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Introduction to the Ethics of Physical Embodiment

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Introduction to the Ethics of Physical Embodiment

The study of the human body can be approached from many different perspectives. In this second volume of the Siegel Institute Ethics Research Scholars journal, we encouraged the researchers to take in the full range of topics possibly included in this issue. What we find in this issue are completely different research projects, but all that are expressly focused on physical embodiment. We also have three different disciplines represented as well as both graduate and undergraduate scholars.

The purpose of this special issue journal is to bring together current thinking about the ethics of physical embodiment. What is presented in this special topics issue of the Siegel Institute Ethics Research Scholar's (SIERS) Journal is the collection of these individual research papers. This represents the second convening of a group of SIERS scholars for the purpose of studying a particular ethical issue of current concern. This group of researchers met weekly in the fall of 2016 to plan their research projects and obtain IRB approval for the research. The following two semesters, they worked independently to carry out the research and analyze the results. They stayed in contact throughout the next two semesters but only met as necessary in order to complete their research and writing.

In the first paper entitled "*Examining burnout in Division 1 collegiate athletes: Identifying the major factors and level of importance in an athlete's life*", Angel (Alex) Almódovar focuses on the phenomenon of athlete burnout, which has been studied for over thirty-five years. Almódovar examines this issue in more depth, however, by having the participants in the study not only name the factors that they feel lead to burnout (which other studies have done), but also to rank these issue as to their importance in an athlete's life. He looks at both psychological and motivational factors in his study. He chose Division 1 athletes for this study, because they are the most competitive at the collegiate level, as well as the most supported by scholarships and encounter the most stress. His on-line survey included both open and closed-ended questions. He concludes his study by identifying four factors that contribute the most to collegiate athlete's burnout.

Laura Morrow wrote the second paper in this series. Her paper is entitled "*Cosmetic beauty: The intrinsic and extrinsic motivators.*" In this study, Morrow uses a mixed method approach

involving one key interviewee as well as an on-line close-ended survey to gather data. In the on-line survey, Morrow included questions as well as two personality scales. The survey was gender specific to women and Morrow had an excellent response rate. Her aim was to examine the use of make-up as a type of value system that reflects self-confidence. She also interviewed a local radio talk show host who took the No Make-Up Challenge and publically talked about it on her show. In her results, Morrow observes the relationship between make-up and self-confidence as well as the times and situations in which women feel the necessity to use make-up.

In the third paper in the series, Charisse Allen writes about “*The attitudes and stigmas surrounding modern day interracial relationships.*” Allen begins with a historical analysis of the history of interracial relationship in the U.S. from the time of slaves and slave owners, but focuses particularly on the period since the court case Loving v. Virginia which effectively overturned anti-miscegenation laws in the United States. The timing of her research was of particular interest to her, in that it occurred during a political election. She recruited eighty-one participants for the study through an on-line format. She asked questions including about religious background, geographic location, and personal experience with an interracial relationship. In her conclusions, she discusses her findings as well as several factors which influenced her research at this time, such as the political climate and a time in which racial issues are at the forefront of many discussions across the county.

This volume of the SIERS journal is a collection of three very different research papers, all related to physical embodiment. It is not meant to be exhaustive of the subject matter, but rather a format for examining an ethical issue through its practical application. As with all the SIERS journal, the ability of the individual researcher to pick their own topic and carry out their own research project is paramount.