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Behind the lens: How women photojournalists' experiences are impacted by gendered double standards and emotion management on the sidelines of the National Football League

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How women photojournalists' experiences are impacted by gendered double standards and
emotion management on the sidelines of the National Football League

Caylie Silveira

**Thesis submitted
to the Reed College of Media
at West Virginia University**

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

**Master of Science in
Journalism**

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ABSTRACT

Behind the lens:

How women photojournalists' experiences are impacted by gendered double standards and emotion management on the sidelines of the National Football League

Caylie Silveira

Women photojournalists working on the sidelines for the National Football League (NFL) are scarce, despite many advancements made by women in sports media. In the workplace, women face double standards and are expected to manage their emotions differently than their male colleagues. This study aimed to analyze the expectations of women by looking at the different stereotypes and biases that they face as well as the gendered wage gaps. Feminist standpoint theory assisted in the qualitative research approach of this study because it states that women are the only ones that can speak about their experiences since they are the ones affected. This study used semi-structured in-depth interviews to interview women photojournalists working on the sidelines of the NFL to gain insight of their experiences. This study discovered based on the participants response that the major themes are preferential treatment towards their male colleagues exists, there are clear disparities in wages between men and women, and there are emotion management expectations, despite them not being explicitly stated. Looking forward, these themes add to the larger conversation of women in sports media. By taking a deeper dive into the smaller group of women photojournalists, this study was able to determine that to ensure a better future for women in the NFL, more women need to be hired and more women need to be advocates for other women in the industry.

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INTRODUCTION

Across the sports industry, women are playing a critical role in shaping the future of sports (Brennan, 2019). More specifically, women working in sports media are partaking in important roles that are assisting in this progress at all levels, especially in the football sphere (Charlton, 2021). However, there are many barriers that still exist and work against women within the sports industry (Charlton, 2021). This study aimed to look specifically at women photojournalists working for the National Football League (NFL) and how their experiences can assist further progress for women working in sports media in the future.

Historically, women have not been treated well within the NFL franchise and because of this, women are still achieving hard-won firsts within the organization (Brassil & Draper, 2021). Over the past few decades, women have begun to break down barriers and smash glass ceilings by contributing to the league in many different ways, such as filling various positions league-wide (Charlton, 2021). This study aimed to consider the challenges and achievements already known about women working in the league and apply those matters to the specific group of women photojournalists working on the sidelines for the NFL.

Gendered double standards and emotion management, as explored by Harrison (2018), are two prominent factors in understanding women's experiences in the workplace. Gendered double standards refers to the differences in treatment based upon gender. The second prominent factor, emotion management, also was applied in this study to assist in gathering the experiences of women sports photographers because it factors in how women are expected to handle their emotions compared to their male co-workers (Harrison, 2018). Both of these elements have been applied to women sports broadcasters but this study extends that work to focus specifically at how both factors affect women behind the camera and covering the NFL (Harrison, 2018).

Categorized within gendered double standards and emotion management are five gender stereotypes, gender wage gaps, and the concept of how women treat other women in the field; all of which are critical to understanding the impact of professional experiences on women photojournalists working for the NFL. The five gender stereotypes that this study explored helps to understand how women have been treated in sports media in the past and informed the questionnaire for this study to explore whether or which stereotypes live on today. Wage gaps have already been seen as an issue between men and women photographers, so this study examined to what degree wage gaps affected women photographers in the NFL (Datausa.io, 2017). In addition, this study explored how women perceive the collegiality of both the men and the other women with whom they work in sports media and across the league.

Feminist standpoint theory provides the theoretical backbone for this research that explored women's lived experiences working behind the camera in sports media. Feminist standpoint theory establishes that women's experiences brings a unique perception of women in society because they are the ones that are directly affected (Hartsock, 1983). With the emergence of more women researchers and scientists, this theory was born to assist women in creating a conversation that has allowed for women to share and gain knowledge about the perception of women in society (Bowell, 2011.). This theory supports this study because it gave the participants a voice to share their lived experiences, which validates that they have unique insight on the nature of sexism that they face.

Taken together, the purpose of this study was to gather information about women photojournalists within the NFL to dive deeper into how gendered double standards and emotion management impact women working in sports media. This study used a qualitative approach to conduct semi-structured, in-depth interviews of women photojournalists. A thematic analysis was

conducted to examine the responses by each participant to explore the research question: *How do women photojournalists describe their lived experiences working for the NFL?* To begin this investigation, the next section discusses the current literature and research of women's lived experiences in the NFL and throughout sports media.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review that follows will aim to look at the history of treatment of women in association to the NFL. A discussion of women in sports media will follow, and then the application of Harrison's (2018) study discussing gendered double standards and emotion management provided the main structure of this research project. The theoretical framework, feminist standpoint theory, informed why it is so important to understand women's experiences working as photojournalists for the NFL, and the stereotypes and biases women face in their work roles. This first section details what is already acknowledged about women in the NFL and will note accomplishments by women working in the industry.

History of Women and the NFL

In order to understand the implications that women face today in the National Football League (NFL), we must look at how women have been treated historically by the league. The league was founded in Ohio on August 20, 1920 but it wasn't until 1987 that the first woman, Gayle Sierens, worked calling play-by-play for the organization (Azzi, 2021). Women have struggled over the decades since to reach those "firsts" and they are still achieving them in 2021 (NFL, 2021). Moving forward from Sierens, more women began to break into the industry as coaches, office workers, owners and executives. Despite these breakouts, women continue to be the minority and suffer consequences for who they are and the positions in which they serve.

The lack of women within the NFL organization is not the only issue the league faces regarding the treatment of women. The NFL also harbors a history of domestic violence. One of the most publicized cases involves former NFL star, OJ Simpson, and the murder case of 1994 when he was accused of murdering his ex-wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ron Goldman (Britannica, 2021). Since 2000, there have been 80 players arrested for a combined 94 domestic violence charges (clickittoticket, 2019).

The league came under heavy fire during the 2014 season with several players being charged with domestic violence and cheerleaders from multiple teams filing lawsuits for unfair labor practices. For example, Baltimore Ravens running back, Ray Rice, was charged for domestic violence against his then fiancée in February 2014. As a result, he was suspended for the first two games of the season in July but in September, a video leaked showing the assault and Rice was then terminated from the Baltimore Ravens. Soon after, the NFL suspended him indefinitely for his actions but Rice appealed with the help of the players' union, stating that he shouldn't be punished twice for the same offense. He was then reinstated but the negative publicity surrounding this incident led to his career ending because no team would sign him during his free agency (Walker, 2019).

In the same year, the Carolina Panthers defensive end, Greg Hardy, was found guilty of domestic violence and charged with 18 months of probation. Due to the legal process being slow to play out, Hardy was permitted to play in the first game of the season but was deactivated for the second game and placed on the inactive list for the remainder of the season, with pay (ESPN, 2015). As a result of the domestic violence charges against the players of the 2014 season, the league issued a new policy for all personnel regarding the crime. It stated that in the occurrence of a first offense, they would be suspended for six games without pay and if they faced a second

offense, they would be issued a “lifetime” ban. However, anyone issued a “lifetime” ban could petition for reinstatement after a year (Sharp, 2014). A 2018 article cited women feeling “unimportant, unvalued, and unheard” in reference to the treatment NFL players get after having issues such as domestic violence (Charlton, 2018).

Additionally, cheerleaders from Buffalo, Cincinnati, New York (Jets), Oakland and Tampa all filed lawsuits for unfair labor practices in 2014. The lawsuit cited that the cheerleaders were held to certain appearance standards that included their weight and make-up, at each woman’s expense. Also, they were not paid for many of their practices, suffered low wages and some were only paid for their work at the end of the season. One of the most controversial aspects of the lawsuits was the Buffalo Jills’ “Jiggle Test,” a weekly test administered to all cheerleaders where they would be forced to do jumping jacks in order for their bodies to be scrutinized to check for a “jiggle” (Buiso, 2014).

The league’s reputational threats over its treatment of women do not end there. In 2020, the Washington Football Team, formally known as the Washington Redskins, came under fire when numerous women came forward and exposed the organization for their derogatory and sexual behavior towards women in the workplace. Allegations were brought by Emily Applegate, along with 14 other women, who had all been former employees who worked for the Washington NFL team and all of which had experienced toxic work environments. In Hobson & Clarke’s (2020) article about the allegations from women against the Washington Football Team, they noted men calling them derogatory names, requesting them to wear tight clothing and men groping the women during games. Additionally, they revealed that the treatment they received by their male colleagues made them realize that their dream jobs were to be accompanied by sexual and verbal harassment (Hobson & Clarke, 2020). Additional to the initial article exposing the Washington

staff associated with the allegations, another expose was released later in the summer that cited that some of the same officials took part in sharing lewd content of the NFL team's cheerleaders.

Since the NFL's image has been so negatively impacted by the events that took place during the 2014 season and since, the league has made several attempts at image repair, but only because the multiple negative crises resulted in the array of negative stakeholder perceptions (Harker, 2018). After the 2014 season, the NFL hired nine women who would make history by joining the coaching staffs on several of the teams. The women hired include Kathryn Smith (Buffalo), Lori Locust (Tampa Bay), Maral Javidifar (Tampa Bay), Katie Sowers (San Francisco), Callie Brownson (Buffalo), Phoebe Shecter (Buffalo), Chelsea Romero (Los Angeles), Jennifer King (Carolina) and Jen Welter (Arizona) (femalecoachingnetwork, 2020). Looking at the more recent picture of women in the NFL, Sarah Thomas was announced in 2021 to become the first female referee to officiate the Super Bowl (Gardner, 2021). In addition to this great feat, Thomas is also known for being the first woman to officiate a major college football game, the first woman to officiate a bowl game and the first woman to officiate in a Big 10 stadium (Gallagher, 2021).

Women in sports media, since Gayle Sierens' 1987 hire, also have been faced with adversity, despite being hired by an outside-of-the-NFL organization. Women are faced with the day-to-day struggles of scrutiny and objectification by coworkers and colleagues associated with the NFL, and have been denied equal access.

The U.S. District Court ruled in 1978 that women should be allowed in the locker rooms for post-game interviews just like their male counterparts. However, numerous women were denied entrance into the locker rooms following a Jaguars-Colts in 2015. Then, in a 2017 press conference, Carolina Panthers Quarterback Cam Newton laughed at a female reporter for asking a question about the offense's run game, saying "It's funny to hear a female talk about routes. It's

funny” (Johnson, 2017). It’s important to note here that bias is reportedly felt by all women who work in sports media, regardless of their position (Wimmer, 2018).

Despite all the advancements that women have made in the NFL, female sports photographers in the industry remain as the minority. It’s important to note that this study added to the conversation that has already been started by diving deeper into the smaller subdivisions of women photographers in the NFL. In reference to the Cam Newton incident with reporter Jordan Rodrigue in 2017, it begins to look at women behind the camera since Rodrigue incorporates visual content in with her stories (Muckrack, 2021). In an interview, Getty photographer, Elsa Garrison, said she had only recently noticed more female photographers covering sports but only in the larger cities such as New York, Los Angeles, and Boston. “After 19 years in the industry, Garrison has only recently noticed more women shooting from the sidelines — but says the demands of the industry still pose a unique challenge for women in the field” (Adler, 2015). Kim Fortino can be noted as one of the few female photographers who worked directly for the NFL, as a team photographer for the 49ers.

Taking all of this into consideration, this research investigated the ongoing treatment of women in sports media covering the NFL. The focus of this study remained on women NFL photographers to investigate the major areas of lived experiences among these women and the challenges they face from behind the camera. In this next section, this study looked at the factors that have been identified by past scholars as major barriers for women in sports media.

The Challenges Women Face Working in Sports Media

Guy Harrison (2018) discussed three types of constructed subjectivities to examine the challenges women face while working in sports media: harassment, gendered double standards, and emotion management. Harrison’s (2018) study discusses the lived experiences of women

sportscasters, in particular, and he notes the perpetuation of these three types of constructed subjectivities regarding gender inequity in the workplace. Harrison (2018) uses the term subjectivity because he states that it is through women's lived experiences that subjectivity is constructed. This meaning that is constructed through the lived experiences of women, creates the presence of the subjectivities of gendered double standards and emotion management. Harrison asserts that gendered double standards appears through studying the system's marginalized perception of women and draws the conclusion that "the sports media industry is a gendering space as much as it is a gendered space" and it is important for the industry to understand the implications that harassment, gendered double standards, and expectation of emotion management can have on women within the sports media industry (p. 954). Harrison explained that women have left sports media or have kept a distanced relationship with sports media because of this heavy expectation of emotion management. In the sections above, a clear depiction was offered regarding the harassment of women around the NFL. This study will hereunto focus on women sports media photographers and explore their experiences that require them to manage their emotions despite the harassment they endure and the gendered double standards that they face.

It is important to acknowledge here that harassment should never be dismissed when analyzing people's lived experiences but in this study, the focus remained on two of the three types of constructed subjectivities: *gendered double standards* and *emotion management*. The following sections explored what we know regarding *gendered double standards* and *emotion management* by reviewing existing literature and exploring reported experiences so that this research project can help both scholars and professionals better understand the experiences of women behind the camera. First though, it is important to review the five stereotypes attached to women working in sports media.

Five common stereotypes of women in sports media. There are several stereotypes about women in the field of sports media that fall under the two main types of constructed subjectivities that will be the focus of this research: *gendered double standards* and *emotion management*. Each of these stereotypes can fit either under the gendered double standards or the emotion management factors that Harrison (2018) proposed because they have a direct impact on women and what is expected of them. First, we need to understand what exactly these gendered stereotypes mean in relation to women in the workplace. According to Heilman (2012), stereotypes can be characterized as the specific generalizations that are attributed to certain groups of people, and in the case of gender stereotypes, those groups are men and women.

The five stereotypes that this study will look at includes 1) women don't understand sports as well as men, 2) that their looks implicate how they are perceived by others, 3) women don't have the knowledge to operate camera equipment, and 4) women do not have the physical build to handle the sidelines, and 5) women are too emotional. Four of these stereotypes fall under gendered double standards because they can be categorized as assumptions that would not be made if they were men and therefore would not be addressed: women not understanding sports like men, their looks implicate how they are perceived by others, women don't have the knowledge to operate the camera equipment, and women are not built to handle the sidelines. Women are held to a double standard in comparison to males (*i.e.*, women can be either smart or beautiful but not both while men's looks have nothing to do with their intelligence) which is unfair because they are expected to act differently and their actions are interpreted differently due to their sex. The fifth and final stereotype, that women are too emotional, will be explored under the emotion management factor.

Gender biases regarding women in sports media. Gender bias is another term that gets used in reference to sports media and more closely, the NFL because historically the organization

has favored men over women. Gender bias falls under the gendered double standards factor because women were not treated or respected the way men were and even weren't a part of the sports industry until almost 70 years after men. Gender bias is most prominently seen in professional settings and it reflects the preferential treatment of men, or more specifically white, heterosexual men (Reiners, 2019). Gender bias thus results in mistreatment and bias towards women based solely on their sex (Reiners, 2019).

Both gender stereotypes and gender biases can be broken down into descriptive and prescriptive, and both can have negative effects on the career paths of women (Heilman, 2012). As such, this research explores two other descriptive and prescriptive topics that fall under gender bias, and therefore, gendered double standards: gender wage gaps and women who are already in the field. Wage gender gaps show the disparities between men and women in the pay they receive for the same work. Also, just because the industry may have women already in it, it doesn't mean that field has changed or strayed away from the biases that it once held (Harrison 2018).

Additional to the stereotypes for the gendered double standards factor, the fifth stereotype that women are too emotional falls under the emotion management factor because women are expected to act differently than their male co-workers. This also plays into the idea that women are expected to control themselves on another level because if they show too much emotion, it may be perceived negatively by those around them (Harrison, 2018).

The sections that follow explore the implications that *gendered double standards* and *emotion management* have had on women in sports media to date. Each section will also include portions of the five stereotypes named here. First, the gendered double standards overarching factor is explored and discussed, and then the emotion management factor follows.

The Gendered Double Standards Women Face in Sports Media

There hasn't been too much research or insight into the topic of gendered double standards surrounding female photographers in association to the National Football League, which is why this study is important. However, it is widely known amongst people in the profession that gendered double standards is a very real problem that needs to be dealt with. "You didn't need to tell photographer Lisa Slagle the statistic that less than 20 percent of action sports photographers are female: It was quickly evident from being in the field" (Lozancich, 2018, para. 1). Some credit the reasoning behind the lack of coverage and acknowledgement to the problem to the lack of respect that many journalists have towards the sports sections and pages of news sources. "The sports department of newspapers or broadcast stations is often derided as the 'toy department' or 'toyland' by other reporters" (Creedon, 1994). This statement can hold true to photographers within specific sporting organizations, such as the NFL, because if news sources aren't taking sports seriously then the wider population most likely isn't either since the news is the leading producer of information to the public (Creedon, 1994). However, sports has seen some major changes over the past twenty years, with sources and organizations becoming increasingly more credible and popularized. Unfortunately, women will only be able to grow along with these changes if the ideas and beliefs towards women in sports are changed drastically.

Women have come a long way since they first began fighting for equality but it has been harder for them to make strides in the world of sports because of heavy stereotypes and gendered double standards from their colleagues. Although there are many reasons for the inequalities that women face compared to their male counterparts as photographers and videographers within and around the NFL, the first of the deep-rooted reasons lies in the age-old stereotype that women don't understand sports as well as men (Wimmer, 2018). This stereotype of women not understanding sports as well as men is a factor of gendered double standards because it shows this

preconceived notion that men are more knowledgeable of this topic than women based on the fact that they are men. Ohio State University Head coach Woody Hayes believed this stereotype back in the 1970s and it unfortunately still lives within athletes in the NFL. Again, it can be noted here the experience that Jordan Rodrigue had during the 2017 press conference with Cam Newton (Johnson, 2017). It's important to note this event in this study because even though the female reporter was not a photographer or videographer, the bias is extended towards all women who work in sports media, regardless of their position (Wimmer, 2018). This concept has created many roadblocks and has kept many women from breaking into the profession (Harrison, 2019). "There's still an unconscious assumption by many fans and employers that women intrinsically know less about sports than men. Hence, the immediate quizzing of any woman who claims to be a sports fan: 'Oh yeah, you're a basketball fan? Can you name every one-time All-Star from the 1990s?'" (Wimmer, 2018) This type of attitude can be seen across the board when it comes to women and sports but has made it hard for women to be taken seriously in their careers. This then has negative effects on the retention of women in sports and the future of women in the profession.

I can tell you exactly how it makes women feel. Unimportant. Unvalued. Unheard. Are we supposed to be thankful the only time we are even mentioned throughout the season is during the month of October when the NFL supports breast cancer awareness month? Thanks, but we're worth mentioning every month, and we shouldn't have to be suffering from a disease in our tits to garner the public's coerced attention (Charlton, 2018, para. 4).

The second stereotype, that women are not knowledgeable of sports because of their looks, fits under the subjectivity of gendered double standards because women are judged more heavily on their appearances than their male co-workers. Many will claim that if a woman appears too feminine, she can't know sports and if a woman appears too manly, she doesn't count as a female in sports or she challenges the idea of female sports (Harrison, 2019). Women are judged on this basis across the board in the sports industry, whether they're an athlete or if they work/report on

sports. A 2016 article discusses how women are expected to maintain the fragility aspect of their sex due to an expected dependency on men that is linked, but once a woman presents with a masculine frame, that dependency aspect is removed which is a threatening concept to many men (Bona, 2016).

Women are asking to have their voices heard therefore there is a clear need for more acknowledgement and research into the gender gaps within any and all sports media organization and with more women involved in the profession the need to be studied is at an all-time high. Studies help others achieve the same accomplishments as those before them because it paves the way for them to be achieved at a quick rate while also allowing more movement for change in the future.

Additional to these first few stereotypes, the third stereotype that people attribute to the lack of women on the sidelines is the size, weight and technical aspects of the equipment which is also a depiction of gendered double standards because it is a preconceived notion that women are not as knowledgeable from a technological aspect and that they can't have the same strength as men to handle the equipment. This belief is derived from the age-old idea that women do not understand technological advancements like men do and therefore cannot operate certain equipment because they are not as knowledgeable (Flanagan, 2015). Additionally, there is the thought that women are of smaller stature, so they aren't strong enough to carry the necessary equipment to use. 49ers team photographer, Kim Fortino has consistently heard remarks about her size in relation to the equipment she uses throughout her career. She was quoted in a 2015 article talking about how rich she would be if she had a dollar for every time someone noted that her camera was almost as big as she is (Flanagan, 2015). The statement that women can't understand

the technical aspects of the cameras is an argument created to keep women from entering the industry and is backed by false misconceptions of women.

The fourth stereotype is a belief that women should not have close access to the action of the game out of fear that they may get hurt and this fits under the gendered double standards umbrella because again, it fits with the idea that women are the petite sex and shouldn't dabble in fields dominated by men. This stereotype plays into the one stated above about their size but also was formed from the common known idea that women can't do the same things that their male counterparts can because they are built differently and can't perform the same. When shooting a sporting event, it is expected that there is a chance to be hit or run down by players on the field if one is not careful and it is because of this, men have developed the belief that women can't hold their own like men and need to be "protected." Sarah Stier, a professional sports photographer, was constantly told to move away from the sidelines during games while her male colleagues were allowed to stay up close and it was a frustrating aspect of the job for her (Stier, 2017):

I'm a really tough cookie, shooting so many athletic events have taught me to be that way. But when members of the bowl game's security team kept moving me farther and farther back from the field and restricting parts of the sideline that I was allowed to shoot from because they were worried that I was 'going to get hurt by a barreling football player,' I nearly lost my marbles (para. 9).

The above stereotypes that women don't understand sports as well as men, their looks implicate how they are perceived by others, they don't have the knowledge to operate camera equipment, and that they don't have the build to handle the sidelines are all factors of gendered double standards. As stated by Harrison (2018), women in sports media face many implications in response to gendered double standards, which includes stereotypes against them. However, there are two other areas that are direct results of gendered double standards, with those being wage gender gaps and the fact that women in the field doesn't mean a changed field. Next, this section

will discuss how wage gaps and women in the field are direct results from gendered double standards in sports media.

Gender bias as a part of gendered double standards. Gendered double standards appear in all areas of the workplace in sports media, including wage gaps. Wage gaps fall under the umbrella of gendered double standards because statistically and historically, women have been paid less than men for the same amount of work. The wage gap amongst photographers in general is drastic, with men making an average of \$48,767 a year and women making \$27,068 a year (Datausa.io, 2017). Wage gaps are an important characteristic of gender double standards because additional to being held to high standards, they are also paid less for the same work that their male co-workers do (Harrison, 2018). Women are not paid as much as their male counterparts because statistically, they are less likely to be promoted, despite their experience and accreditation, than their male co-workers.

A 1998 mail survey of 89 female sports journalists found similar results—that is, frustration at being passed over for promotions. One respondent wrote that salary inequity and lack of promotion were the biggest problems: ‘There are very few women editors and very few columnists. When these positions come open, they go to men.’ Another respondent accused male editors ‘who feel threatened by smart, athletic, talented female writers’ of discrimination (Hardin & Shain, 2005).

This also plays hand-in-hand with the fact that women are less likely to negotiate for raises and higher salaries than their male counterparts. “In investigating this phenomenon, it has become clear that the self-confident demeanor and demanding behavior entailed in salary negotiation is considered inappropriate for women” (Heilman, 2012). There are biases that women are affected by in the workplace compared to their male co-workers and it results in disparities in areas such

as wages. This has captured the attention of many researchers because the idea that women are less likely to advocate for oneself and their worth, is astounding (Heilman, 2012). Bowles, Babcock, and Lai (2007) conducted research that showed that women who negotiated for higher pay, faced consequences and were less likely to be hired in the future. However, when their male colleagues did the same, they faced no penalties.

One important thing to note is that just because women are breaking into the field, it doesn't mean that the field suddenly changes. Women in the field falls under gendered double standards because many women who work in sports media have adopted the same principles as their male co-workers. This is another obstacle that many women face in the industry because their female counterparts can act as a roadblock, just like men in the industry. Many women experience just as much, if not more, discrimination from women in the industry compared to men in the industry. This is another element of gendered double standards because women are holding other women to these high expectations, when their male counterparts aren't scrutinized as heavily (Harrison, 2018).

There have been many studies conducted that look into the perceptions of gender stereotypes by men and women which resulted in numerous similarities (Heilman, 2012). It is expected that women will have empathy towards other women in the workplace but in most scenarios, this is not the case (Heilman, 2012). This can be accredited to the fact that many women and men have the same ideas about women in many male gender-typed positions, historically. The National Football League falls under this category because it has been predominantly male and due to this, women in the workplace may adopt those same ideals which can produce barriers for the next set of women who emerge into the industry.

Additional to women forming these ideas towards other women from working in an industry that pushes it, some of these stereotypes and double standards may have been born through other life experiences. This can be applied to both men and women because of the way they were raised and what they have been taught throughout their lives. Even though it has been researched and studied that men and women don't differ as much when responding to women in the workplace, the reasoning behind their responses varies. In Heilman's (2012) article, it states that despite the concept of men trying to 'keep women down,' comparisons between women co-workers drive them to partake in the same treatment towards other women.

To this point, this section covered an array of the gendered double standards that negatively implicate women in the sports media industry. The four stereotypes: 1) women don't understand sports as well as men, 2) that their looks implicate how they are perceived by others, 3) they don't have the knowledge to operate camera equipment, and 4) they don't have the build to handle the sidelines, along with wage gaps and women in the field, all were reviewed in this section because each contributes to gendered double standards. Next, emotion management will be reviewed for its own set of negative implications on women in sports media.

The Expectations of Emotion Management for Women in Sports Media

In addition to gendered double standards, emotion management is the other constructed subjectivity that women face in the workplace. Emotion management is women being held to a standard different from their male co-workers in terms of how they are able to control their feelings in the workplace. The concept that women are too emotional is a stereotype that falls under emotion management because it generalizes how each gender is judged in a workplace. Women are held to a higher standard in any workplace because of this stereotype despite occurrences of men being emotional in similar situations. It is frowned upon for women to get emotional in the

workplace and they are expected to uphold a certain level of compassion while their male colleagues are permitted to have angry outbursts as they please (Hardin & Shain, 2006). The idea that women have to control themselves to maintain a standard of professionalism in the workplace but their male co-workers are not held to that same standard has enabled workplaces to rid women when they don't meet those expectations, even when men act the same way. At the end of the day, these types of stereotypes are held in place in order to keep women out of the sports industry surrounding the National Football League.

Emotion management can go hand-in-hand with gender bias because it is a direct representation of favoring one sex over the other. Men are able to act out and show their emotions freely while women are expected to hold a level of professionalism and are expected to suppress their emotions. In Harrison's (2018) study, he talks about how these expectations have made work environments uncomfortable and have diverted women away from holding positions as sportscasters. "Of course, the expectation of emotion management—and its implications—are exacerbated when the sportscaster is a mother, is in an unfamiliar geographic location, or is a woman of color" (Harrison, 2018). It's important to take note that even though women are treated differently than men, there are also another level of expectations for women when they are of a different race or when they are pregnant or a mother.

In conclusion, gendered double standards and emotion management, as stated by Harrison (2018), have major implications on broadcasters who are women in sports media. For the purpose of this study, gendered double standards and emotion management were used to examine the lived experiences of women behind the camera in the NFL. The five stereotypes of women not understanding sports like men, their looks implicate how they are perceived by others, women don't have the knowledge to operate the camera equipment, women are not built to handle the

sidelines, and women are too emotional were key contributors to understanding how gendered double standards and emotion management apply to women behind the camera. The gendered double standards umbrella reaches over the four stereotypes: women not understanding sports like men, their looks implicate how they are perceived by others, women don't have the knowledge to operate the camera equipment, and women are not built to handle the sidelines; wage gaps and women in the field, which shows how women are treated in comparison to men in the workplace. Emotion management umbrellas over another stereotype, the idea that women are too emotional to handle the job, which contributes to gender bias and the overall expectation of women in the workplace. All of which applies directly to feminist standpoint theory and the concept of how women working as photojournalists covering the NFL describe their lived experiences. In this next section, this study will expand on feminist standpoint theory and how the experiences of the women in this study contribute to the conversation of how gendered double standards and emotion management implicate women in sports media.

Feminist Standpoint Theory

In addition to the historical overview of women in the NFL and the study of gendered double standards and emotion management's effects on women in sports media, feminist standpoint theory allows for a deeper understanding of the study of women's lived experiences. Feminist standpoint theory refers to the concept that women are able to shed light on topics that others can't because they have lived experiences and are the ones directly affected (Hartsock, 1983). Hartsock (1983) discusses that the labor that people conduct, how they engage with the material world, including their class status, shapes their consciousness of themselves and the world. Hartsock (1983) then theorizes that due to the sexual division of labor, although men and women have the same "wage jobs," women have more roles in reference to child raising or taking

care of the home and that makes them more knowledgeable about their roles and gives a unique perception of society.

Feminist standpoint theory makes three principal claims: (1) Knowledge is socially situated. (2) Marginalized groups are socially situated in ways that make it more possible for them to be aware of things and ask questions than it is for the non-marginalized. (3) Research, particularly that focused on power relations, should begin with the lives of the marginalized (Bowell, 2011, para. 1). These three principal claims infer that due to the social situations that women are in, they are able to form perceptions differently than men because they are more aware of the experiences of the marginalized. This was applied to the study because women photojournalists in the NFL experience situations differently and have a different perspective of the workplace than their male colleagues due to their social situation.

Many theorists have different views regarding what actually encompasses feminist standpoint theory but it is widely acknowledged that women have a different vantage point or perspective of the world due to their numerous roles (Hartsock, 1983). Additional to this, it is referred to as feminist standpoint and not “women’s standpoint” because it focuses primarily on “the liberatory possibilities contained in that experience” (Hartsock, 1983, p. 369).

The feminist standpoint theory emerged in the 1970s as a part of the second wave of feminism and was the first critical theoretical approach within the feminist social disciplines. Its core principles were developed as a critique of Marxism by Marxist feminists and it questioned how hierarchical structures shaped society (Hartsock, 1983). It challenged past thinking and studies by scientists and created a new way of thinking that would allow feminists to speak openly on their own experiences to hopefully bring awareness and change in the future (Bowell, 2011). In addition, feminist standpoint adds to epistemology by also adding to “methodological debates

in the social and natural sciences, to philosophy of science, and to political activism” (Bowell, 2011, para. 1). This theory is committed to entering knowledge and perceptions from personal experiences to the conversation to therefore bring about change in society.

The feminist standpoint theory was invented to challenge cultural norms and address social justice issues by those being oppressed (Collins, 1997). Additionally, this theory can be referred to on an individual and group platform, meaning that it takes into account personal experiences as well as works to address experiences expressed by whole groups (Collins, 1997). This theory informed the study by giving a voice to the women working as photojournalists in the NFL because it gave them a platform to share their perceived experiences. Hartsock (1983) discusses how there is a sexual division of labor where the women’s work expands farther than the workplace compared to men because most of the work in social reproduction is done by women. In relation to the study of women in sports media and even more direct, women working the sidelines for the NFL, the feminist standpoint theory allowed for the perceptions of lived experiences by those marginalized in the industry to be heard. This study utilized this theory to establish and analyze the data collected to add to the conversation about women behind the camera on the sidelines of NFL games.

The Current Study

It is clear that the data already available about women in sports media and women in the NFL can be related back to Harrison’s (2018) study discussing gendered double standards and emotion management. Additionally, the feminist standpoint theory makes it clear that it is important for women to share their perceived lived experiences in order to infer the treatment of women moving forward. Therefore, this study built on the research already done to expand the conversation to women photojournalists working for the NFL.

The historical overview of women in the NFL, the constructed subjectivities of women in sports media which include gendered double standards and emotion management, were examined via the lens of feminist standpoint theory to uniquely explore the lived experiences of women behind the camera. Additionally, the stereotypes and biases, wage gaps and women in the field, each were explored. Through the use of qualitative in-depth interviews, this thesis sought the perceived experiences of women behind the camera in order to explore how they describe their working experiences as photojournalists covering the NFL. As such, the following research question was asked:

RQ: How do women photojournalists covering the NFL describe their lived experiences regarding gendered double standards and expectations of emotion management?

The way in which this research question was explored is detailed in the next section with an overview regarding qualitative in-depth interviews. Additionally, the sampling, data collection and data analysis are expanded on to describe the process for this study.

METHOD

This qualitative research project's approach was shaped by Harrison's (2018) study that included factors of constructed subjectivities of women in sports media, two of which that were applied: gendered double standards and emotion management. These two factors coupled with feminist standpoint theory informed the questionnaire for a qualitative study that utilizes semi-structured, in-depth interviews. The questionnaire provides a topical outline and is an instrument for the applied theory that supports the lived experiences of women (Hartsock, 1983). Sparkes & Smith's (2014) study stated that using semi-structured, in-depth interviews is valuable in qualitative research for exploring the research question proposed because qualitative research focuses on how people are able to make sense of the world and their personal, lived experiences.

The general idea of the semi-structured in-depth interviews was to gather answers to the questions (Appendix A) that were based on the literature review and built on the understanding of the situation of gendered double standards and emotion management among women photojournalists working in the NFL. The analysis of the in-depth interviews was crucial in helping to understand how women are perceived in the league. Feminist standpoint theory explains why it is so important to discuss problems such as these with women because they are personally affected by the situation and therefore can be the only ones to truly shed light on their experiences (Bowell, 2011). As stated in the literature review, the three principal claims of: (1) Knowledge is socially situated. (2) Marginalized groups are socially situated in ways that make it more possible for them to be aware of things and ask questions than it is for the non-marginalized. (3) Research, particularly that focused on power relations, should begin with the lives of the marginalized; that feminist standpoint theory encompasses, helped to shape the study and method (Bowell, 2011, para. 1).

Feminist standpoint theory allows for women, the marginalized group, to speak on their experiences in order to build on the knowledge and research into why they go through what they experience and how it affects them personally. This study is heavily influenced by feminist standpoint because by collecting personal perceptions and experiences of women working within the NFL, it will begin to shape the conversation surrounding women working on the sidelines. An important thing that was kept in mind throughout the data collection and analysis period, was to know that these are the perceived experiences of these women in the field and the study should not assume that certain events take place but listen to understand how the environment is for each individual interviewee.

Identifying and analyzing specific people and their progress in the world of sports through this qualitative research project has assisted in the exploration of the research question because it has brought a personal viewpoint to the overall topic at hand. This methods section will next review the participants, procedure, and analysis of the data set that this study collected.

Participants and Sampling. This study gained IRB Flex approval for exempt status on March 18, 2021 before reaching out to and collecting data from participants. This study aimed to reach five women working as photojournalists on the sidelines for the NFL. According to Sparkes and Smith (2014), having a data set of one is permissible in qualitative research because the research is aimed for depth, therefore interviewing five women NFL photographers is appropriate for this study. This study took a purposive approach as the sampling technique by reaching out to the NFL's women photographers. After the study gained approval, six participants were interviewed over a week and a half period. The participants included five who identified as women and one participant who identified as non-binary. Having a participant that identifies as non-binary added to this study's rich data set. Prior to the interviews, it was found that there are fewer than ten women working directly for the NFL as photographers, which was discovered through looking at each individual NFL team's websites and identifying their team photographers. However, through the interviews it was discovered that currently there are only two lead team photographers who are women.

This study aimed to first include women working directly for the NFL or teams but had the opportunity for expansion to other photojournalists who work for other outlets covering the NFL if the five women couldn't be reached from the original sample group. The primary criteria for the participants included that they were women photojournalists either working directly for the NFL, a specific team, an outside sports media organization or they were a journalist from an area news

source. Ultimately, the participants' positions varied with two being team photographers, one an hourly intern, one a contracted photographer, one in-between teams and one just recently left her team photographer position.

Qualitative samples of a smaller population can still provide rich information, as stated in Gratton and Jones (2004). As stated in Wimmer and Dominick (2006), in-depth interviews typically include smaller sample sizes that are able to shed light on experiences and feelings thus providing a deeper or richer dataset to analyze. As stated in the feminist standpoint theory, gathering personal stories that tell the story of what the industry looks like in day-to-day situations for women, by women will contribute to the conversation about what it will take to help women further progress down the line (Hartsock, 1983). The lived experiences expressed in the personal perceptions that were collected through this in-depth interviewing method, built on how gendered double standards and emotion management has affected the abilities of women behind the camera working in the sports industry (Harrison, 2018).

Additionally, these participant's ages ranged from 22 to 42 and their roles varied from interns to full-time lead photographers. This allowed for a more well-rounded view of women photojournalists working for the NFL. However, most respondents were white, with two being of Latin/Hispanic race. With that being said, other experiences may vary depending on other factors. According to Collins (1990), the "accompanying assumption that being of African descent somehow produces a certain consciousness or perspective are inherent in their definitions." It was found that four out of six participants had a prior relationship with sports by either sharing interest or being athletes themselves. Only two of the participants had no prior connection with sports before working in the sports media industry. This study did not hit any roadblocks such as not being able to secure interviews with five NFL women photographers but the participants expanded

outside of the original sample criteria to include participants who worked as photojournalists on the sidelines of the NFL who didn't work directly for the organization.

Data Collection and Procedure. This study reached out to each participant through email and received consent prior to each interview. Both the email and consents (Appendix B) were written under the IRB Flex requirements. The email elaborated on what the study was and how the participation of each participant helped the study. Additionally, the consent forms ensured that both the interviewer and interviewee understood what the procedure was for the study.

Interviews were conducted over Zoom and were recorded. Zoom is a program that operates on several different devices to allow for virtual video calls and it also allows for conversations to be recorded and transcribed (Zoom, 2019). In a 2020 study, researchers looked at how Zoom offered advantages in conducting qualitative research (Gray, Wong-Wylie, Rempel & Cook, 2020). The advantages of using Zoom for the interviews is that it allows people from different locations to meet, it can be accessed by different devices, and it has been found that it allows participants to be more open (Gray et al., 2020). Additionally, the study stated that participants prefer being in different locations from the interviewer because it prevented in-person run-ins.

The interview consisted of seven questions that directly reflected the study of gendered double standards, emotion management, stereotypes, gender bias, wage gaps, women in the field, and the feminist standpoint theory. The study drew from the previous literature of the above sections to create the questionnaire. On average, the interviews lasted roughly one hour, with some being as short as 20 minutes and some lasting as long as two hours.

First, the six participants were identified through research to gather their names and contact info that was used to reach them through email. The first email sent included the base information about the study and inquired whether or not the participant wished to partake in the study. From

there, Zoom meetings were scheduled and each interview was transcribed through Zoom following the interview process. Since the interviews were conducted over Zoom, they were conducted in quiet settings of the participants' and interviewer's choosing. The transcriptions were gathered through the Zoom application because after a call has been recorded, Zoom offers transcriptions. Each transcript was retrieved from the Zoom cloud a few hours after each interview had been concluded and was stored in two different capacities. The original transcript was stored in a Google Drive folder for safe keeping and a second was saved directly to the interviewer's computer for editing and reference purposes. Each transcript saved on the computer was thoroughly read and edited to fix any words that weren't translated properly through Zoom. In addition, each participant's name was removed from the transcript and was then identified by participant number.

Data Analysis. Since this project collected qualitative data, the data was analyzed by conducting a thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is “a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail” (Braun & Clarke, 2008, p. 79). This means that the study looked for common themes through the responses given by each participant. Both the inductive and deductive reasoning approaches were applied to the thematic analysis. The deductive approach was used to identify any themes that emerged from the interview questions that related to gendered double standards and emotion management, wage gaps and the five gender stereotypes. The inductive approach was used to identify any other themes that arose that also related back to gendered double standards, wage gaps and the five gender stereotypes. Following the interview process, each transcript was analyzed for deductive and inductive responses. Two separate documents were created to separate the participants' responses under the deductive and inductive umbrellas. In order to properly search for those themes, numbers and letters were assigned to the concepts that arose. After the

participants' responses were separated under the deductive and inductive approaches, common themes emerged through duplicate numbers or letters that repeated in each document.

Four deductive themes and four inductive themes were found through the analysis period. The deductive themes are as follows: 1) perceived preferential treatment exists towards men, 2) women are known to keep other women out, 3) emotion management requirements are not explicitly said but is known by all women from the study and 4) there are major gaps in wages compared to their male colleagues. In addition, the five inductive themes that emerged are: a) most participants work in sports because of the rush or their own background in athletics, b) the most challenging part is the pace and the long hours, c) the majority of respondents wish to remain in sports media and d) the majority of their advice for the future is to hire more women and for women to advocate for other women. It is important to note that the inductive theme referring to the backgrounds of each participant's reasoning for working in sports media has already been explored in the participant section of the methodology due to the relevance in describing each participant.

The interviews conducted gathered a plethora of information regarding the experiences of women photojournalists working on the sidelines of the NFL. For the purpose of this study, the themes discussed in the method section directly reflected gendered double standards and emotion management, the five gender stereotypes and wage gaps. In the next section, both the inductive and deductive themes will be expanded upon and discussed under the gendered double standards and emotion management factors of constructed subjectivities of women in sports media.

DISCUSSION

This study explored how women photojournalists' experiences are impacted by gendered double standards and emotion management. In order to do this, the study applied feminist standpoint theory to hear the experiences of the six participants who were interviewed. As stated

in the literature review, feminist standpoint theory makes three principal claims: (1) Knowledge is socially situated. (2) Marginalized groups are socially situated in ways that make it more possible for them to be aware of things and ask questions than it is for the non-marginalized. (3) Research, particularly that focused on power relations, should begin with the lives of the marginalized (Bowell, 2011, para. 1). An important thing to note is that feminist standpoint theory informed each interview because it re-enforced each participant's responses by stating that their experiences brings a unique perception of society because they are the ones directly affected (Hartsock, 1983).

In conducting interviews of women photographers who work for the NFL, there were several themes that emerged relating to Harrison's (2018) work regarding gendered double standards and emotion management, the five gender stereotypes and wage gaps. As stated in the literature review, those five stereotypes are as follows: 1) women don't understand sports as well as men, 2) that their looks implicate how they are perceived by others, 3) women don't have the knowledge to operate camera equipment, and 4) women do not have the physical build to handle the sidelines, and 5) women are too emotional. The five gender stereotypes that fall under the two umbrellas of gendered double standards and emotion management emerged throughout the interview process. In addition, wage gaps have been observed between men and women photographers in general and were observed through the responses of each participant in the interview process.

In this discussion section, the thematic analysis will be presented under the gendered double standards and emotion management factors of constructed subjectivities that women face working in sports media. Both the deductive and inductive data analysis approaches revealed themes that related to these two umbrella topics, gender stereotypes and wage gaps. Based on the interview questions and using the deductive analysis approach, the themes that emerged are as

follows: 1) perceived preferential treatment exists towards men, 2) women are known to keep other women out, 3) emotion management requirements are not explicitly said but is known by all women from the study and 4) there are major gaps in wages compared to their male colleagues. In addition to the four themes that emerged during the deductive analysis, there were four other themes that emerged when using the inductive approach to data analysis. The inductive approach was used to identify other themes that arose during the interviews that also related to the gendered double standards and emotion management, gender stereotypes and wage gaps. This approach allowed for the four following inductive themes to emerge: a) most participants work in sports because of the “rush” or their own background in athletics, b) the infractions of “wage jobs” pace and long hours, c) the majority of respondents wish to remain in sports media and d) the majority of their advice for the future is to hire more women and for women to advocate for other women.

Harrison’s (2018) gendered double standards and emotion management are two factors that have a direct impact on the experiences of women photojournalists working for the NFL. Therefore, each theme observed in the thematic analysis process falls under either the gendered double standards or the emotion management factors. At the end of each interview, the participants gave advice for how the NFL can assist to ensure a better future for women in the profession. The advice given by each participant, along with the themes observed in this study, allowed for this study to offer a set of professional recommendations, which follows this discussion section.

Gendered Double Standards

Harrison’s (2018) study characterized gendered double standards as the disparity in treatment towards men and women in the workplace and stated that it appears through studying the system’s marginalized perception of women. As stated in the literature review above, the four stereotypes that fall under gendered double standards includes: women not understanding

sports like men, their looks implicate how they are perceived by others, women don't have the knowledge to operate the camera equipment, and women are not built to handle the sidelines. All of the participants reported that the first stereotype, that women don't understand sports like men, was not a challenge they faced while working as women photojournalists on the sidelines of the NFL. However, the other three stereotypes were revealed through the experiences of the participants. The major themes that emerged relating to gendered double standards and these stereotypes included: perceived preferential treatment towards men, women keep other women out, the most challenging part of the job being long hours and pace, and wage gaps exist between men and women.

Perceived preferential treatment exists toward men. In regards to perceived preferential treatment, the data supported six different reoccurring events where women were regulated more than their male colleagues. Those six occurrences are as follow: women are more likely to be stopped on gameday to have their credentials checked, women are less likely to have appropriate areas to change during away games, women tend to minimize themselves on game days by monitoring what they wear, women have been made to share hotel rooms for away games, women tend to be passed-up for promotions and women are more likely to be kept out of locker rooms pre- and post-game. These experiences shared by the participants relate directly to the gendered double standards and five stereotypes because women are regulated and monitored more their male colleagues based off the pre-conceived notions discussed in the literature review.

First, it was observed through the thematic analysis that women have their credentials checked more often on gamedays. The majority of participants reported that their male colleagues did not have the same issues and one even reported that her male colleague dismissed it as an issue because they had never been faced with such a request. In addition, another participant spoke of

an event where she was attempting to get on the field before kick-off and the security guards would not let her on the field, despite her having proper credentials and her colleagues walking onto the field right before her.

It was at one of the first home games where I experienced that. I was trying to go in at different entry points and every single security guard was saying, 'you have to stay behind the yellow line' and I finally went up to the office asked my boss if the credential I had meant that I should be able to go in the field and he said yes. He actually came down to the field and spoke with the security guard but ended up kind of taking the side of the security guard, while he was right there with me, and that was really disappointing. It seemed like he wanted to avoid hurting the feelings of the security guard.

Even though she eventually made it on the field, the event displayed how women are disproportionately regulated compared to their male colleagues.

It was also observed through the thematic analysis that clothing was a reoccurring topic discussed amongst participants. This was seen through participants discussing gameday attire, areas to change in gamedays and regulations of clothing of women photojournalists on a day-to-day basis. One respondent recalled her time at a previous team where they were required to wear basketball shorts and a big shirt to practices to minimize distractions. Even on the colder days, they were required to wear the shorts and t-shirt but were allowed to wear leggings or thermals underneath. Another participant spoke about struggling to dress appropriately in the eyes of her higher-ups while at a previous team. She referenced how she started out in the position wearing jeans and t-shirts to team events but then someone suggested she dress-up more so she wore a dress and then was told that she was showing too much skin and was a distraction. She stated that the organization was very concerned and attentive to how the women dressed. Harrison (2018) states that appearance falls under the gendered double standard because their male colleagues are not subjected to the same scrutiny. The majority of respondents reported dressing in muted tones on game days and also made conscious decisions to wear clothes that are less form fitting to minimize

“distractions.” Another common response was that multiple respondents reported the difficulties of finding a place to change on game days both on the road and at home. Personnel who travel with the team are required to wear business casual attire pre- and post-game but are allowed to change for the games. Male photographers are allowed to use team locker rooms but if not provided with a space, women photographers would have to find a public restroom to change. Most male colleagues are able to wear their business casual attire and change into more comfortable clothes for covering the game in provided areas but women are not given the same opportunities and are scrutinized for their clothing, despite adequate accommodations not being provided.

In addition, several participants said that they have been kept out of locker rooms on numerous occasions, despite the fact that the U.S. District Court ruled in 1978 that women should be allowed in locker rooms for post-game interviews just like their male counterparts. One thing that was reported that is interesting to note is that even though there were a smaller number of women associated with the teams, one respondent stated that when they had a road game, she always had to room with the other women. Whereas her male colleagues all received their own private rooms. Most participants reported not being compared to other women around them due to the lack of women in the industry. However, the non-binary participant stated that they have been compared to women throughout their career and it has since heightened after they came out as non-binary.

Another perception of preferential treatment existing towards male colleagues was observed through the topic of promotions. One respondent reported a perceived experience where she was passed up for a promotion. She felt that she was passed up for the lead photographer position for her male colleague who she described as having less experience and was an unreliable worker. Despite her co-worker’s actions, he was then given the sole team photographer position

and the respondent was let go. This is an example of gendered double standards because the male colleague was given chance after chance and was continuously allowed to goof off on the job while the respondent was held to high standards and was monitored closely despite her performing her job to the best of her abilities.

An interesting thing that emerged throughout the interviews that is crucial to note in this study, is that some respondents who had previous experience outside of the NFL said that based on their own experiences, they felt other sports organizations treated women worse. They reported being more likely to witness preferential treatment towards men, and that they were more likely to be taken less seriously than their male colleagues. Because the NFL has had a predominantly male workforce since its start in 1920, women have faced numerous barriers to get to where they are today but this suggests that there are other organizations who are struggling with gender equity just as much, if not more, than the NFL (Charlton, 2021).

Women are known to keep other women out. The theme that women keep other women out of the industry, also emerged, which was explored in the literature review. It is critical to remember that just because there are women working in the field, it doesn't mean that the field automatically adapts and accepts women. In the analysis period, the data suggested that this statement can be seen through participant's experiences. One participant referenced an event where her superior was a woman but when the participant had suggestions to improve the department, her superior knocked her down and credited them to the participant being inexperienced in the field.

I was told directly to my face that I'm a young girl and they knew I was inexperienced when they hired me and I haven't been working in corporate America or in the NFL long enough, and so they knew that it would take time for me to get up to speed and to train me. I was told that I needed to be doing more, that they needed more from me but nothing was going to change there. They attempted to attribute it to me moving far away and that I was experiencing a lot of

homesickness but that wasn't going to change anything. I remember walking away from that conversation and being fired up because I couldn't believe that it was a woman telling me that.

This participant reported that the negativity she received may have been from her superior's unfamiliarity with creative media and that it may have come from a place of fear for her own job. In addition, she also stated that she felt that the message being communicated to her was a reflection of the male influence in the workplace. A few participants reported observing instances where women filled higher-up roles but instead of lifting other women up around them, they began to adopt the ideals of the male colleagues around them. Due to this, one participant stated that they believed the only way to fix the field for women, was to start with the owners and higher-up positions. The participant made this claim because they believed that if there were more women in those positions, it would be less likely for women to adopt these ideals and that it would be a more common occurrence for women to hold positions with teams. This is an example of gendered double standards because it is common for women to adapt the principles of their male colleagues (Heilman, 2012). As stated in the literature review, Heilman (2012) established that although it is expected that women will have empathy towards other women in the workplace, in most scenarios, this is not the case. In this participant's case, her female superior acted as a roadblock to her suggestions and showed that not all women in the industry are allies or advocates.

Infractions of "wage jobs" long hours and pace. The most challenging part of the job that all respondents reported was the long hours and the pace of the profession. One respondent said that she had kept track of her hours during the season and they averaged about one day off per month in season, typically being a Saturday when away for a road game. Due to the hours, it made free time hard for the participants. Due to the time commitment and the COVID-19 pandemic in the 2020 season, one respondent had to leave her position prior to the end of the season due to a

family death. She stated that it was one of the hardest decisions of her life because at the time, she was the youngest lead team photographer to work for the NFL. However, with the COVID restrictions and her inability to be with family during their time of mourning, she decided that leaving was the best decision for her. In addition, she stated that she was especially torn over the position because by her being a lead photographer, she was paving the way for other women and that it was a hard decision to give that up with the uncertainty if she would end up later finding a new job in the NFL.

Long hours and pace are attributed as the most challenging part of the job by respondents in this study. The above example showed how hours and pace had an impact on the personal family situation of the participant, therefore, it is important to acknowledge the perception of the impacts of family on women navigating this profession. As stated by feminist standpoint theory, women's jobs are not only their "wage jobs," but extends to their roles in childcare and taking care of the home (Hartsock, 1983). Hull (2021) examined how this concept influenced the lives and professions of local women sportscasters by studying these additional roles. It is a common perception when women have children, that it is accredited as an "obstacle" to their career (Jessop, 2020). According to Hull's (2021) study, women sportscasters credit their profession as the reason for putting off starting a family due to the long hours, low pay and fast pace of the job. Collectively, these research efforts highlight how preconceived notions about women and family have shaped the fear of current women in the sports workforce.

Gendered double standards refers to the disparity in treatment of men and women in the workplace. In addition to the gender stereotypes discussed in the literature review and the above themes, wage gaps also fall under the gendered double standard umbrella. Wage gaps have been

observed throughout history, with the current gap being that white women make 82 cents for every one dollar a man makes in the United States (Jones, 2021).

Wage Gaps

Gendered double standards also includes the wage disparities between men and women in the workplace because historically, women have been paid less than men for the same amount of work (Harrison, 2018). Wage gaps also highlight how women are paid less but are also held more accountable for their actions and have higher expectations for their work. Heilman (2012) observed that women are also less likely to advocate for raises and promotions than men. Furthermore, Hull's (2021) study stated that women fear that their low earnings will not support families and since they fear asking for raises, it then results in them putting off starting one.

Wage gaps between women and male colleagues. In regards to the salaries earned by each participant, this study's data suggests that: 1) the average salary of the participants ranged from as little as \$10/hour as an hourly intern and as much as \$75,000 annual salary and 2) they expressed their perception of their male colleagues being compensated more than them while fulfilling the same or similar positions. In regards to photographers in general, men make \$48,767 yearly on average compared to women who make \$27,068 on average per year (Datausa.io, 2017). Three participants reported incidents where men had earned more than them, either on the same team or on different teams, especially at entry level hiring. One participant spoke about being hired at \$36,000 and working her way up to \$51,500 after five years with her team but her male colleague was hired a few years after and started at \$57,000.

A majority of the themes observed through the deductive and inductive approaches during the thematic analysis process fell under the gendered double standards umbrella. The themes that emerged and were discussed under gendered double standards included: perceived preferential

treatment towards men, women keep other women out, the most challenging part of the job being long hours and pace, and wage gaps exist between men and women. However, emotion management was also observed through the responses of each participant. In the next section, the theme of emotion management expectations will be expanded on and explained through the experiences of the participants.

Emotion Management

Emotion management requirements not explicitly said but known. Emotion management is the expectation that women are supposed to control their emotions when in the workplace and can't be too overly emotional (Harrison, 2018). The fifth stereotype explored in the literature review references the pre-conceived notion that women are too emotional. This falls directly under the emotion management umbrella and was observed throughout the responses of the participants. Each respondent reported that they had not been explicitly told about any expectations of emotion management but they did report that it was known by each one that there were such expectations. A majority of respondents reported knowing that if they did show emotion, it may be perceived by their colleagues as them not being able to handle the task or being able to work in the environment. In addition, they also reported having a more laid back presence in the workplace therefore some did not have a personal experience with co-workers looking at them in a negative way for showing emotion. However, one respondent spoke on an incident where she injured herself covering post-game content in the locker room and she felt like she had to control her emotions.

I didn't scream; I didn't cry; I didn't let out anything, the only thing that was going through my mind at that time was not like I just royally f***** up my leg, it was I just disrupted the locker room they're never gonna let me in here again. That was the main thought going through my head and I was terrified that they were going to kick me out that they were going to yell at me, for disrupting the locker room, because I fell and everyone turned around to look and after that I had doctors

tending to me and I honestly felt like such a huge inconvenience and that I had just almost probably got like myself fired.

Hardin and Shain's (2006) study talked about how men were allowed to express their emotions however they wished in the workplace but it was frowned upon for women to show any level of emotion and they were required to uphold a certain level of compassion. Despite each participant having some level of familiarity with emotion management expectations, a few reported pleasant experiences with certain teams. One respondent spoke about how at one team, her department was very open to discussing topics that brought out emotion and how they made it a point to explain the reason behind the shown emotion which allowed for a more comfortable environment.

Through the thematic analysis of each transcript, it was evident that emotion management expectations existed for women photojournalists working on the sidelines of the NFL. Despite the fact that no participant was explicitly told about any expectations of how they should handle themselves, it was known that it was frowned upon for them to express emotion. This reflected the stereotype that women are too emotional because this common misconception that many men hold resulted in the unspoken regulations felt by each participant in the workplace.

The interviews conducted in this study allowed for participants to share how their experiences were impacted by gendered double standards and emotion management working as women photojournalists for the NFL. In addition, by this study utilizing feminist standpoint theory to inform the interviews, it allowed for each participant's experiences to be shared and heard. The themes that emerged through the deductive and inductive approaches in the thematic analysis allowed for deep insight on how the NFL might improve this constructed subjectivity of women to ensure a better workplace environment for women in the future.

PROFESSIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

In previous sections, the study explored what is already known about women in sports media and more specifically, women in the NFL. Through the interview process, the interviewer discovered common themes amongst the participant's answers that helped to better shape the current narrative for women working as photojournalists for the NFL. Based on the literature review and the data collected, it is suggested that the industry needs to hire more women photojournalists, women need to have access to appropriate areas to change, wage gaps must be addressed and women need to become advocates for other women in the field.

First, in order for women to continue to make progress and break barriers within sports media and more closely, within the NFL, it is suggested that the industry hire more women. By hiring more women, the industry will begin to become more used to the idea of women in the field. Thus, allowing for many of the pre-conceived stereotypes and notions to fade with the continued observations of women's actual capabilities and accomplishments in sports media. Also, by hiring more women in the industry, it will open the doors for more women to pursue careers in sports media, expanding the opportunities for women working in media.

Second, the NFL needs to supply appropriate areas for women personnel to change on gamedays. By giving women these areas, it will make them more comfortable working for the organization and will also normalize the presence of women in those roles. This access will assist in retention of women in these roles because by making an environment more comfortable, it allows for women to progress and work to the best of their abilities. It is also important for those in the organization who are not used to having women around to see these accommodations being made because it shows a more permanent presence of women, advocating for common thinking to be adapted.

Third, it is also important for the organization to address the wage gaps between men and women filling the roles. By creating an equal plain for men and women in the workplace, it allows for the retention of women in continuing to fill sports media roles. As reported by many of the participants in this study, men are typically paid more for filling the same roles as women in the industry. In addition, equal pay may also support women in their confidence to ask for raises because they are treated as equals to their male counterparts who are more likely to ask and receive those raises.

Lastly, at the end of each interview, each participant was asked what they would recommend to ensure a better future for women in sports media. Every participant's responses were that in order to improve the future for other women, the industry needs to hire more women. They also said that it is important that women who are currently in sports roles advocate for women and actively work to help women gain more opportunities in the field.

Honestly, I think just more women working, which is difficult because it's kind of a catch 22. You need people to be comfortable with women doing these jobs in order for them to get hired but then you also need women doing these jobs for people to be comfortable with the fact that they do them. So, it's really difficult because you want to kind of shake people and be like 'we can do this too, it's really not that hard, you're (men) not special for being able to do these jobs.' I think the more that people see females in these roles and on the sidelines, the more comfortable our male counterparts are getting with it.

A few participants stated that when people have asked them for recommendations of other media professionals for other employment opportunities, that they actively try to recommend women. They do this as a way to bring light and awareness to the talent that women have in these roles. One reported that there is a team where their creative director has hired a multitude of women in photographer and media roles due to their abilities. Many participants spoke about their willingness to talk to those looking to get into the profession as well as actions they have already

taken to assist the next generation in achieving more in the future. One stated that she is currently doing portfolio review sessions for anyone that reaches out to her and is open to sharing her knowledge and expertise to the next generation of women photographers. The final question of the interview allowed for this insight to be heard and also shed light on how the participants were currently working towards helping other women in the profession.

This study took a qualitative approach that does not generalize the experiences of women photojournalists, however given the number of women photographers in the NFL, the number of participants that were interviewed provided a rich data set that gives an explanatory landscape of the experiences of women behind the camera (Polit & Beck, 2010). Gender research typically focuses on the white women's experience which can be considered a limitation of this study because it does not explore race in depth. However, this also offers an opportunity for the future and it is recommended that future researchers explore race as a factor of the lived experiences of women photojournalists. It is important that future research continues on this topic and other aspects of women in sports media because as feminist standpoint theory states, women are the only ones who can share their experiences because they are the ones directly affected (Hartsock, 1983).

CONCLUSION

By filling important roles in the sports industry, women continue to make progress by breaking barriers, especially in the National Football League (Charlton, 2021). This study examined Harrison's (2018) gendered double standards and emotion management and the impact of each through the experiences of women photojournalists working on the sidelines of the NFL. Through the use of semi-structured interviews and deductive and inductive approaches in the thematic analysis, the study was able to gain an understanding of the current state of women

photojournalists working on the sidelines of the NFL. As Hartsock (1983) stated, feminist standpoint theory establishes that experiences of women allows for a unique perception of society to be seen because women are the ones directly affected. By using feminist standpoint theory as the theoretical backbone to this study, this study's design allowed for the experiences of each participant to be heard and explored. It is important to study the experience of women photojournalists to examine how women are treated *behind* the camera, something that has not previously been studied in great detail.

The NFL has historically treated women poorly (Brassil & Draper, 2021). This study aimed to look specifically at how women photojournalists' experiences reflect Harrison's (2018) gendered double standards and emotion management, the five gender stereotypes and wage gaps. Through the use of deductive and inductive approaches during the data analysis process, it was indeed established that the participants' experiences shaped by gendered double standards and emotion management, four of the five gender stereotypes, and wide wage gaps.

Despite the impact that gendered double standards and emotion management, the gender stereotypes and wage gaps had on the participants' experiences, five out of the six respondents reported wanting to stay in the sports media industry. The ones that wished to stay in sports media were hopeful to continue working for the NFL but were open to working for other sports organizations and they credited this decision to their experiences in the industry. A few participants reported their desire to work their way up to higher positions in the league. One also stated that she thought about teaching after her professional career concludes. However, one participant did not wish to stay employed by the NFL or any other sports team and credited that decision to her experiences as well. She shared that her current desire was to explore other areas of photography and media.

The goal of this study was to observe how Harrison's (2018) gendered double standards and emotion management impacted the experiences of the photojournalist participants working on the sidelines of the NFL. The three claims made by feminist standpoint theory of (1) Knowledge is socially situated. (2) Marginalized groups are socially situated in ways that make it more possible for them to be aware of things and ask questions than it is for the non-marginalized. (3) Research, particularly that focused on power relations, should begin with the lives of the marginalized, allowed for each participant to share their experiences. Through deductive and inductive thematic analysis approaches, the themes that emerged reflected the gendered double standards and emotion management constructed subjectivities that women face but also highlighted how the NFL can improve to ensure a better future for women working within the organization. This study is only the starting point to analyzing the experiences of women photojournalists working on the sidelines of the NFL but it is the hope that this research will inspire future researchers to study more firsthand perspectives regarding what happens *behind* the camera for women working in sports media.

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APPENDIX A– QUESTIONNAIRE

Semi-Structured Questionnaire

1. Why do you work in sports media and what do you love about your work? What has been challenging?
2. Do you work alongside any other women photographers? If yes, how many? Are you ever compared to other women in sports media by any of your colleagues or by NFL personnel?
3. Have you witnessed preferential treatment toward either men or women while working on the sidelines of the NFL?
If respondent answers yes: In what specific ways?
4. If you are willing, how much is your annual salary?
5. Do you feel like there are any expectations for emotion management while on the job? Do you feel you are perceived in any particular way if you show emotion while on the job?
6. Based on your own lived experiences, what can we all do to work together to ensure a better future for women in sports media?
7. Do you see this being your lifetime profession? How have your experiences shaped this decision?

APPENDIX B – IRB Email/Letter

Dear Participant,

This letter is a request for you to take part in a research project that is looking at how women photojournalists describe their lived experiences working for the NFL. This project is being conducted by Caylie Silveira in the Journalism department at WVU under the supervision of Dr. Jennifer Harker, an assistant professor at the Reed College of Media, to fulfil requirements for a Master's Degree in Research.

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to be interviewed over a Zoom call about your experiences working for the NFL. Your participation in this project will be in an interview that will last approximately 30 minutes. You have been chosen due to your line of work because it is applicable to this study. You must be 18 years of age or older to participate.

Your involvement in this project will be kept as confidential as legally possible. All data will be reported in the aggregate. You will not be asked any questions that could lead back to your identity as a participant. Your participation is completely voluntary. You may skip any question that you do not wish to answer and you may discontinue at any time. West Virginia University's Institutional Review Board acknowledgement or approval of this project is on file.

If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to contact me at (631) 740-0280 or by e-mail at cms0041@mix.wvu.edu, or my thesis advisor, Dr. Jennifer Harker, at jennifer.harker@mail.wvu.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the WVU Office of Human Research Protection by phone at 304-293-7073 or by email at IRB@mail.wvu.edu.

I hope that you will participate in this research project, as it could help us better understand women's experiences working in the NFL. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Caylie Silveira