



2007

Endorser Source Credibility: Redefining Spokesperson Influence Through Development of the Celebrity-Hero Matrix

Joshua Stuart

Sacred Heart University, shuartj@sacredheart.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/wcob_fac

 Part of the [Advertising and Promotion Management Commons](#), [Sports Management Commons](#), and the [Sports Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Stuart, Joshua. "Endorser Source Credibility: Redefining Spokesperson Influence Through Development of the Celebrity-Hero Matrix." *Sport Marketing in the New Millennium: Selected Papers from the Third Annual Conference of the Sport Marketing Association*. Ed. Brenda G. Pitts. Fitness Information Technology, 2007.

This Book Chapter is brought to you for free and open access by the Jack Welch College of Business at DigitalCommons@SHU. It has been accepted for inclusion in WCOB Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@SHU. For more information, please contact ferribyp@sacredheart.edu.

Endorser Source Credibility: Redefining Spokesperson Influence Through Development of the Celebrity-Hero Matrix[©] (CHM)

JOSH SHUART
SACRED HEART UNIVERSITY

Abstract

Endorsement of sport and non-sport products by athletes is an extremely popular method that corporations use to drive sales and advertising. Traditionally, celebrity endorsement research has focused on the physical attractiveness of the endorser; while this makes sense, it provides only a partial explanation why consumers purchase athlete-endorsed products. Several other components of *source credibility*, as well as previously unexplored elements such as “heroic” traits, prove to be stronger predictors of intent-to-purchase. A 3-phase research study of Americans aged 18-35 was conducted, with a Celebrity-Hero Matrix[©] (CHM) developed and several marketing recommendations made based on the findings.

Introduction

The modern sports hero is actually a misnomer for the sports celebrity. Critics have noted true sports heroes are an endangered species, whereas sports celebrities are as common as Texas cockroaches. On the surface professional sports seem to offer a natural source for heroes, but on closer examination they offer celebrated sports figures shaped, fashioned, and marketed as heroic.

—Susan Drucker (1997)

Bryant and McElroy (1997) point out the vital element of sport hero worship, a dichotomy between collective and individual identity. Fans of sport are complex in that their interest and fascination spans both collectively (teams) and individually (players). Conversely, hero worship in this realm can mean that the fan follows a particular team (and likely a favorite team in a particular sport). As such, said fan will support that team in a variety of ways: 1) watching the games in person; 2) following the games on television, radio, or Internet; 3) buying and wearing licensed sport merchandise; and 4) purchasing products that the athlete promotes. Exploring specific components of athlete endorsement is essential to further understanding and developing a new theory; to date, most research focuses on a single element of endorsement—physical attractiveness—and virtually ignores other potentially important factors (Ohanian, 1991). Hence, this paper focuses upon the perceived expertise and trustworthiness of the endorser, and their subsequent influence upon sport fan consumption behaviors.

Original research was conducted in several phases, and included two separate validated surveys and several focus groups (N = 302). Goals of the research were to pinpoint personal characteristics that most influenced consumers to purchase athlete-endorsed products. Results found that despite the fact that the majority of celebrity research focuses upon physical attractiveness, trustworthiness and perceived expertise were far stronger predictors of purchase intention, and resulted in the development of new endorsement models.

Review of Literature

Celebrities and Celebrity Endorsement

Celebrities have long been a highly revered sector of American society. However, it was not until the 1920s that advertisers actually began to use famous people for product endorsements, specifically to sell goods to adoring fans (Fox, 1984). There are obvious differences between celebrities and heroes, in terms of perceptions and influence on society, and it is important to look at both as separate entities. This section focuses on celebrities, with specific focus on their use as endorsers. In many cases, the celebrities in question are famous professional athletes.

The work of MacKenzie and Lutz (1989) was crucial to the understanding of how attitude toward the ad (signified as Aad) developed, and all of the possible antecedents and predictors that were involved in this process. In order to understand this process, it is necessary to observe the operational definition of attitude toward the ad, defined in this context as “a predisposition to respond in a favorable or unfavorable manner to a particular advertising stimulus during a particular exposure occasion” (Lutz, 1985). Understanding how attitudes toward the ad—and the endorser—are influenced will assist in explaining why some celebrity endorsers are effective and others are not. One aspect has to do with the quality of the ad (effectiveness) and emotive feeling (persuasiveness) of each specific situation. When looking at their schemata, one ascertains five central areas help to influence, positively or negatively, one’s attitude toward the ad: 1) ad credibility, 2) ad perceptions, 3) attitude toward the advertiser, 4) attitude toward the advertising, and 5) the viewer’s mood. It might be arduous to pinpoint each respondent’s mood on any given day, but the other four components are easily measured.

Stotlar, Veltri, and Viswanathan (1998) explored athlete-specific products, endorsed by the athletes themselves. This study used an original survey instrument to measure two things: a) recognition of the athlete and the *sport* in which they participated; and b) association of the athlete with the *products* that he/she endorses. The methodology used the top six sports, in terms of media coverage: baseball, basketball, football, golf, hockey, and tennis. It is likely that well-known athletes from lesser-known and less glamorous sports might have been excluded from their study. This investigation’s design used an open-ended section on the first phase of the study, allowing respondents to choose any athletes from any sport, regardless of media exposure. As indicated by Balswick and Ingoldsby (1987), nearly 70% of all heroes/celebrities chosen were “current media personalities.” The Stolar et al. (1998) study findings supported those of Agrawal and Kamakura (1995), in saying that, generally, celebrity endorsement is a very viable advertising strategy. However, it was the marketing implications made by Stotlar, Veltri, and Viswanathan (1998) that were most useful for implementation and consideration. Their suggestions were as follows:

1. In general, the products that athletes endorse may be more often recognized when they are sport-related products as opposed to non-athletic products.
2. Although specific fees were not correlated in the study, these data may indicate that it could well be worth the high costs associated with established celebrities if a high recognition rate is desired.
3. Men may be more attentive to athlete endorsement than women are. Yet, with the emergence of more women’s sport, additional research is warranted.
4. Sports where the athlete-endorser is fully visible to the audience may yield higher recognition rates than sport where athletes’ faces are obscured by helmets.

5. Marketers must examine the media exposure of the athletes selected for endorsement. These results prompt additional study on the notion that a correlation may exist between the number of minutes that a player appears on television and the recognition of that player by consumers.
6. Marketers must be attentive to the fluidity and rapid change that exists in the sport world. These data indicated that, particularly with young consumers, celebrity status and recognition change rapidly. (p. 55)

Basil (1996) explored identification as a possible mediator of celebrity effects. He points out that previous research, such as Kamins et al. (1989), usually focuses on one of the three main constructs surrounding celebrity endorser effectiveness: credibility, physical attractiveness, or expertise. Ohanian (1990, 1991) encompassed all three constructs simultaneously, and that was the reason that the Ohanian methodology was a model for this study. Basil (1996) argues that one smaller sub-factor, *identification*, could be the item that best explains why celebrities are so successful as endorsers.

Basil (1996) reviewed three pioneering definitions of identification: Kenneth Burke's "Dramatism" theory, Herbert Kelman's theory of "Opinion Change," and Albert Bandura's "Social Cognitive" theory. All three theories looked at identification from various perspectives and in different settings. Burke's (1950) theory, most popular in drama and literature, measured the extent to which a person perceives that he/she "shares values or perceptions of reality with the character" and discussed the "bond" that is formed between celebrity and fan (p. 479). However, Burke's theory is limited in that it is predominantly applicable to dramatic, fictional performances, and it does not apply to the process of persuasion, the key to endorsement (i.e., getting people to *buy* the endorsed product). Kelman (1961) believed that there were three agents of social influence: compliance, internalization, and identification. His theory stated that the central component of identification was an adoption, of attitude or behavior, from the celebrity. The fan believes that this acceptance will lead to a "satisfying self-defining relationship with that person" (Basil, 479). Essentially, Kelman indicated that the person was trying to imitate the celebrity, by aping their actions, to the greatest extent possible. The limitation of this theory is that there was no link to celebrity situations. Bandura's (1986) theory approximates explanation of identification effects. People tend to identify with role models who are similar (gender, age, ethnicity, etc.) to themselves. Additionally, it seems that if the identification is strong enough, the person will model themselves after the celebrity; in the sport endorser context, this means that the person would be very likely to buy and use the product that their celebrity is selling. Another relevant identification fact in Basil (1996) centered around the sense of intimacy and identification that forms within the person after repeated exposures to the celebrity; this holds true even if the exposure is strictly via mass media. This replicates what Alperstein (1991) found in his study on celebrities in commercials, reinforcing the concept that, perpetually, a vicarious social relationship is formed on the part of the viewer—this despite the fact that the viewer has never met, and will probably never meet, the celebrity. While focusing on these imaginary relationships, Alperstein also admits that *emulation* is a key component to celebrities in advertising. With emulation comes purchase, the desired outcome of most advertising. Most interesting in Alperstein (1991) is the complexity of the celebrity-viewer relationship. He avers that the *experience* dimension of advertisements (i.e., what does the viewer experience while watching the commercial) is often obscured because of the imaginary bond between celebrity and the viewer. Instead of clarifying the message of the ad, the association of the celebrity with a specific product only serves to confuse the viewer. In cases such as these, the viewer is actually no more likely to purchase the

endorsed product than is someone who does not identify with the celebrity endorser of that particular product. Therefore, the “spirit of emulation” (Fox, 1984, p. 90) is potentially negated and, if the imaginary bond is strong enough, the viewer sometimes resents the celebrity’s involvement with endorsement. This has a negative effect on the purchasing behavior of the viewer, insofar as celebrity-endorsed products are concerned.

Celebrity endorsement and the most effective means by which an advertiser can use a celebrity have long been debated. The reasons for the success of one campaign and the failure of others is a sensitive subject. The value of investigating other potential explanations in terms of how consumer attitudes and behaviors are influenced/alterd through the use of celebrities as endorsers is worthwhile. Tripp, Jensen, and Carlson (1994) viewed endorsement by focusing on credibility, physical attractiveness, or expertise. Tripp et al. (1994) examined the effects of multiple product endorsements by celebrities; that is, does endorsement of more than one product affect the attitudes, and purchase intentions, of the consumer. Surprisingly, perceptions of celebrity credibility, celebrity likeability, and attitude toward the ad lessened significantly as the number of products endorsed by the celebrity increased. Logic suggests that the more one sees the same face on television, the more likable and influential that person might become. However, this study discovered the opposite. The expected outcome would be to limit the number of endorsements by one person, in order to enhance and maximize his/her effectiveness.

Another factor, largely ignored by scholars of celebrities, is the impact of the fame/wealth of the endorser (Mathur, Mathur, & Rangan, 1997; Heath, McCarthy, & Mothersbaugh, 1994) upon the consumer’s decision-making process. Heath et al. (1994) used both famous and relatively unknown endorsers and found that, in general, spokesperson fame did not influence consumer attitudes. Also not relevant was the vividness of the ad’s text copy. Mathur, Mathur, and Rangan (1997) found just the opposite in their study of Michael Jordan. Then again, “Jordan is an economic factor. That translates right to the bottom line” (Mathur, Mathur, & Rangan, 1997, p. 67). It is for this reason that Michael Jordan—an endorsement anomaly—was included in both versions of the survey *for comparison purposes only*. The focus of Mathur, Mathur, and Rangan’s study was to assess the impact that Michael Jordan’s (first) return to the NBA would have upon Jordan-endorsed products. This article fits well with the theme established in Agrawal and Kamakura (1995). Agrawal and Kamakura specifically look at the economic impact of media-announced sport endorsement contracts. They examined the affect on the market of 110 celebrity endorsement contracts, focusing on the initial impact of the announcement. From their study, the use of celebrity endorsers, particularly athletes, is highly valued and implemented in corporate advertising. Agrawal and Kamakura astutely point out some of the negatives of celebrity endorsement, including multiple endorsements, endorsers switching to rival brands, and negative publicity associated with certain athletes. These are concerns that were echoed by a number of researchers (Burton et al., 2001; Tripp et al., 1994; etc.). However, for every case of negativity associated with a particular endorser, there are successful campaigns that utilize endorsers in a positive manner; a manner which can actually increase consumer awareness of a company’s advertising and perhaps change the image of a company (Kamen, Azhari, & Kragh, 1975). What appears to involve more risk is coupling a celebrity endorser with a potentially harmful product (McDermott, Hocking, Johnson, & Atkin, 1989), such as tobacco products used by athletes. It is now clear that marketing—giving consumers what they want and need—focuses mainly on the end-product, sales.

Methodology

Previous studies have shown age (Harris, 1994), gender (Vander Velden, 1986), and ethnicity (Lüschen, 1981) to be important variables related to sport hero selection. A convenience sample (n=102) was drawn between 2001 and 2002. A second purposive sample (n=120) was drawn in mid-2002. Additionally, there were several focus groups conducted in 2003 (n=83) as a follow-up. Respondents were ages 18-35.

Ohanian (1991) took celebrity endorsement research to its highest level, developing a valid and reliable instrument capable of measuring the three main influences upon its effectiveness: perceived expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. Most previous studies of endorser effectiveness were focused on one of the three dimensions of source credibility; Ohanian implemented all three simultaneously within her 15-item validated and reliable inventory. Her scale was used as the basis for this study, with additional constructs being added (and tested for reliability and validity).

Of absolute relevance to celebrity influence is proper *matching* of celebrity endorser to an appropriate product (Kamins, 1990). Michael Jordan selling soccer balls is a poor match, as his expertise level is in the basketball arena. Likewise, Tiger Woods endorsing basketball shoes would probably be ineffective in terms of sales returns. An anti-hero such as Dennis Rodman selling something like the new model of Harley Davidson motor cycles, based on the associations we make with the two, might prove to be a very effective marketing strategy. Ohanian's (1991) study described that a celebrity with expertise about a product was significantly more effective than a non-celebrity expert. In order to limit and/or control this issue, a non-sport-specific product was chosen for the final survey instrument: a sport drink. It was believed that a sport drink might be used by any athlete in any sport, thus there would be no internal bias nor any issue with proper matching of endorser-to-product. The product chosen was an actual sport drink, called Ultima, but it was not one that is currently popular or visible on the market today, such as Gatorade or Powerade. While expertise is only one of three major conduits to effective endorsement—physical attractiveness and credibility are the other two—it was believed that by using Ohanian's (1991) methodology, which encompassed all three simultaneously, the truest results should be attainable. Like Mitchell's (1986) study, the design was used as a model for the current investigation. Each subject saw four different advertisements. However, in contrast to Mitchell, where all four endorsers were advertising a *different* product, the standardized sport drink was used for all four ads in this study. Two separate versions of the survey were administered. One contained 4 males, one exemplary character chosen from each of the four quadrants from a celebrity/hero matrix. The second version of the survey contained 4 females, which used the same selection criteria as for the males. Michael Jordan, by far the most well-known and recognized athlete of our time, by all age groups and both genders, was added for later comparison purposes to *both* versions of the survey. By having two versions of the survey, four distinct groups are analyzed: females rating all males (and Jordan), females rating all females (and Jordan), males rating all males (and Jordan), and males rating all females (and Jordan). By including Michael Jordan on both, a baseline can later be established to which all other celebrity sport endorsers can be compared. Although not a focus of this investigator's study, future use of the comparison group (Jordan) will prove to be helpful. Michael Jordan scored extremely high on the Phase One survey (9/10 of both the hero and celebrity scales), and is a proven endorser entity. It would be senseless to assume that nothing is known about Jordan's endorsement legacy, by including him as one of the four athletes in this study. But by including him on both versions of the study, it allows for much richer future results and potentially allows for comparison based on the gender of the endorser, gender of respondent, and sport of the endorser.

A multi-item measure of purchase intention was added, to test the effectiveness of the selected endorsers in selling the Ultima product to college students. Additionally, several hero and celebrity measures were added to the Ohanian (1991) portion of the survey, then tested for validity and reliability.

Results

As depicted in Table 1, the top 15 “celebrities,” with each athlete’s sport, and their score (out of 10.0). Respondents were also asked to rate the athletes on a second scale, determining where they ranked (out of 10.0) as a “hero.”

Table 1: Top 15 Sports Celebrities

Athlete	Sport	Score
Michael Jordan	basketball	9.696
Tiger Woods	golf	9.166
Magic Johnson	basketball	8.627
Muhammed Ali	boxing	8.588
Shaquille O’Neal	basketball	8.568
O.J. Simpson	football	8.303
Babe Ruth	baseball	8.186
Mike Tyson	boxing	8.176
Andre Agassi	tennis	7.735
Wayne Gretzky	hockey	7.686
Dennis Rodman	basketball	7.421
Ken Griffey, Jr.	baseball	7.382
Kobe Bryant	basketball	7.117
Derek Jeter	baseball	6.990
Dale Earnhardt	auto racing	6.970

Research Question 1: *How do perceived expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness influence one’s opinion of their sports hero?*

Most studies (McCracken, 1989; Kahle & Homer, 1985; Atkin & Block, 1983; Friedman & Friedman, 1979; Baker & Churchill, 1977) focused on physical attractiveness of the endorser, but as evidenced by Table 2, the other two constructs—expertise and trustworthiness—are actually more highly valued among college consumers in terms of what they look for in their sports heroes. The previously mentioned constructs that were tested and validated are listed below the three main source credibility constructs.

Table 2: Attractiveness, Trustworthiness, and Expertise Constructs of Sport Hero

Classy	4.98	←	ATTRACTIVENESS
Attractive	4.18		
Elegant	4.00		
Beautiful	3.97		
Sexy	3.69		
Sincere	5.47	←	TRUSTWORTHINESS
Trustworthy	5.33		
Reliable	5.23		
Honest	5.17		
Dependable	5.01		
Skilled	5.80	←	EXPERTISE
Qualified	5.77		
Experienced	5.76		
Expert	5.53		
Knowledgeable	5.31		
ADDITIONAL CONSTRUCTS			
Athletic	5.78		
Trained	5.76		
Good	5.51		
Credible	5.45		
Courageous	5.35		
Generous	5.12		
Caring	5.10		
Helpful	5.01		
Wise	5.01		
Appealing	4.97		
Open-minded	4.67		

Research Question 2: *How do the hero and celebrity constructs impact the consumer's intent to purchase the endorsed product?*

Based on the ratings of all 52 athletes on both “celebrity” and “hero” scales, it was possible to categorize them into 1 of 4 quadrants. The 8 athletes chosen for the second part of the study (Q2) were:

Tiger Woods	High Hero, High Celebrity
Venus Williams	High Hero, High Celebrity
Mike Tyson	Low Hero, High Celebrity
Anna Kournikova	Low Hero, High Celebrity
Ray Lewis	Low Hero, Low Celebrity
Cynthia Cooper	Low Hero, Low Celebrity
Hank Aaron	High Hero, Low Celebrity
Bonnie Blair	High Hero, Low Celebrity

Correlations and linear regression were very telling concerning intention to purchase the endorsed product. The results are explained as such. The first number is the Pearson correlation for each, in terms of correlation to intention to purchased the endorsed product. The second number (in parentheses) is the P-value. All numbers are examined at the .05 significance level. Immediately following, for all 8 endorsers, is a quick summary of salient numbers from the linear regression. The regression equation for this is Y_1 (dependent variable—i.e., intent to buy) = $a + bx_1$ (independent variable—i.e., hero) + cx_2 (independent variable—i.e., celebrity). Results for the 2 athletes are as follows:

Ray Lewis: Both Hero .553 (.000) and Celebrity .405 (.001) were correlated with intent to buy. The R Square value of .316 is considerably low, as are the R Square values for the other 7 endorsers. A possible explanation of the low R Square values throughout the 8 endorsers is that Y is categorical, not continuous. In terms of the regression, with intention to buy being the constant, hero (.442 coefficient and .124 Std. Error) was significant (.001), while celebrity (.108 coefficient and .117 Std. Error) was not significant (.360). Anna Kournikova: Both were correlated—Hero .493 (.000) and Celebrity .311 (.008), with intention to buy. The R Square was, as explained earlier, low at .246. Again, hero (.509 coefficient and .152 Std. Error) was significant (.001) and celebrity (.065 coefficient and .144 Std. Error) was not significant (.652).

Hank Aaron: Hero .224 (.043) was significantly correlated with intention to buy the product, while Celebrity .142 (.139) was not correlated, at the 5% level of significance. The R Square was .065. Neither hero (.232 coefficient and .141 Std. Error), at .105, nor celebrity (.142 coefficient and .150 Std. Error) at .349, was significant.

Cynthia Cooper: Hero .303 (.009) was significantly correlated with intention to buy the product, while Celebrity .060 (.323) was not correlated, at the 5% level of significance. The R Square was .094. Like Kournikova, for Cooper, hero (.227 coefficient and .095 Std. Error) was significant (.021) and celebrity (.038 coefficient and .106 Std. Error) was not significant (.717).

Tiger Woods: Not surprisingly, given his proven success thus far as an endorser, he was correlated on both Hero .415 (.000) and Celebrity .317 (.007). The R Square was .192. Once again, hero (.453 coefficient and .178 Std. Error) was significant (.014) while celebrity (.244 coefficient and .204 Std. Error) was not significant (.235) at the .05 level.

Bonnie Blair was a bit of an anomaly. Neither Hero -.098 (.228), nor Celebrity .105 (.212) were correlated with intention to purchase her endorsed product. The negative Pearson Correlation on Hero is indicative that even those who rated Blair as a hero would not buy her product. The R Square for Bonnie Blair was .024. Again, the regression showed that neither hero (-.111 coefficient and .127 Std. Error) and .387 significance, nor celebrity (.103 coefficient and .112 Std. Error) and .361 significance, to be statistically significant.

Mike Tyson was another interesting case regarding his endorsement power. Both Hero -.042 (.376) and Celebrity -.013 (.461) were negatively correlated with intention to purchase. Neither was statistically significant. The negative values indicate that even when respondents rated Tyson highly on the hero or celebrity measures, they still did not intend to buy the product from him. The R Square was .002. Neither hero (-.039 coefficient and .124 Std. Error) and .751 significance, nor celebrity (-.015 coefficient and .138 Std. Error) and .912 significance, proved to be statistically significant in the linear regression analysis.

Venus Williams: Both were correlated—Hero .481 (.000) and Celebrity .240 (.033). The R Square was .232. Like several others, the regression showed that hero (.539 coefficient

and .150 Std. Error) was significant (.001) and celebrity (.034 coefficient and .146 Std. Error) was not significant (.813), at the 5% level of significance.

Perhaps most interestingly, it was found that 6 of the 8 endorsers (75%) had correlations with the hero construct and intention to buy; conversely, only 4 of the 8 endorsers (50%) had correlations with the celebrity construct and intention to buy. This might suggest that sport heroes are, as many have theorized (Chalip, 1997; Brooks, 1998), more successful as endorsers, regarding selling products.

Conclusion

The findings of this study and others (Burton, 2001; Ohanian, 1991) confirm the belief that someone known as both a hero and celebrity will prove to be the most effective spokesperson for products. The way that the media operates, there are few people who seem to embody the qualities of hero and celebrity. Michael Jordan and Tiger Woods are two exemplary characters in this vein.

It was essential to adhere to Strauss' (1987) *grounded theory* technique. For this reason, it was necessary to always be sensitive to the possibility of new categories and information. Previous research conceded a lack of understanding about true heroes; especially in the sport realm. Consequently, the use of literature combined with new responses on the first phase survey helped to shape the second phase survey instrument into what was ultimately used.

There have been several important studies that have shaped the idea of modern hero worship and celebrity endorsement (Smith, 1973; Harris, 1994; Brooks, 1998; Burton, 2001). However, none of the studies have effectively synthesized the knowledge of heroes with the marketers' portrayal of the endorser; at least not in the athletic setting. This study combines unique elements and provides a useful model for subsequent studies of the athlete as hero and endorser.

In light of the events on September 11, 2001, there has been a refocusing on heroic behavior in American society. Even sports media giant ESPN ran a series of patriotic ads depicting the real heroes of our generation, the firefighters down at "Ground Zero" in NYC. These ads flashed words such as "heroic" and "courageous" and one such ad said that those were "words we once so freely bestowed upon our athletes" that have now made us reconsider what a hero is. This is precisely the focus of this study, which began well before any of the tragic 9/11 events occurred. Despite this, it is a timely issue to examine and explore.

As much as athletes are undeserving of the responsibility of serving as role models, so too are they incapable of truly heroic acts. The number of athletes who should rightfully be lauded as heroes can be counted on one hand. True sports heroes should fit the definition of heroism, overcoming tremendous odds with grace and perseverance. Jackie Robinson, a genuine standard bearer for the African-American cause, broke the color barrier in professional baseball, and is rightly appreciated as a hero. He fits the description of the heroic warrior, which goes back as far as Carlyle in 1840, and probably further than that. But one would be hard-pressed to find someone with such qualities in today's sporting world. Society has trivialized an important institution, and the line between heroes and celebrities is forever blurred in the media. Today's celebrity is tomorrow's has-been. As quickly as the programming changes on television, so does opinion of the heroes of this generation. As Leonard (1980) pointed out, as society changes, so does the choice of heroes.

Finally, it is important to challenge future researchers to continue exploring all aspects of celebrities, heroes, and endorsement, and the nature with which they intertwine. Work in several important areas is needed:

1. Continue the move away from Q-scores and move towards methods that are more sophisticated, useful, and rich in detail (to companies).
2. Add dimensions to the CHM©, so that one is able to plot athletes on a “perceptual map” or matrix. This could be expanded to include specific products and to look intimately at entire leagues.
3. Hero dimensions are a must. Subsequent research should seek to refine and add to existing knowledge base in this area.
4. Financial analyses need to be conducted to assess “value” of endorsement contracts beyond publicity for the company. True and accurate contribution to the bottom line is needed.
5. Cross-cultural implementation of new theory. Testing is needed in different countries with different value sets, and different sports and entertainment heroes.

References

- Agrawal, J., & Kamakura, W. (1995, July). The economic worth of celebrity endorsers: An event study analysis. *Journal of Marketing*, 59, 56-62.
- Alperstein, N. (1991). Imaginary social relationships with celebrities appearing in television commercials. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 35(1), 43-58.
- Atkin, C., & Block, M. (1983, February/March). Effectiveness of celebrity endorsers. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 23, 57-61.
- Baker, M., & Churchill, G. (1977, November). The impact of physically attractive models on advertising evaluations. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 14, 538-555.
- Balswick, J., & Ingoldsby, B. (1987). Heroes and heroines among American adolescents. In A. Yiannakis, M. J. Melnick, & T. D. McIntyre (Eds.), *Sport Sociology: Contemporary Themes* (3rd ed., pp. 74-78). Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social-cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Basil, M. (1996). Identification as a mediator of celebrity effects. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 40, 478-495.
- Brooks, C., & Harris, K. (1998). Celebrity athlete endorsement: An overview of the key theoretical issues. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 7(2), 34-44
- Bryant, J., & McElroy, M. (1997). *Sociological dynamics of sport and exercise*. Englewood, CO: Morton Publishing.
- Burke, K. (1950). *A rhetoric of motives*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Burton, R., Farelly, F., & Quester, P. (2001). Exploring the curious demand for athletes with controversial images: A review of anti-hero product endorsement advertising. *International Journal of Sports Marketing & Sponsorship*, 2(4), 315-330.
- Carlyle, T. (1840). *On heroes and hero worship*. London: Oxford.
- Chalip, L. (1997). Celebrity or hero? Toward a conceptual framework for athlete promotion. In D. Shilbury & L. Chalip (Eds.), *Advancing Management of Australian and New Zealand Sport*. Melbourne, Victoria: SMAANZ.
- Drucker, S. (1997). The mediated sports hero. In S. Drucker & R. Cathcart (Eds.), *American Heroes in a Media Age*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton.
- Fox, S. (1984). *The mirror makers: A history of American advertising and its creators*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Friedman, H., & Friedman, L. (1979, October). Endorser effectiveness by product type. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 19, 63-71.
- Harris, J. (1994). *Athletes and the American hero dilemma*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

- Heath, T., McCarthy, M., & Mothersbaugh, D. (1994, March). Spokesperson fame and vividness effects in the context of issue-relevant thinking: The moderating role of competitive setting. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 20, 520-534.
- Kahle, L., & Homer, P. (1985, March). Physical attractiveness of the celebrity endorser: A social adaptation perspective. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 11, 954-961.
- Kamen, J., Azhari, A., & Kragh, J. (1975). What a spokesman does for a sponsor. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 15(2), 17-24.
- Kamins, M., Brand, M., Hoeke, S., & Moe, J. (1989) Two-sided versus one-sided celebrity endorsements: The impact on advertising effectiveness and credibility. *Journal of Advertising*, 18(2), 4-10.
- Kamins, M. (1990). An investigation into the "Match-Up" Hypothesis in celebrity advertising: When beauty may be only skin deep. *Journal of Advertising*, 19(1), 4-13.
- Kelman, H. (1961). Processes of opinion change. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 25, 57-78.
- Klapp, O. (1969). *Collective search for identity*. New York: Holt.
- Klapp, O. (1949, February). Hero worship in America. *American Sociological Review*, 14(1), 57-63.
- Leonard, W. (1980). *Sport heroes as reflections of dominant cultural values. A sociological perspective of sport*. Minneapolis, MN: Burgess.
- Lüschen, G. (1981). Hero identification. In G. Lüschen & G. Sage (Eds.), *Handbook of Social Science of Sport*. Champaign, IL: Stipes.
- Lutz, R. (1985). Affective and cognitive antecedents of attitude towards the ad: A conceptual framework. In L. Alloway & A. Mitchell (Eds.), *Psychological Processes and Advertising Effects: Theory, Research, and Applications* (p. 11). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- MacKenzie, S., & Lutz, R. (1989, April). An empirical examination of the structural antecedents of attitude toward the ad in an advertising pretesting context. *Journal of Marketing*, 53, 48-65.
- Mathur, L., Mathur, I. & Rangan, N. (1997, May/June). The wealth effects associated with a celebrity endorser: The Michael Jordan phenomenon. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 67-73.
- McCracken, G. (1989, December). Who is the celebrity endorser? Cultural foundations of the endorsement process. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 16, 310-321.
- Mitchell, A. (1986). The effect of verbal and visual components of advertisements on brand attitudes and attitude toward the advertisement. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 13, 12-24.
- Ohanian, R. (1990). Construction and validation of a scale to measure celebrity endorsers' perceived expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. *Journal of Advertising*, 19(3), 39-52.
- Ohanian, R. (1991). The impact of celebrity spokespersons' perceived image on consumers' intention to purchase. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 46-54.
- Smith, G. (1973). The sport hero: An endangered species. *Quest*, 19, 59-70.
- Stever, G. (1991). The Celebrity Appeal Questionnaire. *Psychological Reports*, 68, 859-866.
- Stotlar, D., Veltri, F., & Viswanathan, R. (1998). Recognition of athlete-Endorsed sports products. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 7(1), 48-56.
- Strauss, A. L. (1987). *Qualitative analysis for social scientists*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Tripp, C., Jensen, T., & Carlson, L. (1994, March). The effects of multiple product endorsements by celebrities on consumers' attitudes and intentions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 20, 535-547.
- Vander Velden, L. (1986). Heroes and bad winners: Cultural differences. In L. Vander Velden & J. H. Humphrey (Eds.), *Psychology and Sociology of Sport: Current Selected Research* (Vol. 1). New York: AMS Press.