.

*Addressing the audience:*

The audience is only addressed once throughout the “Strong is Beautiful” commercial. In the first instance the narrator asks “what are little girls made of?” This question guides the entire commercial as the voiceover only responds to this question. The question is used as a tool to mold audiences’ opinion about what little girls are made of.

The audience is addressed three times in the “Paul George Strong” commercial. The first is in second instance when the television anchor asks “will Paul George ever be the same again?” She is asking the audience a rhetorical question. The audience is supposed to use the images of PG succeeding at physically demanding activities to answer the question. The audience is also addressed in fourth instance when PG says “strong can push **you** even harder.” By saying “you” he asks the audience to consider all the benefits of “strong.” The final time the audience is addressed is in the fifth instance when PG says “think what **strong** can do for you.”

In analyzing the vocal elements of the “Strong is Beautiful” television commercial there were some significant findings. This first being that an old, gendered nursery rhyme was used to narrate the commercial. Additionally, the sexist part of the the nursery rhyme, “what are little girls made of...sugar and spice” was not omitted from the commercial, but rather was used to explain women’s athletic ability. Moreover, none of the eight female tennis pros were ever mentioned or introduced to the audience. Finally, the use of “little girls” to describe adult women was also an important take away. Regarding adult women as little girls is a form of infantilization. In contrast, the “Paul George Strong” commercial had no references to gender or beauty, allowing Paul George’s physical activity to take priority. Moreover, the word “strong” was used explicitly in every instance except one, proving that “strength” was a key theme in this

commercial. The next modality to be explored focuses on the music and sound in the “Strong is Beautiful” and “Paul George Strong” ads.

*Aural modality:*

The aural modality focuses on the music and sound effects in the commercial that are separate from the speech. As mentioned previously, aural elements have grown in importance in recent years as, music and sound effects can convey a particular mood or feeling towards certain stimuli (Saz-Rubio, & Pennock-Speck, 2009). The aural modality was evaluated for tempo, volume, genre and prominent musical instruments were made note of. This modality was divided into 10 second instances, as it is not as difficult to evaluate as the visual and vocal modalities. Moreover, instead of presenting the findings in accordance with each element, they will be presented by instance.

In the first instance of the “Strong is Beautiful” campaign there was only music, no sound effects or singing. The music was very slow, with long pauses in between each note. It was almost as if the music was in slow-motion. The volume of the music was soft but still detectable. In terms of genre, it was quite similar to the music that is played in a ballerina music box. However, for the purposes of this study, it fit best into the classical genre, as it was graceful and serious. The piano was the only instrument evident within the first instance of the commercial. The piano was played in an interesting way, as a long almost awkward pause would follow after every note was played.

In the second instance, the tempo remained slow and the volume remained soft, however there was an addition of a very soft guitar. Only one distinct chord was played from the guitar

and when the note was over, it played again. The guitar fit with the slow nature of the piano and commercial.

In the third and final instance, a drum was added to the guitar and piano. The music remained slow and soft but the addition of the drum shifted the genre towards rock. However, the music still had a graceful and elegant nature.

The music and sounds used in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad were quite interesting, as they were not typical of the music and sound that is generally heard in sports ads. The music had a certain level of elegance that fit with the character’s attire, appearance and the setting of the ad, but within the genre of sports, it cannot be considered archetypal.

The findings from the “Paul George Strong” television commercial are much different than that of the “Strong is Beautiful” ad. The tempo was very upbeat and almost cheerful; it was the type of music you would expect from a sports ad. In regards to the volume, it was loud, especially within the first three seconds of the commercial. The commercial started with quick drumming that faded into an electronic mixer with a prominent beat. Due to the repetitive beat and the use of mixer, it was evident that the genre of music used in this ad was hip-hop.

In the second instance, the tempo, volume and genre all remained the same. However, there were some sound effects such as the treadmill volume increasing in speed, as well as PG dropping weights. PG also yells “AHH” at one point from having such a physically demanding workout. The music cuts at this point so that his yell is the most salient sound in the frame.

In the final instance, the tempo, volume and genre all remain the same and the AT&T sound effect is heard at the very end of the commercial.

The “Paul George Strong” ad featured the type of music one would expect from a sports ad: loud, fast and catchy. The sound effects such as the weights and Paul George’s yell worked



to enhance what was happening visually and vocally in the commercial. Moreover, these sound effects contributed to a sense of realism whereas the omission of sound effects from the “Strong is Beautiful” ad diminished this commercial’s realism factor.

The aural findings from both commercials are telling. Given that both these commercials are sports advertisements that feature athletes, it was presumed that the aural elements would be more upbeat, invoking an empowering or uplifting mood that would make the listener feel strong. However, this was only the case for the male commercial: “Paul George Strong,” as the music was catchy, loud and fast; it was the type of music one would listen to to get pumped up for a game or work-out. On the other hand, the music used in the “Strong is Beautiful” commercial seemed very out of place in a sports ad. It was extremely slow and had a gloomy feel to it rather than being upbeat or cheerful. It seemed as if it would be better suited in a ballet studio. I did not expect the aural elements in these ads to diverge so greatly. When focusing on just the aural elements, it is easy to see how this modality is being employed in each commercial and how it is contributing to an overall message. It seems as if the aural elements in these commercials are a tool through which encoders create meaning. The final section explores the findings from the textual modalities of both the female and male commercials.

#### *Textual Modality:*

When collecting textual data, the text was copied and was assessed for font size and colour. Although textual elements may seem insignificant in an image-based medium (video), Cogaliniceanu (2011) notes that text can have an impact on an audience’s impression, attitudes and emotions. Therefore, this modality was worth including in order to evaluate how different modes work together to produce similar or diverging messages.

In the “Strong is Beautiful” ad, text appeared three times in the commercial. The first text was the WTA logo which was present throughout the whole commercial in the bottom right hand corner. It was in white writing against a purple-ish background. The font size was small. The second text appeared near the end of the commercial in the middle of the screen. It read “Strong is Beautiful” in white. The size was small to medium. The final text was the WTA logo and “wtatennis.com.” The logo was purple and white and the url was in grey. The logo was medium sized and the website was small. The use of white for the text fit with the light and airy nature of the commercial. Additionally, the text that reads “Strong is Beautiful” was the only time that audience was explicitly exposed to the word “strong” throughout the 30 second commercial.

In the “Paul George Strong” commercial, text appeared twice. The first was a tweet that read “Keep Fighting PG.” The colour was black and the size was medium. The second text appeared at the end and read “AT&T’s network now has the strongest 4G LTE signal.” The writing was in grey but the word strongest was in orange and italicized. The size was medium. The first use of text was noticeable as it took up the whole screen and demanded the audience’s attention. The second use of text was also noticeable and the word “strongest” was the most prominent due to its different colour and being italicized.

The smaller size of fonts that appeared in light colours in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad do not convey a sense of strength. However, the text in the “Paul George Strong” ad demanded attention and the colour choices stood out. Therefore, the use of font in the latter commercial was more effective in conveying a feeling of strength.

### Discussion:

Both the “Strong is Beautiful” and “Paul George Strong” commercials use the word “strong” and feature top-notch athletes in their respective sport. However, this is where the similarities between the two commercials end as the visual, vocal, aural and textual elements are employed differently in each commercial resulting in conflicting definitions of strong. The visual, vocal, aural and textual elements seem to be a vehicle through the beauty myth is communicated and constructed in order to convey a certain message about women in sport. By choosing to feature seven female athletes in outfits that are opulent and visually appealing, using a sexist children’s nursery rhyme, slow angelic music that is reminiscent of a little girl’s toy (i.e. ballerina music box), and equating strength with beauty, the encoders of the “Strong is Beautiful” commercial frame women’s tennis in a manner that is in accordance with hegemonic gender ideologies and current media representations of women (Lazar 2011, Fink 2015). Essentially, women can participate in sports so long as the media and sporting industries adhere to ideological femininity; visuals, voice-over, music and text happen to be vehicles through which the framing of ideological femininity takes place.

When strength is portrayed in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad, it is defined on men’s terms and directly applied to women. For instance, words like “sweat, grit and fury” are used at specific points during the commercial to describe the female athletes’ physical activities. These adjectives are in line with the language used in the “Paul George Strong” commercial and can be considered standard ways for describing men’s physical strength (Fink, 2015). Additionally, the few images of sweat, and noticeable muscles in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad are typical ways of showing male strength. Directly applying male defined terms to women puts female athletes in the difficult position of never being able to measure up on their own terms. Even beauty in the

“Strong is Beautiful” ad is defined on men’s terms, as women appear flawlessly beautiful while engaging in exceptional physical acts. For instance, a large majority of the women in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad showed little to no physical strain on their faces as they hit the ball. They were also in exquisite dresses and had their hair and makeup done. As mentioned previously, these images are an example of the performative tactics Butler (1990) discusses that are meant to satisfy the male gaze. The performances of gender by the athletes in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad are examples of the mass media images that maintain the beauty myth- the idea that physical perfection is attainable and that an objective standard of beauty exists. After analyzing the images in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad, it is clear that the realm of sport is not exempt from the beauty myth. Essentially, the images, voiceover, music and text in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad work to fix a certain impression of how female athletes should look and behave which not only keeps women in an inferior position in Western society, but also, reaffirms male power and privilege.

The false dichotomy that women in sport must be both physically strong on men’s terms in order to be taken seriously in their sport, but yet still feminine and beautiful (again, on men’s terms) in order to be noticed by the media and viewers is extremely apparent in the “Strong is Beautiful” commercial. The voiceover in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad presents an interesting paradox as it infantilizes the women by calling them little girls and uses a sexist nursery rhyme, while also using adjectives that are used to measure male athletes physical power. The images in the ad also have a paradoxical nature as the women are completing physically demanding tasks, such as hitting a tennis ball; however, these acts are in slow motion and filled with glitter. The images are antithetical to one another and when analyzed in-depth, they are illogical. Furthermore, the attire and appearance of the women in the ads reinforces male defined

understandings of beauty, which muddies any attempt at communicating a message of strength to audiences. Therefore, the images and voiceover in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad present beauty and strength in a manner that make it impossible for one to equal the other.

While these findings are compelling, when analyzed within the context of beauty myth, they would not have been as evident had they been evaluated alone. Evaluating the “Strong is Beautiful” ad in combination with a male sports commercial reveals how the same codes can be used differently depending on the context in which they occur. For instance, gender or physical appearance were never mentioned in the “Paul George Strong” commercial, proving that there are differences in what media images choose to emphasize when portraying each gender within the sporting context. Unlike the “Strong is Beautiful” ad, the four different modes in the “Paul George Strong” ad worked in tandem to produce a coherent message regarding male athletic ability. Visually, PG was dressed as an athlete and the setting took place in a gym. He participated in over six different physical activities that require strength which was visibly noticeable and highlighted throughout the 30 second commercial. Moreover, the voice-over focused on the word “strong” and described what “strong” can do for someone. The music was cheerful, upbeat and fit perfectly with the setting and theme of the commercial. Finally, the text was prominent when it was featured and even highlighted the word “strongest.” The four modes all communicated a similar message about how male athletes should look and behave which, overall, worked to reinforce and highlight strength as a male standard. It was clear that because PG is “strong” that he will be able to make a comeback to the NBA despite his injury. His comeback and achievements as an athlete were not based on his looks or good luck, but rather hard work and relentless training in the gym. Basic clothing, close ups of his muscles and his workout equipment honed in on his athletic ability. In contrast, the “Strong is Beautiful” ad had

numerous close ups on the women's faces, outfits and the racket and ball, in some cases, were omitted from the frame. When evaluating these findings in the context of Hall's (1980) encoding and decoding model, it is clear that the disparities in the the commercials are purposeful and a form of encoding that wishes to establish a preferred meaning pertaining to how women in sport are viewed by audiences. Had the "Strong is Beautiful" ad been evaluated on its own or in combination with other female ads, the findings would not have been as pronounced or evident.

By exploring the four themes established in the literature review: the sociology of sport, encoding and decoding of media texts, media representations and the beauty myth and the beauty myth and post-feminism, I was able to create research questions that interrogate notions of strength and beauty in female sports ads. When applying the four research questions to my data set, the results revealed important information regarding the way women in sport are portrayed in Western society. Despite participating in sports in record numbers (Fink, 2015), media images, such as the one analyzed in both commercials, still seek to restrict and fix understandings about what a female active body should look like. In regards to the first research question, strength is oversimplified in the "Strong is Beautiful" ad. Rather than having a polysemic value, strength is represented as simply having muscles and being physically strong. Instead of exploring how different signs can have different meanings for different social groups, the encoders of the "Strong is Beautiful" ad simply applied male conceptions of strength to the female athletes, without trying to understand this group or how they use and view the term "strong." Strength in its reductive form is highlighted via images of muscles, sweat and physical strain. It is also present in the voice-over in the female commercial which equates strength with grit, sweat and fury. Moving forward, media images that represent female athletes should seek to better understand what strength means to women. Perhaps, strength for female athletes has nothing to

do with sweat or muscles but more so with ignoring Western society's expectations about what a female athlete should look.

The second research question focused on how the word "beautiful" was encoded in the "Strong is Beautiful" ad campaign. Although beauty only appeared once explicitly (at the end in text reading "Strong is Beautiful"), beauty was encoded in numerous ways throughout the commercial. Analyzing each modality separately allowed me to determine how different elements are encoded in order to convey an overall message, that in some cases can be implicit, as was the case in the "Strong is Beautiful" ad. For instance, the aural modality featured one of the most noticeable differences between the two commercials. The music in the "Strong is Beautiful" ad, as mentioned previously, was soft, graceful and had a ballet-esque feel to it. This is an example of an encoding tactic that was used to convey beauty. The music was extremely out of place for the genre of commercial and it made it seem less like a sports ad and more like a high-fashion ad. Another encoding tactic used to convey beauty was the attire and appearance of the athletes. The overall look of the female athletes was an overt attempt at gender marking. By over-dressing the athletes and having them look as if they just stepped off the runway, not only were the images unrealistic and atypical of women in sport, but also, they made images of strong female athletes more palatable for Western society. As long as women in sport look beautiful it is okay for them to participate in sport because they fit within the status quo and appear unthreatening to male hegemony. Furthermore, the voiceover that says "what are little girls made of? They're made of sugar and spice..." was purposefully used before the male defined adjectives to gender mark and highlight femininity and beauty. Finally, the use of a white text for the words "Strong is Beautiful" not only fit with the light and airy nature of the commercial, but also fit with typical adjectives used to describe little girls, as white resembles purity, innocence

and goodness. The text is also problematic because equating strength with beauty is arbitrary as the former is quantitative while the latter is qualitative therefore making it impossible for one to equal the other. It is also a statement that is seldom used in male sports commercial's. Using the rule of the female ad, if strength equals beauty, then PG must be beautiful since he appears extremely strong in the "Paul George Strong" ad. However, this reversal does not have the same effect. While strength can be applied universally to all athletes without any consideration of how these groups give meaning to the term, the same cannot be said for beauty within the context of a male sport's ad. Despite never being explicitly communicated, all these factors combined to encode a message of beauty within the "Strong is Beautiful" ad.

#### *Denotative and Connotative Meanings in "Strong is Beautiful" and "Paul George Strong"*

When exploring the denotative and connotative meanings of the terms "strong" and "beautiful," in the ads, it is clear that in the "Paul George Strong" ad, "strong" operates on the denotative level. "Strong" is portrayed in accordance with its literal dictionary meaning. This is evident in the numerous physical tasks PG completes throughout the 30 second commercial. It is also evident in the voiceover, music and text used throughout the ad. Each modality combines to produce an overall message of male strength and power. In the "Strong is Beautiful" ad, the situation is not as clear cut. Rather "strong" operates on both the denotative and connotative levels. "Strong" is visible in its denotative form when muscles are highlighted, when there is strain on the athletes faces and when sweat is visible. It is also somewhat evident in the physical activities that the female tennis pros complete. Finally, "strong" is also evident at times in the voiceover when describing what little girls are made of. However, "strong" takes on a different meaning when analyzed within the context of the commercial. "Strong" is portrayed in a way



that equals beauty, thereby contradicting its denotative form. This is evident in the use of slow motion, the music, the attire, appearance, close-ups, the use of a nursery rhyme and the phrase “little girls,” the lack of setting and the glitter and smoke that come out of the balls that are hit. The differences in the way “strong” is portrayed are best understood via social semiotic theory. Harrison (2003), states that the meaning of signs are created by people and are not separate from them or their social/cultural communities. Since sportswomen in Western society are often portrayed in ways that highlight their femininity and gender (Seagrave et al. 2006), it becomes easier to understand why the meaning of the word “strong” in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad is encoded differently than in the “Paul George Strong” ad. Within in the context of the “Strong is Beautiful” ad, “strong” begins to take on an additional meaning, or as Hall (1980) deems it, a preferred meaning, as its connotative meaning becomes entangled with female beauty. Moreover, the subtle encoding tactics mentioned above reinforce the idea that it is okay for female athletes to be held against the beauty myth. Additionally, instead of “strong” being empowering as it is in the male commercial, “strong” is oppressive in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad because of its reductive use; proving that the same signs can have different meanings depending on the context in which they occur. Since “strong” is universally applied to the women in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad, there is no room for altering the term or shifting its meaning which confines and oppresses the female athletes in the ad and contradicts the very notion of what a female athlete should be: empowered. On the other hand, beauty operates on the denotative level as the commercial portrays beauty in regards to its literal dictionary meaning. The images, sounds and words in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad are aesthetically pleasing to the audience. The women are constructed with the male gaze in mind and the meaning behind the word beautiful, despite the encoders best attempt to equate strength and beauty, appears to be unchanged.

Using a commercial from each gender has allowed this paper to comment on the overall status of the beauty myth and post-feminism in the sporting world. The lack of agency in the definition of the term “strong” and the unrealistic images of the female athletes, who were never named, suggest that the beauty myth is pervasive in the world of sport. “Strong” and “beautiful” are both defined on men’s terms so as to maintain male power. Maintaining male power is a crucial tenet of the beauty myth, as Wolf (1991) argues that the beauty myth has nothing to do with women, but rather men institutions and institutional power. Women who excel at sport are held up to an objective standard of beauty that requires outer physical perfection so that they do not threaten a male deemed domain: sports. Moreover, while the images in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad are meant to be a celebration of female athletic achievement, in reality, they are an illusion of post-feminism. Post-feminism cannot be claimed in the world of female sports simply because women are allowed entry into a male domain. Women’s gender and femininity are still crucial to their success in the sporting world (Smart, 2002; Fink, 2015) an experience that many male athletes never face. In the “Paul George Strong” commercial, gender and physical attractiveness are never mentioned. He completes his workouts in a typical setting, in a typical outfit with typical music. On the other hand, beauty and gender are evident from the first frame in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad. There is a need for lights, camera and action. The women are not able to play their sport without an added gimmick. As a result, sparkles, fog and glitter and costumes are used. The women in the commercial must be dressed to the nines in a mysterious setting with elegant music and are regarded as “little girls,” so that their sport and athletic achievements draw attention. Due to these reasons, the “Strong is Beautiful” ad when held against the “Paul George Strong” reveal that the beauty myth is rife within women’s sports. As a

result, feminism is more relevant than ever; thereby chipping away at the impression that sports is an arena that can be deemed post-feminism.

### Limitations:

While the world of sports ads are full of displays of strength, the selection of the commercials used in this paper were limited to those that explicitly featured the word “strong” in their title. Therefore, the choice of the two commercials can be considered a limitation since many commercials had to be omitted during the selection process on the basis of the requirement mentioned above. A major limitation of this study is the sample. Due to constraints, only one commercial representing each gender was chosen. Since the commercials are multi-modal, the data collection process was extremely exhaustive making it difficult to analyze more than one commercial. Therefore, future analysis should seek to evaluate a number of commercials to determine whether or not the findings remain consistent. Perhaps the differences may be less diverging when different sports are analyzed. Another limitation of the study was the multi-modal nature of the sample. Multi-modal medium forms make it difficult to analyze all that is occurring, especially when the media form is video based. What one person regards as important for transcription, another could deem insignificant. Moreover, it is impossible for everything to be transcribed, which is why the commercials were split into 5 second instances. Despite best efforts, some details are left out. Additionally, multi-modal analysis runs the risk of focusing too much attention on certain modalities. While I did mention that the visual and vocal modalities would be of most importance to this research, there is a chance that the aural and textual elements were weighed more than they actually do on audiences. However, it is impossible to know the importance each person gives to specific modalities.

### Conclusion:

Although 43% of intercollegiate scholarships are held by women and 3 million girls participate in high-school sports and the number of opportunities for female athletes are at an all time high (Fink 2015), media representations of female athletes tell a different story. Not only has coverage of female sporting events declined over the years on every medium (Fink, 2015), qualitatively speaking, the differences in media representations of women and men, which was evidenced in the paper, are startlingly different. The inability of media images to reflect reality are the result of the inextricable nature of sport and media and what Jhally (1984) calls the sport-media complex. By using encoding tactics, such as the ones discussed and analyzed in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad, the world of sport is strongly embedding and shaping the values of modern culture; thereby impacting how we perceive reality and limiting women far beyond the world of sport. The media images presented in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad are not only a vehicle in which the beauty myth is maintained, but also a vehicle in which “strong” operates as an oppressive term, rather than an empowering one. Although the female athletes in the ad are participating in a commercial that celebrates their excellence, the images are unrealistic and a part of a system that oppresses women while promoting and teaching female perfection. The images are also part of a system that seeks to maintain strength as a male standard and as a gendered descriptor. The lack of diversity in defining beauty and strength on the terms of the female athletes, is not only an argument for why post-feminism cannot be claimed but also, is what puts female athletes at a disadvantage, as their own terms are never used to gauge their athletic achievements. The results from the “Strong is Beautiful” ad are also consistent with the paradox that female athletes face: negotiating between femininity and male muscularity in order

to be successful at their sport. When evaluating the “Paul George Strong” ad, it is clear that PG like other male athletes, does not have this problem. As long as male athletes are strong and achieve greatness in their sport, they will be deemed heroes and world class athletes. Evidence proves that this is not the case for female athletes, as excelling at one’s sport is simply not enough. For instance, Anna Kournikova was the second highest earner in the WTA league in 2002 despite ranking outside of the top 30 because of her ability to exploit her gender and as a result, secure lucrative sponsorship deals (Smart, 2002). Fast forward 14 years and not much has changed, as the Forbes 2015 “World’s Highest Paid Female Athletes” list reveals some troubling results. Although Serena Williams won more tennis matches and made more money in winnings in 2015 (\$11.6 million) than Maria Sharapova (\$6.7 million in winnings), Sharapova remains the highest earner in the WTA with \$29.7 million in earnings. When analyzing the pay of athletes in a less feminized sport such as the WNBA, the stats are startling as the highest paid athlete in the WNBA, Diana Taurasi, makes \$107,000 per year (Boren, 2015). This gap in pay within the WTA and between other female sporting leagues reveals that ideal body types such as Sharapova’s and that performative tactics that most WTA stars use, result in more endorsement deals. Essentially, because media images, such as the ones in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad, are so pervasive, they become embedded in reality.

The differences in how the media engages with female athletes is argument for why the world of sport cannot be considered post-feminist. To claim that we are post-feminist is to ignore the experiences that women in sport face. Using the “Strong is Beautiful” ad in combination with the “Paul George Strong” ad, this paper has attempted to chip away at the facade that sports is a realm of equal ground by exposing the inherent discrepancies between women and men’s sporting experiences. Although the data was collected from a structured media form (television

commercials), the mass media holds institutional power and reinforces stereotypical and gendered notions of what it means to be an athlete thereby contributing to a culture of devaluation of women. Going forward, media representations of female athletes should seek to shift the meaning of strength by understanding how women interpret and use the term in their daily lives. Strength manifests itself in many different ways, but gendering it as a male term associated with muscles and sweat, disadvantages women and ignores how they interpret the term. Additionally, encoding processes of female sports commercials need to change.

Commercials should feature more realistic images of female athletes. When Serena Williams appears on court, she does not look as she does in the “Strong is Beautiful” ad, so other women should not have to use a constructed image to measure themselves against. Encoding needs to show women in their natural capacity, so that they know that it is okay to simply be good at what they do. Perhaps, then we can make a move towards claiming post-feminism but for now, the world of sports is anything but for women.

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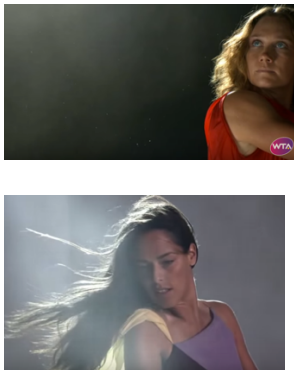

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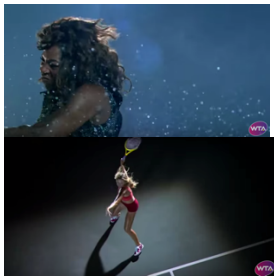
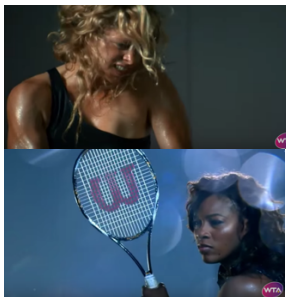

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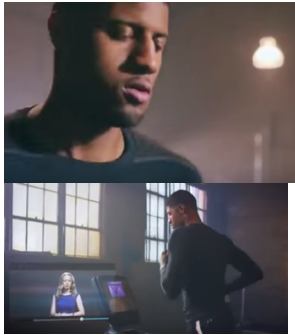
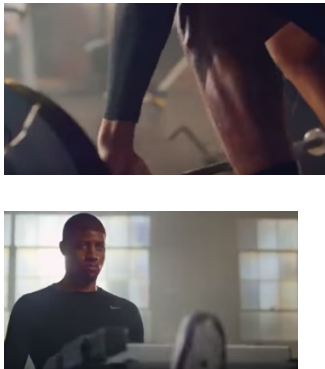
Appendices:**Appendix 1.0-Visual Modality “Strong is Beautiful”**



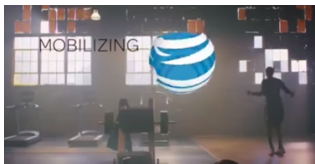
Instance:	Attire	Appearance	Setting	Physical Activity	Camera view
0-5 secs. 2 female characters in this scene 	-one in red dress -one in purple, black and yellow dress → dresses are not typical tennis or sporting wear- they are fancier - arms and chest area = skin exposed	- red dress has hair curled - purple dress hair is straightened - both have makeup done and look well put together	- no clear, black background with glitter floating through the air	- slow motion - hitting something not yet detectable what it is but assumed it is a ball	- Red dress- zoomed in portrait style - purple dress close up can't see past waist
5-10 secs. Continues with purple dress character and introduces a new female character 	-purple dress - beige dress with green shorts - both in fancier dresses that show lots of skin	- both elegant with hair and makeup done	- same black background	- finally able to see that the purple dress character is hitting a ball with a tennis racket - also see feet moving - beige + green dress hits a ball see a full body shot	- close up on feet and then a body shot of green + beige dress
10-15 secs.	-first female character in a black	- both have hair done and makeup	- black dress scene is in a red background	- black dress is hitting a ball in	- black dress is close-up with a

<p>2 new characters</p> 	<p>dress that shows lots of cleavage - second female character in a one shoulder blue dress that shows lots of skin as well</p>	<p>- black dress is wearing a designer watch</p>	<p>in slow motion  - blue dress in a black, foggy background</p>	<p>slow motion - blue dress hitting a ball</p>	<p>focus on the face/dress - blue dress is zoomed out can see definition of muscles in legs</p>
<p>15-20 secs. 2 new characters</p> 	<p>-first female character in sparkly dress -second in bright pink crop top and red shorts</p>	<p>- sparkly dress = curly hair and makeup done - crop top= can't see face clearly but hair is done</p>	<p>- sparkly dress= black background with exploding glitter - crop top= first time a character is seen on a tennis court</p>	<p>- sparkly dress- hitting a ball that explodes into glitter - crop top- hitting a ball that explodes into blue fog</p>	<p>- sparkly dress- close up on face and glitter - crop top= body shot that changes into close up of ball + chest</p>
<p>20-25 secs.  New female character + sparkly dress character returns</p> 	<p>-black one shoulder dress- evening gown</p>	<p>- hair is curly</p>	<p>-Black one shoulder= black background -sparkly dress= black background with sparkly light bubbles</p>	<p>-black one shoulder – hitting ball very sweaty and muscles defined -sparkly dress= posing with racket</p>	<p>-black one shoulder- close up focus is on sweat and muscles -sparkly dress- focus is on racket and face</p>
<p>25-30 secs.  Sparkly dress character</p> 	<p>-see 15-20 secs for description of dress</p>	<p>- see 15-20 secs for description of appearance</p>	<p>- black background</p>	<p>- no physical activity. Racket lowers and it is on the face of</p>	<p>- head shot of sparkly dress with words strong is beautiful</p>

				sparkly dress	
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### Appendix 1.1-Visual Modality “Paul George Strong”

Instance	Attire	Appearance	Setting	Physical Activity	Camera View
0-5 secs -one main character throughout- Paul George 	-typical gym clothes- black hoody, with black basketball shorts	-hard to tell as not many close-ups in this instance, hair seems well kempt	- gym	- walking into the gym + skipping rope	- initial focus on hands as he is walking in texting - then wide view of the whole gym - close up of PG skipping rope
5-10 secs 	-long sleeve muscle fit black workout top + basketball shorts	- muscular, fit individual	- same	-running on treadmill	-close up on face + body and arms as PG is running
10-15 secs 	-same as previous	-same as previous	-same as previous	-increasing treadmill -lifting weights -focus on muscles and facial reaction to pushing his body	- close up of feet running - close up of muscles lifting weights - close- up of legs while using leg machine
15-20 secs	-same as previous	-same as previous	-same as previous	-yelling from intense workout	Close-up of forehead sweat -head shot of when he

				-lifting weights -tweeting to fans about his work out	is yelling from the strain -close up of legs while lifting weights
20-25 secs  	-same as previous	-same as previous	-same as previous	- dropping weights after successfully completing his rep - using the leg machine	- close up on weights as they fall - close up on legs during use of leg machine
25-30 secs 	-same as previous	-same as previous	-same as previous	- PG skipping rope	- wide view of the whole gym PG off to the side- dim lighting- face not detectable but activity is

### Appendix 2.0-Vocal Modality “Strong is Beautiful”

Instance:	References to gender	References to beauty	References to strength	Addressing the audience
0-5 secs.	Yes: “what are <b>little girls</b> made of”	No.	No.	Yes: asks a question- what are little girls made of?
5-10 secs.	No.	Yes: “they’re made of <b>sugar</b> and <b>spice</b> ”	No	No

10-15 secs	No	No	Yes: and <b>sweat</b> and <b>fury</b>	No
15-20 secs.	No	No	Yes: and <b>grit</b> and <b>strength</b>	No
20-25 secs.	Yes: “That’s what <b>little girls</b> are made of”	No	No	No
25-30 secs.	No	No	No	No

### Appendix 2.1-Vocal Modality “Paul George Strong”

Instance:	References to Gender	References to beauty	References to strength	Addressing audience
0-5 scs	No	No	Yes : “ <b>Strong</b> can lift you from your lowest points”	
5-10 secs	No	No	No	<b>Yes:</b> “Will Paul George ever be the same player?”
10-15 secs	No	No	Yes: <b>Strong</b> can silence the doubters”	No
15-20 scs	No	No	Yes: “ <b>Strong</b> can push you even harder”	No
20-25 secs	No	No	Yes; “ <b>Strong</b> can do for you”	Yes: “for you”
25-30 secs	No	No	Yes: AT&T’s network now has the <b>strongest</b> 4g LTE signal	No

### Appendix 3.0-Aural Modality “Strong is Beautiful”

Commercial	Time:	Tempo:	Volume:	Genre:	Instruments:	Additional Notes:
Strong is Beautiful	0-10 secs.	Slow	Soft	Classical	Piano	Long pauses in piano notes. Very

						gloomy feeling.
Strong is Beautiful	10-20 secs.	Slow	Soft	Classical	Piano + addition of a very soft guitar	Only one chord is played from the guitar and when it is over it goes again- playing on the slow nature of the commercial and the piano
Strong is Beautiful	20-30 secs.	Slow	Soft	Classical/rock	Piano + guitar + drums	Ends with drums playing but piano and slow nature are still evident

### Appendix 3.1-Aural Modality “Paul George Strong”

Commercial	Time	Tempo	Volume	Genre	Instruments	Additional
Paul George Strong	0-10	Fast	Loud	Hip-hop	Electronic mixer/drums (at beginning-very quick)	Especially loud at the very beginning (first 3 secs) and fades to a lower but still loud level.
Paul George Strong	10-20	Fast	Loud	Hip-hop	Electronic mixer + drums+ treadmill volume increasing + weights + a yell “ahh”	Drums pick up at one point (20 secs.)

Paul George Strong	20-30	Fast	Loud	Hip-hop	Electronic mixer + drums + weights+ AT&T sound effect	
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#### **Appendix 4.0-Textual Modality “Strong is Beautiful”**

Transcription	Colour	Font size
WTA logo (present throughout)	Purple + white	Small
Strong is Beautiful (26 secs. - 28 secs)	White	Medium
WTA logo + wtatennis.com (28-30 secs)	Purple + white	Small

#### **Appendix 4.1-Textual Modality “Paul George Strong”**

Transcription	Colour	Font Size
Keep fighting PG (20secs.)	Black	Medium
AT&T’s network now has the strongest 4G LTE signal	Grey- strong is in orange and italicized	medium