

The representation of male drivers in Formula One

A content analysis on the use of discourse on masculinity in F1
Nation's post-race commentary

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ABSTRACT

Formula One is the highest class of motorsport in the motorsport industry. The motorsport industry and its culture is considered to adhere to mainly hegemonic masculine ideals. Hegemonic masculine ideals are dominant discourses on how men should act and engage in life. Formula One is accused of engaging in this culture as well and is therefore regarded as a sport that is mainly male dominated. Previous research has focused on the representation of gender in the motorsport industry and Formula One. They mainly focused on the representation and participation of women but have neglected how men are being represented in the sport. This study aims to shed light on the representation of Formula One drivers during the 2021 season by looking at the use of discourse on masculinity. Specifically, the study looks at the Formula One podcast F1 Nation. The podcast is hosted by former Formula One driver Damon Hill and Formula One reporters Tom Clarkson and Nathalie Pinkham. The study particularly looks into their post-race commentary of the Grand Prix review episodes during the 2021 season. The research question for the study is *how is discourse about masculinity used to represent the 2021 Formula One drivers through the analysis of F1 Nation's post-race commentary on Formula One races?* In order to answer the research question, a qualitative content analysis was conducted. The study made use of the discourse analysis theory to analyse 22 podcast episodes upon their use of discourse on masculinity to represent the 2021 Formula One drivers. The analysis found three main categories, namely, *maintaining discourse about masculinity*, *establishing discourse about masculinity*, and *challenging discourse about masculinity*. The study found a high frequency of comments that made use of hegemonic masculine ideals, such as toughness and aggressiveness that led to the reconstruction and maintenance of a masculine representation of the Formula One drivers. This masculine representation is understood in this study as the Formula One drivers being seen as tough, emotionless, and competitive athletes. The drivers are represented as purely athletes in the sport, rather than being represented as athletes *and* humans. There were some comments found that challenged a masculine representation of the Formula One driver, however these comments were not as frequent as the comments that reconstructed and asserted hegemonic masculine ideals. The hosts also briefly discussed the lack of diversity in the representation on the grid in Formula One, but it was only discussed in one episode of the 22 episodes that were analysed. From the analysis of the podcast episodes of F1 Nation, it becomes clear that Formula One media still adhere to the masculine ideals of society to a larger degree, despite showing slow changes in its diversity on and off track.

KEYWORDS: *Formula One, masculinity, sports commentary, representation of male athletes, content analysis*

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1. Introduction

The media have powerful effects on society. They play a part in constructing our knowledge of the world. Sports media celebrate athletes and sporting events, but also contribute to certain representations of these athletes and events (van Sterkenburg et al., 2012). Sociological research about mediated sport is much interested in how sports media is constructing and reporting on relevant topics in society. One example is diversity in sports, ranging from race to gender. The main argument in previous studies is that sports media reinforces stereotypical discourses about gender for both men and women. This includes gendered representations of athletes, to the point that it shapes and creates a stereotypical view of both genders in society (Bryson, 1987; Wenner, 2013; Hartmann-Tews, 2019; Yang et al., 2020). The audience assumes that the media reports news in a trustworthy and accurate way. However, previous studies have found that it is more likely that media cannot always be unbiased (Hartmann-Tews, 2019). The people that work in media related industries and have power over media channels are influenced by social constructions about topics. They select what will be talked about and which perspective will be presented. Therefore the media is not able to fully report and convey an unbiased view on events (Wenner, 2013; Hartmann-Tews, 2019). The media needs to appeal to its audience and therefore present topics in a certain way that fits the narrative for them. This leads the media to be an important tool to socially construct our understanding of the world. These understandings are established and maintained through discourse that is used to report on topics (Adams et al., 2010; van Sterkenburg et al., 2012; Hartmann-Tews, 2019).

Sports media is not different from mainstream media. Sports media reports on sporting events and the athletes participating in the sports. Several arguments are provided for a gendered representation in sports. Including the media's dominance of representing masculine values in sports to represent and distinguish between the different genders. Previous studies found a big difference in the way commentators are reporting on male and female athletes. This is causing a big issue in the way sports is being reflected in society, because media coverage can influence the way an audience perceives sports and its athletes (Bryson, 1987; Eastman & Billings, 2000; Hartmann-Tews, 2019). It can also cause men's sports and women's sports to be categorised in a stereotypical light (Bryson, 1987; Hartmann-Tews, 2019; Yang et al., 2020). For example, this categorisation can be a result of the representation of the sport and its athletes in the media by the sports commentators. In previous literature, there has been specific focus on the use of discourse on concepts like race, ethnicity, and gender in sports commentary to analyse how athletes gets represented

(van Sterkenburg & Knoppers, 2004; van Sterkenburg et al., 2012; Hartmann-Tews, 2019). The studies that have specifically focused on gender discourses in sports commentary regarding the representation of gender in sports have mostly focused on the representation of female athletes. The representation of male athletes has been pushed aside and it is mostly assumed that male athletes have been represented in a much better light than their counterparts (Bryson, 1987; van Sterkenburg & Knoppers, 2004; Hartmann-Tews, 2019). Most of the commentators focus on the achievements of male athletes and their performances in a sports event. Meanwhile, female athletes are largely getting ignored by sports coverage. If they are being covered, their achievements are being ignored and most female athletes are subject to objectification and sexualization (Bryson, 1987; van Sterkenburg & Knoppers, 2004; Hartmann-Tews, 2019). These previous studies show a clear significant difference between the coverage and representation of male and female athletes in sports media.

When representing male athletes, the media mostly uses discourse on the concept masculinity. Masculinity is a socially constructed concept that defines which social norms and understandings about men are dominant in society (Connell, 1995). These hegemonic masculine ideals are characteristics typically ascribed to men and in society men are expected to act on these norms and values (Bryson, 1987; Connell, 1995). These ideals are then conveyed through discourse. Discourse analysis theory understands discourse as a way to represent different aspects in the world. It looks particularly at processes, relations and structures of both the material and the mental world of society. Discourse represents the world and the different ways in which people perceive the world (Fairclough, 2003). One can analyse texts on the discourse they use to uncover how people perceive the world through the use of the discourse analysis theory. This study will make use of this theory to study how discourse on the socially constructed concept masculinity gets used to represent male athletes in sports media. Discourses on masculinity are presented through aspects that relate to the hegemonic masculine ideals. Such as aggressiveness or competitiveness (Bryson, 1987; Adams et al., 2010).

To have a better understanding of how male athletes are represented in sports media, this study will look into the motorsport industry, specifically Formula One. As mentioned before, the motorsport industry is accused of its male dominated perspective; the overrepresentation of men in the sport and the environment and the lack of representation of female drivers and staff members (Lumsden, 2010; Sturm, 2011; Matthews & Pike, 2016). Despite being the most well-known international sporting event, Formula One has been

underrepresented in a bulk of research. The research that has been done on the event focuses solely on the representation of women in the sport (Sturm, 2014; Matthews & Pike, 2016). But there has not been a specific focus on the men in the sport, or how their male drivers are represented. The focus of this study is therefore on the representation of the 2021 Formula One drivers and how sports commentary uses discourse on masculinity to represent the male drivers to its audience. Formula One is the highest class of international autosport and is accused of a lack of diversity on track and off track. The sport has a reputation of being male-dominated: male-dominated in their overrepresentation of men in the sport and a larger number of men working in the sport (Bryson, 1987; van Sterkenburg & Knoppers, 2004; Adams et al., 2010). It is therefore an interesting industry to study regarding the representation of male athletes and masculinity in sports. An overrepresentation of men in sports, like Formula One, causes society to perceive sports as a male-dominated field. Male-domination, as mentioned before, is understood as the overrepresentation of men in the sport and a larger number of men working in the sport environment. To take the example of Formula One, Formula One Group is a corporation that is responsible for the promotion of the championship. It is currently managed by Stefano Domenicali. His management includes Chase Carey acts as the non-executive chairman of Formula One, Ross Brawn is managing director of motorsports for Formula One, Duncan Liowarch is the chief financial officer, and Sacha Woodward Hill is the general counsel. Sacha is the only woman in the top management of the sport (Formula 1 Corporation, n.d.). Besides that, the current Formula One drivers are only men, and the team principals of the Formula One teams are also only men. In conclusion, the overall representation of men in Formula One is very high.

The study focuses on the 2021 season, because it is the latest Formula One season to date and all of the athletes, the drivers, were male participants. The championship ran from March until December in several countries around the world. The 2021 season was one of the most watched seasons of its decade (Formula 1 Corporation, 2022), mainly because of the championship title fight between Sir Lewis Hamilton and Max Verstappen. Sir Lewis Hamilton is the British driver for the team of Mercedes and Max Verstappen is the Dutch driver for the team of Red Bull Racing. Both drivers were competing against each other for the world championship title, which was ultimately won by Max Verstappen. The battle for the world championship title was close all season and it was the first time since a few years that a driver from another team could compete against Hamilton. Verstappen ended the championship title streak of Hamilton, who has previously won seven world titles. It was therefore the best watched Formula One season of its decade. The total growth of the TV

audience for the 2021 season was higher with 4% with an estimated global audience per Grand Prix of 70.3 million viewers. The share of digital views on the social media platforms of the sport alone went from 10% in 2020 to 16% in 2021. The season finale in Abu Dhabi which saw the championship battle between Hamilton and Verstappen conclude and where Max Verstappen won his first Formula One world championship title had 108.7 million viewers. That was 29% higher than the year before (Formula 1, Corporation, 22). In conclusion, the 2021 Formula One season had a lot of coverage across multiple media platforms for a bigger global audience. A high number of viewers would mean a bigger platform for the sport to promote the 2021 championship on. For that reason, the study focuses itself on the Formula One podcast F1 Nation which is released and distributed by Formula One media. The podcast analyses all the races in the Formula One season and looks ahead to the next race of the season. The drivers are the main topic of discussion in the podcast, therefore the study looked at the post-race analysis of the podcast episodes to analyse how discourse about masculinity got used to represent the 2021 Formula One drivers.

To sum it up, this study is focused on the representation of masculinity in sports media through the lens of Formula One. In doing so, the study is investigating discourses about masculinity in Formula One media, particularly the podcast F1 Nation. Discourses about masculinity are presented through aspects like toughness, aggressiveness, and competitiveness of male athletes (Adams et al., 2010). The representation of the male participants in Formula One, the drivers, is the main subject of analysis in this study and will be studied through one research question. A qualitative content analysis is being used as the method for the study. The results will be looked at from the perspective of the discourse analysis theory. This is useful to address different issues in the data set and enables the study to critically assess the data on the socially constructed concept masculinity (Connell, 1995; van Sterkenburg & Knoppers, 2004). The main research question is:

RQ: How is discourse about masculinity used to represent the 2021 Formula One drivers through the analysis of F1 Nation's post-race commentary on Formula One races?

In order to get to the conclusion of the analysis, the theoretical framework of the study will first be discussed. The framework will discuss and explain the representation of masculinity in sports and specifically Formula One and the culture of the motorsport industry in more detail. Then the research method is outlined, followed by the results and

discussion. The study concludes by answering the research question along with an identification of implications, limitations, and directions for future research.

2. Theoretical Framework

To gain a better understanding of the representation of masculinity in sports and sports media, especially in Formula One, the theoretical framework will outline some important concepts that need to be considered for the study. First, a general explanation of the representation and establishment of masculinity in sports will be discussed. Then the representation of male athletes in sports media will be explored. Finally, an in depth exploration of the representation of masculinity in the motorsport industry, specifically Formula One as that is the main industry that is being studied.

2.1 Representation and establishment of masculinity in sports

The representation of male and female athletes in sports and sports media gained a lot of academic attention through the years, especially in relation to topics like gender equality. Sports has been an important catalyst in the representation of men in society and the different power construction between men and women (Bryson, 1987; Adams et al., 2010). Recent studies have argued that sports contribute to male-domination through a symbolisation of superiority and power of men in society (Yang et al., 2020; Liston & Maguire, 2021). In the context of this study, male-domination is regarded as the overrepresentation of men in sports and a larger number of male participants than female participants in a sport. This gets further established through the promotional culture of sports (Eastman & Billings, 2000; Wenner, 2013; Hartmann-Tews, 2019). Mass media have the ability to spread messages globally. It observes and reports on events in the world. Sports media tap into this by observing and reporting on different sports. By using certain discourse to represent sports and its athletes, sports media convey a certain perspective to the audience. Discourse about gender is one of the few discourses the media can use to represent male and female athletes. Discourse is defined as the ‘constructions or significations of some domain of social practice from a particular perspective’ (Fairclough, 1995; 2003). In the context of this study, discourse about masculinity in particular refers to the meaning and significance of gender and male athletes in sports that are constructed in society and sports media.

The use of discourse by sports media will be discussed further in the next section. But to fully understand how sports and sports media reinforce gender representations in society, one has to go back to the definition of masculinity and femininity. Both masculinity and femininity are regarded as social norms and expectations that are regarded as the characteristics of men and women (Connell, 1995; Schippers, 2007). While femininity can

be explored and studied in its own way, this study is particularly focussing on masculinity. This is mainly done because recent studies have focused on female athletes, but have mentioned a need for more studies on male athletes and how they are viewed by sports consumers and the media (van Sterkenbrug & Knoppers, 2004; Hartmann-Tews, 2019; Naess & Tjønnndal, 2021). Masculinity, in the context of this study, is understood as a concept that is mainly constructed through social norms and expectations. To further explain masculinity, the study looks at the theory of hegemonic masculinity.

The theory of hegemonic masculinity constructs a set of social practices of masculine domination and marginalisation of gendered attitudes to men. According to this theory, there are a multitude of achieved and ascribed qualities enforced in society that are generally considered to be the dominant norms and values that society expects men to follow. For example, men cannot show emotion because that will mean that they are weak or men are considered to be weak. These norms and values make up hegemonic masculinity and are applied and spread in society (Connell, 1995). It is also argued that masculinity and femininity in western societies can be understood as a two-sex model which serves as the dominant understanding of gender on symbolic and social level. Masculinity and femininity divert from each other and are both socially constructed (Connell, 1995). The socially constructed perspective on masculinity and femininity can be applied to different fields and how these fields perceive gender. This perception of gender and its representation of masculinity and femininity results in society having a specific idea of how men and women should behave and how society should view them (Connell, 1995; Gregson & Rose, 2000). In this way, perceptions of gender constructions like masculinity and femininity get established and asserted.

In the context of this study, four distinctive processes are taken into consideration through which hegemonic masculinity is maintained in sports. These four processes are 1) defining sports; 2) direct control of sports; 3) ignoring women in sports; and 4) trivialization of women in sports (Bryson, 1987). Each process promotes the male dominance in sports and therefore leads to the representation of hegemonic masculinity within the sport. The first process '*defining sports*', shows how sports is largely defined as an activity for primarily the participation of men or boys. In this process, women and girls have to adapt themselves to the games and rules men and boys are playing and following in order to fit in. This can even result in a low number of female participants in sports, because the female participants may not want to adapt to the games and rules that are put forward by the men (Bryson, 1987; Adams et al., 2010; Hartmann-Tews, 2019). It also argues that the hegemonic definition of

sports is perceived as a biological element. This means that sports are largely defined by factors such as intelligence, race, physical attributes, etc. The same factors are also used to define masculinity in society (Bryson, 1987; van Sterkenburg et al., 2012; Hartmann-Tews, 2019).

'Direct control of sports' shows that men are mainly in higher power in the sports industry. Even when a sport has mainly female participants, its management is more likely to consist of men. High attention rates attract men to sports and it is therefore argued that the responsibility of sports policies on national and international level is in the hands of men (Bryson, 1987; Hartman-Tews, 2019). On top of the direct control of men in sports, sports media are overwhelmingly in the hands of male commentators and men in power of the media companies. Those responsible for the representation of sports athletes are men and thus their view on masculinity and male athletes are largely reflected in the media (Bryson, 1987; Hartman-Tews, 2019).

The process of *'ignoring women in sports'* largely speaks for itself. It shows how media and sports consumers are largely ignoring female participation in sports. This is purposely done by the organisation of sports. Ignoring female participation in sports is done to protect male athletes and to protect the hegemonic masculine standards that sports is 'known' for (Bryson, 1987; Hartmann-Tews, 2019). One of such practices in the media is called gender marking which is the presentation of female athletes as a different individual in comparison to sports that are marked as male sports. Examples of these are the distinctive championships held for only female participants (Hartmann-Tews, 2019).

The final process is *'trivialisation of women in sports'* showing how female athletes are subordinated to traditional roles and how they are sexualised. This results in the audience viewing women in a subordinate relationship to men, neglecting their individual role in the sports industry. For example, commentators frequently refer to their family situation, instead of their performance and achievements like they do with male athletes (Bryson, 1987). Some kind of de-athletisation is implemented in sports media when it comes to female athletes. The media represents male participants and female participants clearly in a different way, typically in a manner where the abilities of female athletes are inferior to male athletes. Sports media are more likely to frame male athletes in a superior role (Hartman-Tews, 2019; Yang et al., 2020).

These four processes of effect on the hegemonic masculine view on sports contribute to the promotion of dominant masculine views in sports. The processes show the cause of the establishment of hegemonic masculinity in sports. It includes the dominance of men in

the definition of sports and the organisation and management of sports, which result in the ignorance of female participants and subordinating them in the process (Bryson, 1987). The dominance of men in sports is, in turn, maintained largely by sports media (Wenner, 2013; Hartmann-Tews, 2019; Yang et al., 2020). In the context of the study, the four processes of effect are viewed as a concept that introduces the male dominated environment of the sports industry. The study considers this concept as an introduction to masculinity in sports media as it will give some foundation for later concepts and the analysis of the study. The next section will go into further detail about the representation of male athletes in sports media, using the discourse analysis theory.

2.2 Representation of male athletes in sports media

Sports media have enforced and reproduced a gendered representation of male and female athletes (Eastman & Billings, 2000; Adams et al., 2010; Hartmann-Tews, 2019; Yang et al., 2020). Previous studies have found distinct differences in the way that sports media represent male and female athletes in different sports. First of all, male athletes receive relatively more coverage in the media than female athletes (Hartmann-Tews, 2019; Yang et al., 2020). Secondly, there is a big difference in the way that commentators are talking about the male and female athletes (Adams et al., 2010; Hartmann-Tews, 2019; Yang et al., 2020). The use of discourse by the media and specifically sports commentators are especially interesting to look at. The discourse analysis theory by Fairclough (2003) understands discourse as a way of representing different aspects in the world; processes, relations, structures of mainly the material world. But it also includes thoughts, feelings, and beliefs ascribed to the mental world of individuals. Discourse therefore represents the world and the ways that different people look at the world (Fairclough, 2003). Analysing texts on their discourse can result in uncovering how certain people represent things in their material and mental world. This study will therefore take the discourse analysis perspective when analysing the data. Van Sterkenburg et al. (2012) used the discourse analysis perspective in their study before to look at the representation of athletes in sports commentary. They specifically looked into the ways in which race and ethnicity are socially constructed through soccer commentary. They found different themes in which the sports commentators reported on the soccer players that made use of hegemonic discourses. These discourses were mainly reconstructed, confirmed, and maintained but also challenged at times (van Sterkenburg et al., 2012). They found that the soccer commentators made use of and supported hegemonic ideals in society on race and ethnicity in their representation of soccer

players. Their representations of these players also presented themselves as a ground for creating and (re)constructing racial and ethnic understandings and categorisations (van Sterkenburg et al., 2012).

If we take this study's understanding of masculinity into account, as described before, discourse about masculinity is very much created and shaped to social norms and dominant understandings of how men should act and feel. This can be argued with the discourse analysis perspective of Fairclough (2003) and the findings of van Sterkenburg et al. (2012). An example of discourses about masculinity specifically related to sports is that men are generally perceived to be good at sports because of their physical attributes. The discourse on male athletes refers to them as 'beasts' or 'muscular', really emphasising their physical attributes. Women on the other hand are referred to as very emotional and their family situation gets mentioned a lot more than their male counterparts. Compared to women, men are perceived to have more physical power whilst women are more emotionally invested (Bryson, 1987, Hartmann-Tews, 2019). The use of such discourse can be traced back to sports media in their representation of athletes and the sport (Adams et al., 2010; Hartmann-Tews, 2019; Yang et al., 2020). Some other examples can be found in Adams et al. (2010) study on discourses about masculinity in football. The study found two distinct discourses through which masculinity gets perceived and established. Although the two discourses that the study found focuses on sports coaches, this narrative can be related to sports media. It is also a good foundation to rely upon for the analysis of the data in this study.

The first discourse the study found was *masculinity-establishing discourse*. It functions to re-establish and establish sports, in this case football, as a masculine sport through regulating, disciplining, and policing its athletes according to the behaviours and attitudes that fit the dominant masculine narrative (Adams et al., 2010). This dominant masculine narrative is regarded favourably for the representation of the athletes and it is meant to be positive towards male athletes. Hegemonic masculine ideals in this discourse discuss the toughness, aggressiveness, and competitiveness of male athletes. A positive representation of male athletes are therefore tough, aggressive, and competitive (Connell, 1995; Adams et al., 2010, Yang et al., 2020). Male athletes are also not described as emotional nor are they expected to show emotions, only anger and competitiveness. They are therefore not described in such a manner in the media or by their sports coaches (Adams et al., 2010; van Sterkenburg et al., 2012; Yang et al., 2020). Next to this, the focus on male athletes is more on their physical attributes, such as muscles and build as well as their

sporting achievements. Like Bryson (1987) argued already, men get more praise for their performances and physical form compared to women (van Sterkenburg et al., 2012; Hartmann-Tews, 2019). In sum, masculinity-establishing discourse is the set of practices that constitutes sports as a ‘game for men’ and characterises sports in the ways that an athlete would fit in easily. Hegemonic masculine ideals in this discourse are then used for representing male participants in commentary as tough, aggressive, and competitive.

The second discourse the study found was *masculinity-challenging discourse*, which serves as a system for gender and athlete performance regulation. The discourse was mainly used as a disciplinary strategy over the athletes and was implemented when the coaches of the team felt like their players were not realising the appropriate composed version of masculinity that is established for them (Adams et al., 2010). In this discourse, the hegemonic masculine ideals that are being established are in practice being maintained in sports. This can be done through sports organisations, trainers, coaches, but also through sports media (Eastman & Billings, 2000; Adams et al., 2010; Hartmann-Tews, 2019). In the context of this study, these two discourses will be investigated in the data, although it will be a directive of the content analysis and thus the masculinity-establishing and the masculinity-challenging discourses will not be solely investigated.

In the media’s representation of male athletes, they can make use of the two discourses discussed before, the masculinity-establishing discourse and the masculinity-challenging discourse. Whilst sports media try to be objective, this can’t always be the case. Especially when commentators are commenting and analysing competitions their commentary will always be influenced by a certain narrative. It is therefore argued that sports media heavily influence discourses in sports through their social construction of topics like masculinity. Media have a big influence on audiences and can therefore add to an established hegemonic masculine view on sports (Adams et al., 2010; Hartmann-Tews, 2019). In the context of this study, the two discourses explained before and the discourses analysis perspective will be taken into account while analysing sports commentary on the representation of male athletes. In order to investigate how masculinity is represented in sports media, this study will look into the motorsport industry and how their male participants are represented to establish, maintain, discourage, or even challenge masculine ideals.

The previous studies discussed in this section have only focused on sports in general or particularly soccer. These studies have also mentioned that it is good to analyse how the representation of male athletes and masculinity looks like in other sports industries (Eastman

& Billings, 2000; van Sterkenbrug & Knoppers, 2004; van Sterkenburg et al., 2012; Hartmann-Tews, 2019). Therefore, this study will look into the motorsport industry, in particular Formula One, to investigate how their media represents the male participants and how they make use of discourse. This industry was particularly picked because its culture is heavily accused of being male-dominated. Male-dominated, in the context of this study, is understood as the overrepresentation of male participants next to a larger number of men in the sporting environment. The next section will go into further detail how previous studies have regarded the representation of masculinity in Formula One, how this study will understand those findings, and finally how it will be used in the context of this study.

2.3 Representation of masculinity in Formula One and the motorsport industry

Formula One is the biggest globalised mediated motorsport. Next to its reputation as a sport, it is a media event and media spectacle operating on an international and corporate level (Sturm, 2014). The sport projects a glamorous lifestyle wrapped as a global media event and relies on media to involve as many people as possible as most of its audience is unable to attend their races in person (Sturm, 2014). The motorsports culture is famed for its highly masculine characteristics, however previous studies focused more on the underrepresentation of women in motorsports (Lumsden, 2010; Sturm, 2011; Matthews & Pike, 2016).

A study that is somewhat useful to gain an interesting insight into the motorsport culture and its genderization is that of Matthews and Pike (2016). Through a documentary analysis of articles from a UK newspaper group from 1890 and a case study of a UK-based motor-racing championship they showcased how gendered processes work in motorsport. They illustrated that gender is still a major divider in motorsports. Men continue to dominate the field, in both competition and consumption. Female participants are called 'Formula Woman' and they are still seen in a negative light. Despite a slow positive change in the (re)presentation of female drivers, they argue that Formula One still lacks in their representation of women. This is due to the longstanding power of men in the industry. In both management, representation on the grid and in the media (Matthews & Pike, 2016). Another interesting study on the culture of motorsport and racing is that of Lumsden (2010). Lumsden found in her study that male-domination gets established in the culture of motorsport through a few factors. Men get many opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge on racing. In this way they can stand out, giving them a feeling of belonging and adhering to societal definitions of masculinity. The culture of motorsport in her study is

therefore seen as a space to construct a form of hegemonic masculinity (Lumsden, 2010). The focus of her study diverts from this study, as she goes into detail how female participants adhere to this culture embedded in racing and motorsport. This study is more interested in how this construction of masculinity and its ideals are represented and brought forward in the media. As a result, looking at how the male athletes are represented. The construction of masculinity ideals and the representation of male athletes lack academic literature (Lumsden, 2010; Matthews & Pike, 2016; Hartmann-Tews, 2019), thus this study aims to fill in that gap.

The scope of this study is focused on Formula One and the culture of motorsport. It is therefore important to understand the current discourses on masculinity within the industry. First of all, motorsport is fast-paced and competitive. That combined with technology on the racing cars to be as quick as possible on the circuit defines motorsport and Formula One. Technology is seen as a masculine domain (Connell, 1995) and because technology is such a big aspect of motorsport, fans of Formula One are expected to have some technological knowledge (Lumsden, 2010; Sturm, 2011). By showcasing knowledge about the sport and its technology, men are more likely to establish their power and act more masculine. It is a way for them to stand out and feel like they adhere to masculine ideals (Lumsden, 2010). The Formula One fandom also consists of mainly male fans. Formula One establishes male activity within its fandom and the organisation of the sports through performative interpellation of masculinity. Men, and particularly the Formula One drivers are viewed within the sport as very masculine which is further established through the performance of masculine acts that in turn create this hegemonic masculinity within the sport and its fandom (Sturm, 2011). That goes hand in hand with the technological knowledge and the knowledge about the rules of the sport (Lumsden, 2010; Matthews & Pike, 2016). Establishing themselves as the male fans of the sport represents the outlook of the Formula One drivers by their fans as well (Sturm, 2011). The drivers are considered some sort of 'role model' because of their very masculine behaviour and thus this can be reinforced by the representation of these athletes in the media (Lumsden, 2010; Sturm, 2011; Matthews & Pike, 2016). This masculine behaviour of the Formula One drivers can be seen as the 'standards' that the motorsport culture ascribes to them. With the use of hegemonic masculine ideals, Formula One drivers should be fearless and tough. They are not allowed to show any emotion, unless it shows that the driver is competitive or aggressive. Both on track and off track. It also views the drivers as only athletes in the sport, rather than a human being (Sturm, 2011). The establishment of discourses about masculinity is therefore not only

prevalent within the fandom of Formula One, but also in the construction and representation of the sport.

The role of women in the representation of men and masculinity in the industry is very submissive. They are considered sexual objects and are submissive to both male drivers and male fans. Women are also underrepresented within the sports organisation, on the grid, and in the fandom (Sturm, 2011; Matthews & Pike, 2016; Naess & Tjønnedal, 2021). Formula One's management and teams consist mainly of white, rich men and there are currently no female drivers present on the grid. Female representation has slightly improved but it is certainly not at an equal level (Matthews & Pike, 2016; Naess & Tjønnedal, 2021). Because of this, the main ideals and representations of Formula One and the Formula One drivers come from mainly a white male perspective instead of representing diverse outlooks on the sport and its athletes. Ultimately, gender is still a major divider in Formula One and the motorsport culture (Lumsden, 2010; Matthews and Pike, 2016; Naess & Tjønnedal, 2021).

The underrepresentation of women in Formula One has been studied before, but many studies leave out the representation of men in Formula One. It is important to consider this scope of the study because men are also represented in a certain way by the media. Although this study will not be exploring the different reasons why certain discourses or representations are being used for the male participants, it can still be interesting to see how discourses are being used to represent the male participants. Next to that, there is a found limitation to previous studies that have only considered how Formula One and its media represent women, but not the men (Lumsden, 2010; Sturm, 2011; 2014; Matthews & Pike, 2016). After all, Formula One is still run by men and the drivers on the grid are all men too. The previous studies that are considered for this study using the discourse analysis theory to analyse the representation of male athletes are outdated to a significant degree (Eastman & Billings, 2000; van Sterkenburg & Knoppers, 2004). It would therefore be interesting to see how discourse is being used in current commentary to represent the male athletes.

To answer the main research question: *how is discourse about masculinity used to represent the 2021 Formula One drivers through the analysis of F1 Nation's post-race commentary on Formula One races?*, this study has conducted an analysis of the F1 Nation podcast. The podcast is founded and co-owned by Formula One media, therefore it can be argued that the podcast includes dominant views about Formula One. Next to that, the podcast is hosted by one of the few known female reporters of the sport which makes for an interesting addition to the data collection especially because it has been mentioned before

that women are underrepresented in the sports. The emphasis during the analysis of the podcast lies on audio content which is useful for implementing the discourse analysis theory. As swiftly mentioned before, the study will make use of the discourse analysis theory to approach the data during the analysis to get representative findings. Approaching the data from this perspective is useful to understand the deeper meanings of the conversations in the podcast. It offers a specific perspective to interpret and analyse the data that is useful to look at deeper and multiple contexts behind discourses in society. It allows the study to carefully consider the relationship between actual words, how these words convey a message, and which context this message can be placed in (Fairclough, 1995, 2003; Machin & Mayr, 2012). The next chapter will go into detail which specific concepts of the theoretical framework will be analysed upon during the content analysis of the F1 Nation podcast episodes.

3. Method

In order to answer the research question and implement the theoretical framework, a qualitative content analysis has been conducted for this study. This part will outline the method used for the study. First, this chapter will go into detail about the specific method in which the data has been approached specifically for this study. Then it will discuss the data sample; what the specific data sample is and how this was sampled. After that, the operationalisation and analysis of the method is discussed including the specific steps that were taken to approach and analyse the data. Finally, it will discuss the validity and reliability of the method.

3.1 Qualitative content analysis

This study has used qualitative methods in order to look into the use of discourse on masculinity in sports commentary. Using a qualitative method for this study is beneficial because it studies a phenomenon in a natural setting (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003). The study is looking at patterns of behaviour or interactions between individuals and concepts that cannot be naturally generated for the study. Qualitative methods study behaviour and interactions in more natural settings, unlike quantitative methods (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003). As mentioned before, this study has looked at the use of discourse in sports commentary. It is looking at the construction of conversations to analyse socially constructed concepts like hegemonic masculine ideals. The specific qualitative method that is used in order to analyse the data is content analysis.

Qualitative content analysis has been used before in studies on social constructions in mediated sports and sports commentary (Sterkenburg et al., 2012; Zenquis & Mwaniki, 2019). The method is systematic and flexible because of the different ways in which the data can be analysed. It also allows the researcher to revisit the data multiple times and identify the most representative and important parts to answer the research question (Schreier, 2013). Content analysis provides an objective and systematic way to develop compelling inductions of written, visual, or verbal text to measure a specific phenomenon or phenomena (Bengtsson, 2016). This study has taken an exploratory approach to qualitative content analysis. That means that the study is examining reasons and or associations between different aspects in a dataset. In doing so, themes have been identified which were created based on the frequency of its occurrence (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003). This was especially useful to link the analysis to a concept like gender, which is what this study is aiming to do. The different themes in this study will relate to discourse about masculinity that have previously

been mentioned in the framework.

The qualitative content analysis in the context of this study has looked at patterns, themes related to the reconstruction, establishment, and maintenance of hegemonic masculine ideals. It has also looked into the possibility that those ideals were perhaps challenged. Hegemonic masculine ideals were in this study understood as the characteristics that are typically ascribed to men. These ideals are socially constructed and distributed through various channels, including sports media (Bryson, 1987; Connell, 1995; Adams et al., 2010). The framework already explained that the results of the content analysis will be seen from a discourse analysis perspective. The themes will therefore be created with the discourse analysis theory in mind. This perspective to the results of the qualitative content analysis has been beneficial to interpret and understand how language and discourses are used to influence and shape social structures (gender, race, etc.), identities, relationships, knowledge and beliefs (Fairclough, 1995, 2003; Machin & Mayr, 2012). With this definition in mind, the use of this perspective has been beneficial in this study to look into the representation of the 2021 Formula One drivers in the post-race commentary of the podcast F1 Nation. The content analysis was divided into two phases. The first phase was the textual analysis in which the content has solely been analysed upon its textual meaning. The second phase was the contextual analysis in which the content has been analysed upon its contextual meaning. In this phase, the use of discourses on masculinity was central to the analysis (Adams et al., 2010). By looking at the conversations and discussions of the hosts in the podcast, themes have been established after the analysis in order to answer the research question: *how is discourse about masculinity used to represent the 2021 Formula One drivers through the analysis of F1 Nation's post-race commentary on Formula One races?*

3.2 Data sample

The study has analysed the episodes of the podcast F1 Nation. F1 Nation releases pre-race and post-race analysis and commentary on the Formula One Grands Prix during the season. The three hosts of F1 Nation are Formula One reporters, Tom Clarkson and Nathalie Pinkham, and the 1996 Formula One world champion Damon Hill. The announcement for the podcast was published in April 2020 and the first episode was released on 1 May 2020. The podcast releases previews and/or reviews of every Grand Prix weekend weekly on monday. In the episodes, Clarkson, Pinkham, and Hill discuss the drivers and their performances during the latest Grand Prix weekend and look ahead to the next Grand Prix. They also analyse all the events that happened during the Grand Prix weekend, including

incidents on track, remarkable performances, and achievements.

The podcast was specifically picked to be analysed for the study, because its main content is audio. Audio content is useful for the study as it focuses solely on how a message gets conveyed. Only words, discourses, and ideologies are used through which the hosts discuss and analyse the drivers and the races. This is important because the study tries to find how discourse about masculinity in the sport gets used by the hosts in the F1 Nation podcast to represent the Formula One drivers. The podcast has been particularly useful for this study, because the show is supported by Formula One media itself. It sometimes includes guests in the form of other drivers or ex-drivers of the sport, as well as prominent people that work in the management of the sport. This has made for rich data to analyse the discussions about the 2021 Formula One drivers between the hosts and guests in the podcast episodes. An additional benefit to this particular podcast has been the inclusion of the perspective of the female host in these discussions.

This study has only looked at the Grand Prix review episodes of the 2021 Formula One season. This was considered as the data sample because these episodes analyse the races of the Formula One season in-depth. The preview episodes of F1 Nation have been neglected due to time constraints to the scope of the study. The review episodes have been picked because they discussed the racing performances of the Formula One drivers during the entirety of the season, as well as discussions on the overall competition through the year. As mentioned before, this study has analysed all the episodes who review the Grands Prix of the 2021 Formula One season. This was done because it was the latest Formula One season that took place. The season consisted of 22 races, thus 22 episodes of 40 to 50 minutes were analysed in total and these episodes were released between March 2021 and December 2021. The sample has only been studied upon its audio, because of the nature of podcasts. There has been a limitation to the sample as the content is produced and distributed by British media. Formula One's media company is based in the United Kingdom and the hosts of F1 Nation carry British citizenship. Because of this, the analyses and comments might be shaped through a British perspective, especially when one takes into account that most of the 2021 drivers on the grid were British as well.

3.3 Operationalisation and data analysis

This section will discuss the operationalisation of the method to analyse the data followed by the different steps that were taken to analyse the data in order to give a full transparent overview on how content analysis was used to study the F1 Nation podcast

episodes. The study has looked at the data from a discourse analysis perspective. Discourse is understood as a particular way to discuss and/or understand aspects in the world. Discourses get used in discussions to address particular things and thus it is not solely a representation of knowledge of an individual. It is also viewed as a social practice where one actively produces and maintains these kinds of knowledge one has on the world and how this person thinks about the world (Fairclough, 1995, 2003; Zenquis & Mwaniki, 2019). For the purpose of this study, hegemonic masculine ideals were the main factors that were looked at in the data to form an understanding of the use of discourse on masculinity to represent the Formula One drivers in the F1 Nation podcast. These include factors like toughness, aggressiveness, and competitiveness which have been used to positively represent male athletes (Bryson, 1987; Connell, 1995; Adams et al., 2010). The representation of these drivers in the podcast episodes are further analysed upon the ideas that were put forward by Bryson (1987), Adams et al. (2010), and Hartmann-Tews (2019) about how male athletes are generally being represented in sports media. These include factors like a focus on physical attributes, sports performances of the male athletes, and a representation of the male participants as purely an athlete. These factors have been used to positively represent the male athletes. Other factors that have been looked at in the data is how the podcast represents the drivers themselves. As mentioned in the framework, Sturm (2011) found that hegemonic masculine ideals are used for the 'standards' that the motorsport culture ascribes to drivers. In the eyes of the motorsport culture, the Formula One drivers should be fearless and tough. They should not show any emotion, apart from competitiveness and aggressiveness. The drivers are in this way seen as only athletes, rather than human beings (Sturm, 2011).

In order to gain an understanding of whether these concepts are recurring or not in the podcast episodes of F1 Nation, the study has looked into 22 episodes of the podcast that were released between March 2021 and December 2021. The episodes are the post-race analyses of the 22 races of the 2021 Formula One season. Each episode is hosted by Damon Hill, Tom Clarkson, and Nathalie Pinkham. Occasionally prominent persons in the Formula One world make a guest appearance, including Formula One drivers themselves. Each piece of content was 40 to 50 minutes long. The first step in collecting and analysing valuable data was to transcribe all of the contents of the sample, following the methods of previous studies (Van Sterkenburg et al., 2012; Zenquis & Mwaniki, 2019). After transcribing the content, the researcher dived into the transcripts to code the data on the representation of Formula One drivers. The text was coded inductively next to the concepts about hegemonic

masculine ideals ascribed to male athletes and drivers that have been mentioned previously. The program ATLAS.ti was used to code the data in order to have a clear overview of the concepts and corresponding codes that the researcher has attached to the concepts.

The data analysis started with open coding. The open coding stage of the content analysis revolved mainly about the textual analysis of the data sample. During this process, the researcher looked mainly at the discussion between the commentators in the podcast episodes. The data was then distinguished between positive and negative comments about the race performances of the drivers and the characteristics of the drivers, and labelled upon the general subject of the comment. To illustrate this: the commentators talked about the driving abilities of different drivers. They discussed specific overtakes Red Bull driver Max Verstappen did in multiple races and they discussed the talent of McLaren driver Daniel Ricciardo throughout the season. The specific driver, positive comments, and personal opinion were codes derived from these kinds of comments. 61 codes were derived from this coding stage (see Appendix A).

After the open coding stage, the researcher moved on to the axial coding stage and selective coding stage. These two processes included the contextual analysis phase of the data analysis. The initial codes that were derived in the open coding stage were revisited and then coded again into different categories (see Appendix A). During the axial coding stage it was important to identify discourse constructions and patterns. The codes that were derived in this stage were inductively approached with the influence of the theoretical framework. Specifically, the four effects of masculinity by Bryson (1987) and the concept of masculinity by Connell (1995), the two discourses on masculinity by Adams et al. (2010), gender representation in motorsport by Matthews & Pike (2016), and the representation of Formula One drivers by Sturm (2011) were used to code the open codes into more specific codes that relate to these hegemonic masculine ideals. To illustrate this, taking the example of the open coding stage: the commentators mentioned a specific overtake of Max Verstappen in the episode, this then got looked at in a contextual perspective. It was a positive comment, because they discussed his 'brilliant driving ability to overtake in that specific part of the track'. Race performance and racecraft were the codes that were then ascribed to this comment. In the example of the commentators discussing the racing talent of Daniel Ricciardo, they specifically mentioned how his 'racing experience' has been of much influence on his racing talent. Experience and form were the codes that were then ascribed to this specific comment. A total of fourteen codes were established in this coding stage.

Lastly, during the selective coding stage all the fourteen codes were again looked at

and then put together into main categories to create an overall view of the results. Three main categories were derived from the data. The purpose of the three main categories was to explain the overall use of discourses about masculinity in the podcast episodes of F1 Nation. The fourteen codes that were put into the three main categories are considered aspects in relation to the main categories. The fourteen codes are the aspects that make up the use of discourse on masculinity. These fourteen codes lead to the representation of the 2021 Formula One drivers and are divided into three separate categories. Each category has a different function in the representation of the 2021 Formula One drivers. The findings of the analysis will be explained further in the results section of the study to show the interpretation of the data (Machin & Mayr, 2012). To illustrate the process in a clearer way, the following table (Figure 3.1) displays an example of the coding process of the transcripts.

Figure 3.1 Example of coding process

Quote	Open coding	Axial coding	Selective coding
“I thought there was a hint of anger in his driving. When he was out in the first few runs in qualifying he was really on it and kicking up gravel and said he overdrove, made a mistake. But that was the fire that I think we’ve wanted to see from Valtteri.” (Hill, 2021)	‘Aggressiveness & Power’	‘Toughness’	‘Maintaining discourse about masculinity’
“It has made him realise that Lewis in a wheel to wheel battle is not going to back down, flat not going to back down. And that’s gotta go down in the mental notebook” (Hill, 2021)	‘Pressure & Competition’	‘Competition’	‘Establishing discourse about masculinity’
“He’s just got this steely nerves that I find so impressive and that he takes so much in a strike, given that he’s only 24. I mean he acts much older than his years and I mean we saw it at Zandvoort, didn’t we. The pressure he was under and he just took it all in his stride” (Pinkham, 2021)	‘Maturity & Emotions’	‘Humanising the driver’	‘Challenging discourse about masculinity’

The three main categories that were found during the analysis are: *maintaining discourse about masculinity*, *establishing discourse about masculinity*, and *challenging discourse about masculinity*. Discourse about masculinity in the context of this study is understood as using hegemonic masculine ideals to represent individuals. Hegemonic masculine ideals are understood in this study as characteristics that are typically ascribed to men. Such as toughness, competitiveness, not showing emotion, etc. Maintaining discourse about masculinity was found to be related to comments made by the hosts of F1 Nation that relate to the maintenance of hegemonic masculine ideals. These comments were specifically targeted at specific Formula One drivers in the podcast episodes. This is different from establishing discourse about masculinity, as this category was found to be related to comments made by the hosts of F1 Nation that relate to the establishment of hegemonic masculine ideals. These comments were primarily viewed in a more general context in the podcast episodes. Establishing discourse about masculinity is therefore a more general type of discussion regarding Formula One drivers, whereas maintaining discourse about masculinity is a more specific type of discussion regarding a specific Formula One driver or drivers. Challenging discourse about masculinity was found to be related to comments made by the hosts of F1 Nation that combat the maintenance and establishment of hegemonic masculine ideals. The next chapter will go more into detail about these three categories and it will give some illustrations for which type of comments were related to these categories. The fourteen aspects that were found during the analysis were:

- Toughness of a Formula One driver
- Race craft of a Formula One driver
- Achievements of a Formula One driver
- Form of a Formula One driver
- Competition between Formula One drivers
- Performance comparisons between Formula One drivers
- Formula One through the perspective of important figures in Formula One
- Referring to the history of Formula One
- Humanising the Formula One drivers
- Formula One drivers showing emotion
- Personal life of Formula One drivers
- Physical and mental fitness of Formula One drivers
- Involvement of media in their representation of Formula One drivers
- Female representation in Formula One

These fourteen aspects relate to the three main categories in the way that these fourteen aspects lead to either the maintenance, establishment, or challenging hegemonic masculine ideals. The aspects lead to the representation of the 2021 Formula One drivers in the analysed podcast episodes. A more detailed explanation and illustration of the aspects are provided in the next chapter.

3.5 Validity & Reliability

Content analysis has been the most suitable method to get representable results from the data analysis. Validity concerns the study and measurement of the data to make sure that the right thing is being studied and measured. Reliability depends on the method that is being used in order to establish that the same things create the same result after repetition of the method (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003). This study made sure to carefully consider a few factors to make sure both validity and reliability were being met.

Firstly, during the data collection and analysis, the study made sure to go over the transcripts multiple times to ensure that what was measured before could be measured again. In this way, the study made sure that the results would be the same for each coding stage but it also ensured the study to refresh the existing quotations and codes for the other transcripts. This adds to both validity and reliability of the study. Next to that, the method that was used for the study falls back onto past studies that have analysed commentary of sports events (Van Sterkenburg et al., 2012; King & Maecleod, 2016; Zenquis & Mwaniki, 2019). The two studies of van Sterkenburg et al. (2012) and Zenquis and Mwaniki (2019) made use of content analysis to study the representation of athletes in sports commentary. To analyse their results, they also took the perspective of a discourse analysis and how discourse was used to represent the athletes. Their studies are therefore similar to the topic of this study which increases the reliability of the method. King and Maecleod's (2016) study goes more in-depth on the use of content analysis and the critical discourse analysis perspective during the results section. Their study has therefore been used for the foundation of the coding process of the method of this study which would add to the validity of the method.

4. Results

This part will explain and discuss the main categories and its aspects in further detail. In doing so, this chapter is divided into three sections. The three sections discuss the three main categories of the analysis that each have a different function in representing the 2021 Formula One drivers. The sections are in order of the most frequently found aspects during the analysis and are discussed in relation to the topic of the study to answer the research question. The number of times the aspects were found are addressed as ($N=xxx$). Each section includes a discussion of the main category, its aspects and which role it plays towards the representation of the 2021 Formula One drivers. Finally, a coding table is placed at the end of each section to make the results more clearer and accessible. The table displays the main category and their description, the aspects per category, and how each of those aspects were analysed textually and contextually.

4.1 *Maintaining discourse about masculinity*

In the context of this study, maintaining discourse about masculinity is understood as the category in which hegemonic masculine ideals are maintained by the F1 Nation hosts in the podcast episodes. As discussed, hegemonic masculine ideals are characteristics typically ascribed to men. The comments by the hosts that were coded in this category maintain a masculine representation of the Formula One drivers and include some of these hegemonic masculine ideals. They related specifically to the representation of different drivers that were on the 2021 grid, instead of generating a broader outlook on the drivers and the competition. Toughness ($N=316$), race craft ($N=171$), achievements ($N=163$), and form ($N=157$) of a Formula One driver were the four aspects found to be most related to maintaining a masculine representation of the Formula One drivers (Figure 4.1). *Toughness of a Formula One driver* refers to commentators' comments that suggest the hegemonic masculinity ideals of toughness and aggressiveness of male athletes. In the context of Formula One, these are comments about the driving style and mentality of the drivers being more aggressive or feeling pressure. *Achievements of a Formula One driver* refer to commentators' comments about the successes and achievements of the 2021 Formula One drivers such as race wins or championship titles. *Race craft of a Formula One driver* refers to commentators' comments about the driving style of Formula One drivers and how they approach their races, while the *form of a Formula One driver* relates to commentators' comments about the racing mentality and talent of the 2021 Formula One drivers.

Toughness, aggression and competitiveness were a few examples that were given

that indicate hegemonic masculine ideals (Adams et al., 2010; Schmidt, 2018). This study found that the hosts used a combination of aggression and toughness ideals whilst referring to the Formula One drivers in their discussions. Comments by the hosts and guests about the toughness and aggressiveness of the Formula One drivers were the most found in the data sample. Competitiveness was mostly found in comments about the achievements, race craft, and form of the Formula One drivers. The comments about the toughness of Formula One drivers mainly talked about the fighting spirit of the drivers during races. The comments were also made in relation to the ongoing competition during the season. Some examples of the comments about the toughness of the drivers included references to not being regarded 'weak' and having to work under pressure. Formula One drivers are expected to be strong and tough to drive under the pressure of the competition (Sturm, 2011). For example, former Formula One driver Damon Hill, who is also the host of the podcast, mainly made comments that compared the 2021 Formula One drivers to the drivers in the time that he drove in Formula One. One example he used was during the discussion of the Monaco Grand Prix when Nathalie Pinkham tried to sympathise with the pressure that is put on the Formula One drivers during race weekends. Hill responds to that by explaining that having a big amount of pressure on your shoulders as a Formula One driver is 'part of the game'. He also said that former drivers never complained about the pressure and always stuck through it no matter what (Hill, 2021). This example also shows a difference between the host's gender and the difference in their discussions about the toughness of Formula One drivers. The female host, Nathalie Pinkham shows a lot more sympathy for the drivers, whilst Damon Hill and reporter Tom Clarkson show less emotion and sympathy for the drivers. This difference occurs in a lot of the aspects that were found for all three categories.

Their comments about the racecraft and form of Formula One drivers reflected their opinions on the performances of each individual driver. Most of the comments about the racecraft and form of the drivers were made regarding the two championship rivals Sir Lewis Hamilton ($N=234$) and Max Verstappen ($N=178$). The 2021 Formula One season was surrounded by the championship battle between Hamilton and Verstappen, so most of the comments about racecraft and form were made about them. During most of the discussion of both aspects, the commentators reflected on previous performances during the 2021 season and past seasons. The main comments about the two drivers included their growth as a racing driver referring to their race craft and form. The comments reflected some hegemonic masculine ideals, such as aggression when referring to Verstappen, and toughness and pressure when referring to Hamilton. For example, Verstappen has been seen in previous

seasons as an aggressive driver whilst Hamilton during the 2021 season has a tougher time on track because of the competition with Verstappen. Hamilton also gets referred to a lot regarding his past achievements. Sir Lewis Hamilton is a seven time world champion and thus most of the comments made about his racecraft and form reflect how past achievements lead up to the championship battle between him and Verstappen. This reflects how the hosts have extensive knowledge about the industry. These comments were solely focused on past achievements and knowledge about former Formula One seasons, without mentioning any other aspects that make up the drivers. It recognised the drivers as athletes rather than humans, which is mainly done to male athletes in sports media. It therefore maintains the representation of male athletes as pure athletes, rather than human individuals (Bryson, 1987; Adams et al., 2010; Sturm, 2011).

Another factor that was prevalent in the analysis was facing hardship which was coded as a part of toughness. It reflected mostly negative comments about the performances of the drivers during the 2021 season compared to past achievements and performances in previous seasons. Facing hardship reflected commentators' comments about the Formula One drivers having a difficult time performing in the car during the 2021 season compared to other seasons. To illustrate: these comments were mostly made about Daniel Ricciardo ($N=88$) in comparison to Lando Norris ($N=89$). Ricciardo and Norris are teammates at McLaren, with 2021 being the first season of Ricciardo at the team. The 2021 season saw a stronger performance from Norris, compared to a more disappointing season from Ricciardo. The comments made about both drivers reflected that a lot. The commentators mostly complimented Norris about his racecraft and form whilst they discussed primarily the hardships that Ricciardo was facing, battling against his own teammate. In their discussions, they again used references to the toughness, aggressiveness, and competitiveness that a Formula One driver should have and show. In contrast, the female host Nathalie Pinkham, who is also friends with Daniel Ricciardo, showed a lot more sympathy towards the hardship and pressure that was put on the driver.

Ricciardo was also mostly mentioned when race craft was discussed because the driver was driving with a new team during the 2021 season and therefore had to adapt to a new racing car. For example, he was discussed along with Carlos Sainz, Sergio Pérez, and Sebastian Vettel who all had to adapt to a new racing car after switching teams during the 2021 season. Race craft was therefore mostly discussed in terms of adapting to the car. It reflected the toughness and pressure that is put on the drivers. Most of the comments about the adaptation to the new race car resulted in negative comments and comparisons between

the drivers. Mainly the male hosts did not seem to understand why some drivers had more difficulties adapting to the car whilst others seemed to be doing well. This again reflected the knowledge the hosts have about Formula One and previous seasons (Lumsden, 2010). As well as again recognising the Formula One drivers as athletes rather than humans facing a difficult time (Bryson, 1987; Adams et al., 2010; Sturm, 2011).

Race craft was also mentioned more in the last episode of the finale of the 2021 Formula One season, discussing how Max Verstappen won the championship exactly by his driving. Race craft had some overlap with the form of a Formula One driver, however this aspect included more negative comments about the drivers. Discussing the performances of the individual drivers that were given as an example in this section, the podcast hosts made use of hegemonic masculine ideals like toughness, aggressiveness, and competitiveness to illustrate how they thought about the drivers. In doing so, they maintained the perspective that Formula One drivers need to be tough, aggressive, and competitive in the race car (Sturm, 2011). These comments are also solely related to their performances and behaviour on track and their behaviour off track, whilst never getting rid of the athlete mentality (Bryson, 1987; Adams et al., 2010). It maintains the representation of the Formula One drivers as athletes but fails to represent them as ‘human beings’ (Bryson, 1987; Adams et al., 2010). Maintaining discourse about masculinity in the discussions about the drivers’ performances on track and their behaviour off track by the hosts then results in a masculine representation of the 2021 Formula One drivers.

Figure 4.1 Coding table of the category maintaining discourse about masculinity

Main category	Aspects of main category	Example of textual analysis	Contextual analysis of the textual example
Maintaining discourse about masculinity	Toughness of a Formula One driver	“It’s Ferrari for goodness, and you do not want to be the weakest link.” (Hill, 2021)	The quote by host Damon Hill shows his remark in the podcast episode regarding Ferrari driver Carlos Sainz. Hill implies with his comment that Sainz needs to be tough to not be considered weak within the team he drives for, Ferrari. This also implies that Hill has Ferrari in high regard, and that results in drivers feeling the
<i>In this category the aspects add to the maintenance of hegemonic masculine ideals in commentary about Formula One drivers, therefore it maintains a masculine representation of the male athletes in Formula One media.</i>	<i>This aspect includes comments about the ‘toughness’ of the Formula One drivers. Toughness refers to commentators’ comments that suggest hegemonic masculine ideals of toughness and aggressiveness of male athletes, adding on to a masculine representation of Formula One drivers.</i>		

Race craft of a Formula One driver

This aspects includes comments about the 'race craft' of the Formula One drivers. Race craft refers to commentators' comments about the driving style of Formula One drivers and how they approach their races. The comments are purely industry related and contain masculine ideals on specific performances of the male athletes, adding on to a masculine representation of Formula One drivers.

“If you’re a racing driver you have to go for a gap or whatever it was but I think Max is one of the most racy racing drivers. And for him to bailout so early in that chicane, I think that just doesn’t compute with him. So hence I think that explains why he stayed in it and ultimately the crash was inevitable as a result.” (Clarkson, 2021)

need to be tough to conform to Ferrari’s standards.

The quote by host Tom Clarkson shows his comment about Max Verstappen and his opinion on Verstappen’s driving style. He implies that the driving style of Verstappen is in line with the general opinion on what makes a F1 driver, a F1 driver. His quote is in context of an on-track incident whereby Verstappen crashed into his championship contender. Clarkson thinks that the reason he crashed is because Verstappen drives with, what is considered, a very hard and tough racing style.

Achievements of a Formula One driver

This aspect includes comments about the achievements of the Formula One drivers. Achievements refer to the successes and achievements of the Formula One drivers such as race wins or championship titles and is purely industry related and fixated on specific performances of the male athletes, adding on to a masculine representation of Formula One drivers.

“I’ve said earlier in the broadcast, I think that Lewis winning an eight title doesn’t tell us he’s a brilliant driver. We knew from when he won his first, second, third, His fourth, fifth, and sixth, and seventh: he is a brilliant driver and he is the benchmark in Formula One.” (Coulthard, 2021)

The quote by former Formula One driver David Coulthard shows a perfect example of the commentators and guests of F1 Nation talking about the achievements and success of a Formula One driver. In this context, Coulthard discusses the achievements of Sir Lewis Hamilton, a seven time world champion, and that because of his success he is a benchmark for other drivers in Formula One: to achieve and level the success Hamilton has.

Form of a Formula One driver

This aspect includes comments about the form of the Formula One drivers. Form refers to the racing mentality and talent of the Formula One drivers. These comments are purely industry related and contain masculine ideals on specific performances of the male athletes, adding on to a masculine

“I can’t actually say I’m not impressed by Mick. I think he’s showing his strength and I think he’s showing ability and I think he’s also showing he’s a bit of a fighter as well. So it will be good to see him in a more competitive car in the future.” (Hill, 2021)

The quote by host Damon Hill shows his remark about Mick Schumacher’s performance at the Hungary Grand Prix. His comment also indicates his opinion on how Schumacher is performing throughout the season and what kind of a driver he thinks he is. The use of ‘fighter’ indicates the fighting spirit of the driver

representation of Formula One drivers.

which makes a reference to the ‘toughness’ of racing drivers.

4.2 Establishing discourse about masculinity

In the context of this study, establishing discourse about masculine is understood as the category in which the hegemonic masculine ideals are (re)constructed and established by the F1 Nation hosts in the podcast episodes. The comments by the hosts that were coded in this category establish the masculine representation of the Formula One drivers. These comments related mostly to the general representation of the Formula One drivers and the overall competition in 2021. Competition between Formula One drivers ($N=296$), performance comparisons between Formula One drivers ($N=121$), Formula One through the perspective of a Formula One driver ($N=69$), and referring to the history of Formula One ($N=63$) were the four aspects found to be most related to establishing a masculine representation of the Formula One drivers (Figure 4.2). *Competition between Formula One drivers* relates to commentators’ comments about the overall competition of the 2021 Formula One season, while *performance comparisons between Formula One drivers* refers to commentators’ comments that compare the Formula One drivers with each other in racing performance and driving style: how the drivers behave on track and sometimes outside the track. It also focuses on how the championship battle unfolds during the season. *Formula One through the perspective of important figures in Formula One* refers to comments made from the perspective of important figures racing or working in Formula One. It included some comments that were made by the 2021 Formula One drivers themselves, but it also included comments that were made by prominent persons in the sport such as team principals and people from Formula One’s management. It primarily represented their state of mind and perspective on racing in Formula One. Finally, *referring to the history of Formula One* relates to the commentators’ comments on the history of Formula One drivers and race performances of the 2021 Formula One drivers in previous racing seasons. The difference between this category with the former category, maintaining masculinity representations, is that the aspects of this category discussed more general comments that were made about the drivers instead of focusing on specific things that would make up the Formula One driver. This category reflected more the competitiveness (Adams et al., 2010; Schmidt, 2018) of Formula One drivers during the 2021 season and previous seasons.

Compared to the previous category it focused less on how Formula One drivers are expected to act and how they are acting, mostly on track.

The comments about the competition between Formula One drivers reflected the competition on track and off track in a more general way. Rather than going in-depth about the driving styles or the performances of individual drivers, the comments that were coded in this aspect talk about the general competition during the 2021 season. Again, examples of this aspect reflected the championship battle between Sir Lewis Hamilton and Max Verstappen, but also the competition between Daniel Ricciardo and Lando Norris, and the other teams. Another part of this aspect was also discussions about the drivers having to follow the rules of the sport. This again reflected the general discussion around the Formula One drivers rather than reflecting on each driver individually, keeping it industry related at the same time. It showed again the hosts knowledge about the competition and the rules in Formula One. For example, Damon Hill and Tom Clarkson talked a lot more about the technicality of the competition between the drivers, whilst Nathalie Pinkham focused more on the emotions of the drivers in this ongoing battle between them. Technological knowledge in Formula One is considered to be a masculine domain (Lumsden, 2010; Sturm, 2011) and therefore through the comments of Hill and Clarkson a more masculine representation of the sport and the drivers is being constructed. It also views the drivers in the context of being an athlete, rather than a human being (Bryson, 1987; Adams et al., 2010; Sturm, 2011). This results in the reconstruction and establishment of a masculine representation of Formula One and its drivers.

The same could be understood for the comparisons between Formula One drivers. In this aspect, the difference between drivers was mostly made on the experience and age of the drivers. To illustrate this: there was a clear division in the discussions of the hosts between the 'younger generation drivers' and the 'older generation drivers'. The younger generation drivers are the drivers with less experience in Formula One. They are mostly the drivers without any championship wins or even race wins, such as Lando Norris, George Russell, and Alexander Albon. The older generation drivers are the drivers with more experience and who have been in the sport for several years. Most of these drivers have race wins and might even have championship wins, such as Sir Lewis Hamilton, four time championship winner Sebastian Vettel and eight time Grand Prix winner Daniel Ricciardo. Some other comparisons that were made were between the 2021 drivers and former drivers, such as Michael Schumacher and Ayrton Senna. This aspect again discussed a general representation of the drivers and the competition, whilst keeping it industry related. Thereby

again proving the hosts knowledge about Formula One and its drivers. It also adds to the point made before that the hosts put the drivers in the athlete context, instead of representing them as humans as well (Bryson, 1987; Adams et al., 2010; Sturm, 2011).

The comments about former drivers were also reflected in the aspect. It referred to the history of Formula One in which comments were coded that reference to past seasons and former drivers. Referring back to the history of Formula One establishes a masculine representation because drivers are compared to 'old school racing'. According to Tom Clarkson, old school racing can be understood as a tougher race craft, fearless and more aggressive. It uses hegemonic masculine ideals to describe the competition and the drivers (Sturm, 2011). For example, the comments that were coded in this aspect indicated more knowledge about the industry but also reflected more the toughness that Formula One drivers are expected to be that prevails in the sport. It also reflected comments made by Damon Hill that racing in the past was far more dangerous than modern day racing because of the implemented safety rules. The old school racing comments were reflecting the opinion of mainly Tom Clarkson who liked to see the more rougher races during the 2021 season. This showed for example how he views the sport and how he wants the drivers to drive generally. His comments referred back to the hegemonic masculine ideal of the toughness and fearlessness of the drivers (Sturm, 2011). More importantly, it showed his perception of what makes a Formula One driver using hegemonic masculine ideals.

Lastly, the aspect that reflected the perspective of someone in the sport is an interesting finding. This is because it contained the opinions of not only Damon Hill but also some of the 2021 Formula One drivers, team principals, and people managing the sport who made an appearance on the podcast. Comments that were coded in this aspect refer back to the rough racing and toughness that a driver is expected to be (Sturm, 2011). For example, Williams driver George Russell and former Red Bull driver Alexander Albon were recurring Formula One drivers that voiced their opinion on certain incidents in races and reflected on the competition itself from the perspective of a Formula One driver. Not only Formula One drivers' perceptions were included in this aspect. Other prominent figures of the sport were included as well. For example, comments made by Ross Brawn, the managing technical director of motorsports in Formula One. But also that of Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff and Red Bull Racing team boss Christian Horner. What these perceptions have in common is that all comments that were coded were made by the men in the sport. This shows the direct control of the sport (Bryson, 1987) that is mainly in the hands of men. Except for the female host of the podcast Nathalie Pinkham and one other female guest on the show who was a

Formula One reporter in Saudi-Arabia, no other female perspective was included in the podcast episodes. Pinkham mentioned in one of the episodes that 88% of the sport includes men (Pinkham, 2021). It is therefore not surprising that the podcast included mostly the perspectives and perceptions about the sport by the men in the sport. This established the masculine representation of the sport and the drivers even further.

As was the case in the maintaining discourse about masculinity category, in this establishing discourse about masculinity category, the aspects showcased how discourse about masculinity gets used to establish and (re)construct a masculine view on the Formula One drivers. The hosts were again using hegemonic masculine ideals to represent the drivers and reconstruct discussions about them from a purely athlete perspective (Bryson, 1987; Adams et al., 2010; Sturm, 2011). This aspect also highlighted how masculinity in Formula One gets constructed and established by including the comments made by the men in the sport. Enabling discourse about masculinity in the discussions about the drivers and their performances on track by the hosts and the guests would then result in a masculine representation of the 2021 Formula One drivers.

Figure 4.2 Coding table of the category establishing discourse about masculinity

Main category	Aspects of main category	Example of textual analysis	Contextual analysis of the textual example
Establishing discourse about masculinity <i>In this category the aspects add to the establishment of hegemonic masculine ideals in commentary on Formula One drivers, therefore it establishes a masculine representation of the male athletes in Formula One media.</i>	Competition between Formula One drivers <i>This aspect includes comments about the overall competition of the 2021 Formula One season. Competition refers to how the drivers generally behave on track and outside the track, as well as how the championship battle unfolds during the season. These comments are purely industry related and fixated on the general competition aspect between the male athletes, establishing a masculine representation of Formula One drivers</i>	“Both are able to reflect on this as an incredible year and they were pushed in ways, tested in ways that neither of them had been before and both ultimately raised their game as a result.” (Pinkham, 2021)	The quote by host Nathalie Pinkham shows her comment on the title fight between Max Verstappen and Sir Lewis Hamilton. She reflects on the season so far. For context, the Saudi-Arabia Grand Prix was the second to last race being held in the 2021 season. She explains how both drivers have ‘raised their game’, have shown great performances. She also mentions how both drivers have had a different kind of competition against each other, compared to previous years.

Performance comparisons between Formula One drivers

This aspect includes comments that compare the Formula One drivers with each other. Performance comparisons refer to the comparison between the drivers in racing performance and driving style generally. These comments are purely industry related and fixated on the general competition aspect between the male athletes, establishing a masculine representation of Formula One drivers.

“I think that what is interesting is the difference between someone like Daniel Ricciardo and Max Verstappen, or Lando Norris or even Michael Schumacher. Because these guys came in, they didn’t know any different. So when they get given a car, they go: that’s the car I’ll drive.” (Hill, 2021)

The comment by host Damon Hill shows how he is comparing 2021 Formula One drivers Daniel Ricciardo and Max Verstappen, Lando Norris and former Formula One driver Michael Schumacher. His comparison is made on the basis of how each driver is handling the Formula One car and their racing mentality.

Formula One through the perspective of prominent figures in Formula One

This aspect includes comments that are made from the perspective of important persons within Formula One. That could either be drivers, team principals, or people managing the sport. The perspective reflects a general state of mind on Formula One by some prominent persons in the sport. These comments are purely industry related and contain masculine ideals on the competition and sometimes the mentality of male athletes during the competition, establishing a masculine representation of Formula One drivers.

“If you’re fighting for a world championship and you park outside the box. Well I mean that’s not gonna do you much good, is it. That’s the way you gotta think about it: it is a F1 driver, everything is for a world championship.” (Hill, 2021)

This comment by host Damon Hill shows his perception and opinion on how a Formula One driver should and would think about racing and the mentality one has. For context: Hill is a former Formula One driver himself and therefore this quote showcases exactly his explanation of events happening in the Grands Prix through the perspective of a driver. The words in this quote specifically, again talk about ‘fighting’ and how a F1 driver should think to compete in the sport, again in relation to the toughness of the driver.

Referring to the history of Formula One

This aspect includes comments about the history of Formula One. It refers to the general history of the industry; former Formula One drivers and race performances in previous racing seasons of the 2021 drivers and former drivers. These comments are purely industry related and fixated on the general competition aspect between the male athletes, establishing a masculine

“I think one of these eras is James Hunt and he didn’t really active to try and copy James but I think they were very likeminded in that respect they just did their own thing. Kimi always did his own thing but is fantastic racing driver, deserving world champion. Incredibly quick and on the race track

The comment by guest Ross Brawn, technical director of Formula One, shows a comment regarding the history of Formula One. The comment specifically is made regarding 2021 Formula One driver Kimi Räikkönen, comparing him to former Formula One driver James Hunt. The comparison between the two is made regarding the personality of

representation of Formula One drivers.

he was reduced to this.”
(Brawn, 2021)

Räikkönen who just like Hunt became a world champion. For context as well, Hunt was regarded a ‘real’ racing driver. Tough, quick, but a showman too.

4.3 Challenging discourse about masculinity

In the context of this study, challenging masculinity representations is understood as the category in which hegemonic masculine ideals are being challenged by the F1 Nation hosts. The comments by the hosts that were coded in this category go against the reconstruction and maintenance of a masculine representation of the Formula One drivers. They reflected a different state of mind towards hegemonic masculine ideals whilst trying to combat the reflection of Formula One as a male-dominated sport. Humanising the Formula One drivers ($N=225$), Formula One drivers showing emotion ($N=80$), personal life of Formula One drivers ($N=76$), physical and mental fitness of Formula One drivers ($N=57$), involvement of media in their representation of Formula One drivers ($N=21$), and female representation in Formula One ($N=14$) were the six aspects that were found to be most related to challenge the masculine representation of the Formula One drivers (Figure 4.3). *Humanising the Formula One drivers* refers to commentators’ comments about the 2021 Formula One drivers that put them out of the context of being purely an athlete in the sport. It also included comments that reflect their perception of the personality of the 2021 Formula One drivers. *Formula One drivers showing emotion* refers to commentators’ comments about Formula One drivers showing emotion on and off track, whilst the *personal life of Formula One drivers* refers to commentators’ comments about the relationship between the Formula One drivers themselves and drivers’ relationships in their personal lives including family situations. *Physical and mental fitness of Formula One drivers* relates to commentators’ comments about the physical attributes of the Formula One drivers as well as their mental health. *Involvement of media in their representation of Formula One drivers* relates to commentators’ comments about the relationship between the media and Formula One drivers, and finally *female representation in Formula One* refers to commentators’ comments about female drivers and the representation of women in Formula One.

What becomes clear during the analysis is that the female host Nathalie Pinkham was a big influence in challenging the hegemonic masculine ideals to represent the Formula One

drivers in the podcast episodes. Pinkham reflected more on the emotions of the drivers and she showed a lot more sympathy towards the drivers during the 2021 season. This was also previously mentioned in the discussion of the maintaining discourse about masculinity category. Whilst it should not be neglected that Damon Hill and Tom Clarkson also made a lot of comments to challenge a masculine representation of Formula One drivers, Pinkham was on the forefront. This was reflected in the aspect about humanising the Formula One drivers. The comments that were coded in this aspect reflected how the hosts view the drivers outside of their driving abilities and performances. The comments showed mostly how the hosts viewed the drivers outside the track and how they perceived their personalities. In doing so, it humanised the drivers, representing them as a person opposed to the representation of the drivers as purely an athlete in the sport. The representation of the 'male athlete' is very common in sports media (Bryson, 1987; Adams et al., 2010; Sturm, 2011) and this aspect challenged that perspective of the drivers in Formula One. For example, AlphaTauri driver Yuki Tsunoda got discussed a lot. Both in terms of his race performances but also in terms of his personality outside the track. According to the hosts, Tsunoda was a very aggressive racing driver sometimes during the 2021 season and showed feistiness after races as well. The hosts discussed his feisty personality but also praised him for being upfront and direct about how he felt about his races. Rather than viewing the aggressiveness and toughness of drivers as something negative, the hosts found it apt to Tsunoda's personality. This showed that the hosts do not always link hegemonic masculine ideals to toughness and aggressiveness as something that the drivers 'should' have. Rather they showed that it can add to a driver's personality and character, showing a more human side to the driver as an individual. That is in contrast to showing that it adds to a driver's character as an athlete.

A lot of comments were related to the Formula One drivers showing emotion. The comments in this aspect were coded regarding the emotions outside the race car. The overall emotion of the drivers within the car were mainly toughness and aggressiveness, but in this aspect the hosts particularly talked about how the drivers acted outside of racing and on track battles. The representation of the 'male athlete' suggested that these men cannot show any emotion and solely have to focus on the competition (Bryson, 1987; Adams et al., 2010; Hartmann-Tews, 2019). This aspect goes against that ideal and showed that the Formula One drivers do show emotion. Additionally, male athletes in sports media are generally commented on regarding their performance in the competition and solely on their performance. However, this analysis found that even in some podcast episodes, the 2021

Formula One drivers were mentioned regarding their private lives. For example, their family situation gets mentioned as shown in Figure 4 about Daniel Ricciardo being a ‘family guy’. Talking about their private life is also a way to represent the drivers as humans rather than athletes, again reflecting on the humanisation of the drivers. Moreover, the relationship between the drivers outside of the track was taken into consideration as well. Rather than continuously talking about the rivalry between the drivers, the hosts also discussed the relationship and possible friendships between the drivers outside of the racing cars. To illustrate this: Tom Clarkson discussed many stories about championship rivals Sir Lewis Hamilton and Max Verstappen during the press conferences. Clarkson is in charge of hosting the press conferences for each race and therefore had a lot of anecdotes. One example of his story was about the time where Verstappen asked how Hamilton did his hair, because Hamilton was wearing braids. Another example of this was when Hamilton asked how Verstappen was handling his home situation, given that Verstappen’s girlfriend has a daughter (Clarkson, 2021). His comments enabled the audience to listen to how drivers acted outside the track and it puts the drivers in a context outside of the sport. It represented them as a human rather than an athlete.

Another aspect that was an interesting finding is that of the fitness of the Formula One drivers. Hegemonic masculine ideals about male athletes specifically talk about the physical attributes of the athletes (Bryson, 1987; Hartmann-Tews, 2019). However, during the analysis it was found that very few remarks were made about the physical attributes of the Formula One drivers. While physical fitness is important for the drivers, most of the comments on the fitness of Formula One drivers could be related to their mental health. Maturity was a big part of the mental fitness that the hosts were talking about. Maturity in the context of this study was understood as having an indifferent, but very mature reaction or response to events happening on track and off track. It represented the drivers with emotion, but not in a very aggressive or competitive way. That would be the way hegemonic masculine ideals would view emotions for men (Connell, 1995). Often the comments that referred to the maturity of a driver were in relation to the pressures of the competition. The hosts commented that most drivers were coping with the hardships and the expectations in a very mature and adult way. For example, the mindset of Max Verstappen was discussed frequently. Damon Hill mentioned during the episode on the Hungarian Grand Prix that he thought the mental fitness of Verstappen really surprised him. He explained that he was used to the bluntness of Verstappen in the past (Hill, 2021). With this aspect, the masculine representation of the drivers moved away from only comments about their physical

attributes and now also reflected their mental fitness. This also tapped into the emotion of the drivers, which was already discussed to be one of the things that sports media did not represent male athletes with (Bryson, 1987; Adams et al., 2010).

What was also found to be very interesting were the comments by the hosts about the involvement of the media in their representation of the drivers. It seemed that the hosts were very much aware of the impact that the media has on the representation of the Formula One drivers. A good example of this were comments made by Damon Hill about this topic. He has experienced as a Formula One driver what kind of a relationship the media has with Formula One drivers and therefore he could put it in a good context. In the episode about the Spanish Grand Prix he said that certain representations of the drivers in the eyes of the public has become a by-product of the media. He took the example of the press conferences nowadays where drivers are expected to answer questions about the races and the competition. In doing so, they are showing a part of their personality and how they react to certain things. Hill acknowledged that there is a 'relentless hunger' from the media to produce a good story for the audience (Hill, 2021). With this comment, Hill has put emphasis on the fact that the media represents Formula One drivers to the audience in certain ways and therefore always try to find the most interesting stories to show their representation of the drivers. This shows that the hosts actually were aware of the impact their podcast could have on their listening audience. This has been different from other studies who claimed that the media are not aware of the views they are presenting (Hartmann-Tews, 2019).

The discussion of the representation of the drivers in Formula One is further acknowledged when they were talking about the female representation in the sport. The representation of female drivers and the all-women racing championship W Series only gets mentioned in two podcast episodes, but it was an important finding to discuss in relation to this study. The first time that female representation was mentioned is in relation to host Nathalie Pinkham who was commentating on the free practice one during the first race of the season in Bahrain. Damon Hill and Tom Clarkson praised their co-host for this milestone whilst Pinkham told an anecdote of a female fan who praised her on social media for hearing a female commentator during the broadcast (Pinkham, 2021). Most of the comments that were coded about the female representation in Formula One were made during the discussion of the US Grand Prix. Nathalie Pinkham was asked if she thought that fans would see female drivers on the grid soon. Pinkham was very adamant in her response and was positively influenced that there will be female drivers on the grid. But as mentioned before

and shown in Figure 4, Pinkham also mentioned that Formula One is still 88% male. Her argument for a change lays with the media representation, including the podcast itself: “It is all about perception and therefore it is our responsibility to be shouting from the rooftops that there is nothing that precludes a woman physically or otherwise, in terms of driving a car” (Pinkham, 2021). Pinkham gave the example of W Series champion Jamie Chadwick who has said before that she is glad that female drivers finally get a platform to show their talents. Pinkham explained after that, that Chadwick used to race against Formula One driver Lando Norris when they were teenagers but that Chadwick never got the opportunity to further showcase her talents. With the introduction of W Series she could finally show her racing talent. Going back to her argument that the industry mainly contains men, Pinkham argued that she experienced the working environment in Formula One as welcoming. Even as a woman. “But it's down to us as broadcasters of the sport to say: you know, there is so much opportunity. People ask me all the time: is Formula One sexist? And my answer every time is: no, when you're in it's a meritocracy and you've got the opportunity to flourish. Getting in that's the hard part and that is all about perception” (Pinkham, 2021). This quote shows exactly what Pinkham thought about the state of female representation in Formula One. She argued and admitted that the media such as her podcast can achieve a lot in a better representation of female drivers and women in the sport. In contrast to the arguments by Matthews and Pike (2016), the female representation has become more visible throughout the years. Though it is a slow change, it is more noticeable with the audience and the hosts of the podcast were aware of the differences in gender inclusivity in the sport. It is therefore one of the findings of the data sample that truly challenges the masculine representation of male athletes through the discussion of female representation in the sport (Matthews & Pike, 2016). But because the representation of female drivers is extremely low it is sadly not discussed enough.

Figure 4.3 Coding table of the category challenging discourse about masculinity

Main category	Aspects of main category	Example of textual analysis	Contextual analysis of the textual example
Challenging discourse about masculinity	Humanising the Formula One drivers	“The emotion that he showed and the commitment and sacrifice that his family had to make to get him to that place. I mean that must	The quote by host Nathalie Pinkham shows her judgement of the French Formula One driver Pierre Gasly when he won a Grand Prix for the first
<i>In this category the aspects add to</i>	<i>This aspect includes commentators’ comments about the 2021 Formula</i>		

commentary on Formula One drivers that goes against hegemonic masculine ideals, therefore it challenges the masculine representation of the male athletes in Formula One media.

One drivers that humanise them. The humanisation of the drivers put them out of the competition context of purely being an athlete in the sport. These comments reflect how the commentators perceive the male athletes and discuss not only racing performances of the athletes but also their personalities, challenging a masculine representation of Formula One drivers.

make you incredibly proud. I felt proud and I'm not even French.” (Pinkham, 2021)

time. In the process of reflecting on not only the emotions of Gasly, but also herself, she humanises the driver and showcases him as a ‘normal’ human being. Talking about the ‘sacrifice’ that his family made to get him into Formula One and his emotion of commitment to the sport.

Formula One drivers showing emotion

This aspect includes commentators’ comments about the 2021 Formula One drivers showing emotion off track. Off track emotions do not refer to the racing mentality of the drivers and in this context discussing ‘emotion’ goes against the hegemonic masculine ideal of male athletes needing to be tough, challenging a masculine representation of Formula One drivers.

“He wasn’t actually as grumpy as I thought he’d be. He is always quite emotional straight off the back of the race as you would expect any of them to be. But he was reflective is maybe the right word, it’s really difficult because you heard a lot more emotion in the car.” (Pinkham, 2021)

The quote by host Nathalie Pinkham shows her comments on the emotional state of Sir Lewis Hamilton after the Turkish Grand Prix. She reflects on how she perceives the driver ‘normally’, as he would normally be ‘emotional’ after a race ended but this time it is different and his emotion is more inside the car.

Personal life of Formula One drivers

This aspect includes commentators’ comments about the personal lives of Formula One drivers. Personal life relates to the drivers’ private life situation, such as family and relationships. But it also relates to the relationship between the 2021 drivers outside of the track. These comments reflect the male athletes in their private life, which is uncommon in commentary on male athletes, challenging a masculine representation of Formula One drivers.

“Daniel is the real family guy you know. He’s very close to his mum and dad, his sister, his niece, and nephew.” (Pinkham, 2021)

The quote by host Nathalie Pinkham shows her reflection of Daniel Ricciardo as a person outside of Formula One. She mentions specifically that Ricciardo is a ‘family man’. He loves his family. Considering that hegemonic masculine ideals do not usually talk about emotions, this goes against the masculine representation of male athletes.

Physical and mental fitness of Formula One drivers

This aspect includes commentators’ comments about the physical but mostly mental fitness of Formula One drivers. Comments about

“I think mentally they were quite drained, but physically perhaps not as challenged.” (Pinkham, 2021)

The quote by host Nathalie Pinkham shows her comments on the mental health and fitness of Formula One drivers after the Monaco Grand Prix. She comments that in her

physical attributes are considered a hegemonic masculine ideal, however talking about the mental health of male athletes is uncommon, challenging a masculine representation of Formula One drivers.

opinion the drivers were mentally challenged but physically were doing alright. Instead of focusing on only the physical attributes of the male athletes, she mentions the mental state of the drivers which is uncommon for the masculine representation of male athletes.

Involvement of media in their representation of Formula One drivers

This aspect includes commentators' comments about the relationship between the media and Formula One drivers. It refers how media influences the representation of the drivers to the public, which is considered uncommon for commentary on male athletes, challenging a masculine representation of Formula One.

“I think the new crew of drivers are much more adept at selling themselves and letting everyone know into what they're up to and what their hobbies are and stuff. I think this is through social media, completely changed the way drivers express themselves and live their lives and that appeals to young people.” (Hill, 2021)

The quote by host Damon Hill shows his comment and judgement of the younger generation 2021 Formula One drivers and their involvement with social media. He reflects how the considered 'new' drivers on the grid are challenged with the media nowadays. He explains how he views how they are expressing themselves as a driver and more importantly as a person on and outside the track.

Female representation in Formula One

This aspect includes commentators' comments about the female representation in Formula One. It refers to female drivers and workers in the sport. These comments discuss gender representation on the grid, challenging a masculine representation of Formula One.

“It is still 88% male in this sport which is bonkers really, when you think about it. But there is talent coming through and we have a responsibility to shine the light on that talent and to show young women that coming into Formula One in whatever capacity, not just driving, is a viable career option.” (Pinkham, 2021)

The quote by host Nathalie Pinkham shows what the state of female representation in Formula One is at the moment of the publication of the podcast episode. Pinkham comments on the 'obligation' of the media, such as the podcast itself, in representing a positive future for women in the sport.

The next chapter will conclude the study and answer the research question accordingly. It will also discuss implications and limitations to the study as well as suggestions for future research.

5. Conclusion

The study has set out a research question in order to learn about the use of discourses about masculinity to represent Formula One drivers in Formula One media. Formula One is an international sport which is considered as a male dominated sport in both its representation and participation of men in the sport. The study has considered a few previous studies done on the representation of male athletes in sports media in order to establish a clear conclusion to the analysis of this study. These previous studies were using either the socially constructed concept masculinity (Bryson, 1987; Adams et al., 2010; Hartmann-Tews, 2019) or were looking at discourses in texts (van Sterkenburg & Knoppers, 2004; Adams et al., 2010) to analyse how male and female athletes get represented in sports media. Other previous studies that were considered for this study also looked at the representation of gender within Formula One itself (Lumsden, 2010; Sturm, 2011; Matthews & Pike, 2016). This study wanted to add onto these studies with a different angle by looking specifically at the representation of male athletes in sports media through the use of the discourse analysis theory. The study chose not to analyse how female athletes get represented because previous studies have already covered this topic. Previous studies also left out a gap in future research for more analysis on the representation of male athletes which is what this study aims to fill (Adams et al., 2010; Hartmann-Tews, 2019). Moreover, previous studies have not extensively looked into the representation of male drivers in Formula One (Lumsden, 2010; Sturm, 2011; Matthews & Pike, 2016). Their main focus was on the representation of women in Formula One or the motorsport industry. This study has aimed to fill in this gap by looking at the use of discourse about masculinity to represent Formula One drivers. Specifically, this study has looked at post-race commentary of the podcast F1 Nation: a podcast founded and distributed by Formula One media in order to further promote the sport. The study has focused on the episodes that discussed the races of the 2021 Formula One season, as it was the most recent Formula One championship that has been held.

This study found three distinctive categories about the use of discourse in the podcast episodes of F1 Nation to represent the 2021 Formula One drivers. The categories that were found were: *maintaining discourse about masculinity*, *establishing discourse about masculinity*, and *challenging discourse about masculinity*. The first category, maintaining discourse about masculinity, refers to the aspects that lead to maintaining hegemonic masculine ideals in the representation of the Formula One drivers. Hegemonic masculine ideals, as understood in this study, are the characteristics that are typically ascribed to men.

These characteristics are regarded as the norms and values that men should follow in order to be seen as a 'real man' (Bryson, 1987; Connell, 1995). The aspects that led to the maintenance of a masculine representation of the drivers included a lot of references to these hegemonic masculine ideals. Referring to and including these ideals were found to be the most used form of representation that was used by the hosts of F1 Nation when they were referring to the Formula One drivers. Some examples of such ideals were toughness and aggressiveness (Adams et al., 2010; Schmidt, 2018) which were combined in the aspect of toughness. Toughness was the most found hegemonic masculine ideal that was used in this category but also across all three categories. A lot of discourse that included hegemonic masculine ideals were found to maintain the perspective that Formula One drivers should be tough, fearless, aggressive, and competitive (Sturm, 2011). Moreover, the ideals were used to indicate that the drivers should be seen in light of their performances and race craft as athletes. Using these ideals in the discourse surrounding the drivers was then found to neglect the fact that these drivers are also human beings. The use of the ideals to maintain the masculine representation would lead to a very specific masculine representation of a Formula One driver. The category has highlighted that primarily performances and knowledge about the industry was important to discuss in most of the podcast episodes. It therefore confirms the findings in previous studies that male athletes are being discussed by sports commentators according to their performances and are only seen as athletes that need to be tough (Bryson, 1987; Adams et al., 2010; Sturm, 2011; Hartmann-Tews, 2019).

Establishing discourse about masculinity refers to aspects that lead to the establishment of hegemonic masculine ideals in the representation of the Formula One drivers. The aspects that were most found in this category led to a (re)construction of the hegemonic masculine ideals. Competitiveness was the most found hegemonic masculine ideal that was used in this category. A big part of the findings in this category showed that the hosts of the podcast were mostly focused on industry related topics, like the competition in general. In doing so, the hosts frequently referred to past performances of the 2021 Formula One drivers or former Formula One drivers using the hegemonic masculine ideal of competitiveness of male athletes to reconstruct how the drivers should be driving (Bryson, 1987; Adams et al., 2010). Next to that, the perspective of prominent persons working in Formula One was included in this category as well. It meant that the podcast conveyed more insight into the mentality of the Formula One drivers themselves or people working in the sport. The comments that were found in this aspect also reconstructed hegemonic masculine ideals about competitiveness of male athletes as well (Bryson, 1987; Adams et al., 2010). By

(re)constructing the hegemonic masculine ideals to form this general representation of the drivers, the aspects would lead to the establishment of a masculine representation of the 2021 Formula One drivers.

The former two categories portrayed the drivers as pure athletes in the sport and were expected to be emotionless, tough, and fearless (Adams et al., 2010; Sturm, 2011). A representation that is still established and maintained if you look at the frequency of comments that were found that lead to that result. However, the results also showed that there is a slow changing dynamic in the masculine representation of the Formula One drivers and the sport. These significant findings were found to be challenging the masculine representation of Formula One drivers and it was too important to be left out. Even though it was far less frequently found compared to the other two categories. In the challenging discourse about masculinity category, the aspects that were found portrayed the Formula One drivers as both athletes and human beings in the sport. The hosts not only portrayed the drivers as just a tough, competitive, emotionless athlete, but they also discussed their emotions outside of the race car. Therefore representing the drivers as humans as well. In addition, the hosts also discussed the private lives of the drivers whilst this has been found in previous studies to be mainly the case for female athletes (Bryson, 1987; Hartmann-Tews, 2019). In addition, it was also found that the personal lives of Formula One drivers were also sometimes the subject of discussion in the episodes. This was also previously found to be only the case for female athletes (Bryson, 1987; Hartmann-Tews, 2019). Finally, the hosts were aware of the involvement of the media in the representation of the Formula One drivers, as well as the lack of female representation in the sport. Whilst both aspects were found less frequently talked about, they did get mentioned and it was therefore important to take note of it to show that at least the hosts of F1 Nation were aware of a lack of diversity in the representation of the drivers and Formula One.

The main research question was: *how is discourse about masculinity used to represent the 2021 Formula One drivers through the analysis of F1 Nation's post-race commentary on Formula One races?* This study has found a high usage of discourse about masculinity to represent the 2021 Formula One drivers. The comments made by the hosts of F1 Nation established and maintained a masculine representation of the Formula One drivers. The hosts made use of hegemonic masculine ideals, such as toughness, aggressiveness, and competitiveness to discuss the drivers and their performances in the races. They also used these ideals to describe a typical Formula One driver. It represented the drivers as purely athletes in the sport, instead of human beings in a sport. This

representation of Formula One drivers was highly reconstructed and asserted in the host's discourse about the drivers themselves and their performances in the 2021 races. However, it is also important to mention that masculine representations of Formula One drivers were being challenged to a significant degree but it was not frequently found enough to overrule the use of discourse about masculinity to represent these drivers.

5.1 Implications

The results of this study showed that there was a high frequency of masculine representation of Formula One drivers in the podcast F1 Nation through the use of discourse on masculinity. The podcast is part of the official media outlets of Formula One and is hosted by three prominent persons in the Formula One media world. Damon Hill is a former Formula One champion, Tom Clarkson is a Formula One reporter who also guides the press conferences for the drivers and team principals, and Nathalie Pinkham is one of the few female Formula One reporters. It was found that the hosts reconstruct and maintain the representation of Formula One drivers as competitive, fearless, and emotionless athletes in the sport. Because the masculine representation of Formula One drivers was largely maintained in the podcast episodes, the study could assume this representation of Formula One drivers was also reconstructed and asserted under the listeners of the podcast. The smallest signs of challenging this representation were overshadowed by the bulk of reconstruction and assertion of hegemonic masculine ideals in the discussion of the drivers themselves and their performances in the races. Therefore, the establishment of a masculine representation of male athletes in sports media still prevailed and has only continued through discourse about masculinity even though there was a slight change found in its dynamic. In the future studies on Formula One and the sport itself, the changing dynamic could and should be more referred to. The discussion of gender representation in the episode discussing the US Grand Prix was a prime example of why it is important that the sport and the representation of drivers in the media need to change for the better: to set a better example for women and the public that the sport is indeed inclusive. Especially when Formula One strives for a higher diversity in the sport. Perhaps another way to change the discourse on masculinity in the F1 Nation podcast should be a change in the way they choose to represent male athletes through their discussions of the races and the drivers. Rather than representing them as purely athletes in this sport or industry, they can be represented as athletes *and* humans who are not completely emotionless or tough.

5.2 Limitations

There were some limitations to the study. First of all, only one Formula One podcast was considered for the sample. This limited the results to a degree as there was no material to compare the results to, except the other episodes of the same podcast. It also limited the scope of the study and that could have resulted in a lack of accurate results for the representation of Formula One drivers in a broader sense. Next to that, the hosts of the podcast all have a British nationality. This could have limited the findings of the study to a more British perspective, however, this was not taken into consideration whilst analysing the data. The three hosts are also working for Formula One and it could consciously or unconsciously factor into some of the discussions and arguments made by the hosts. Especially the example that was given about the female representation in Formula One when Nathalie Pinkham said she did not think that the sport is sexist towards women (Pinkham, 2021). Pinkham works for the sport and therefore it could be questioned whether her judgement was completely unbiased. Another limitation to the study was the gender of the researcher herself. Because this study has been conducted by a female student, some of the codes in the contextual analysis could have been interpreted differently than other researchers would have. For example, male researchers could have coded the same text in a different way, looking at different things. Although the method and the researcher made sure the contextual analysis was conducted without bias, this could not be fully guaranteed.

5.3 Directions for future research

Future research could look into analysing and comparing another Formula One podcast. Preferably a podcast that is hosted by people that do not work for Formula One or have a podcast supported by the sport. It would then be interesting to look at the results of that analysis and compare that to the results of this study. Furthermore, future research could also focus on other media than podcasts. For example, the news articles on the site of Formula One itself. If future research is looking for an analysis of modern media platforms, YouTube and TikTok are social media platforms where a lot of content about Formula One gets uploaded. These are some examples of media outlets who could be considered for further analysis on the representation of Formula One drivers and the use of discourse on masculinity. Other studies could also focus on the actual commentary that happens during the race.

Another interesting dynamic to this study that could be looked into are other factors that can influence a masculine representation of Formula One drivers, such as nationalities

and race. The intersectionality of comments made by the podcast hosts or by commentators has not been considered but it could be an interesting angle to this study as it can influence the ideals that individuals construct and pass on in their conversations. Finally, future research could also make use of multiple researchers to study the topic. This would combat possible bias made in the analysis of data samples, but it would also make for an interesting angle to this study. For example, using a male and female researcher to code and analyse content. It will then be interesting to see if the same results will be found after the same analysis.

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Appendix A: Open and axial coding sheet

Code	Code Groups
● (race) performance	race performance
● achievements	success and achievements
● affirmation to oneself	toughness
● agresiveness	toughness
○ Alex Albon	drivers
● animal comparison	toughness
○ Antonio Giovinazzi	drivers
○ Carlos Sainz	drivers
○ Charles Leclerc	drivers
● comparison to other drivers	comparisons between drivers
● competition	competition
○ Daniel Ricciardo	drivers
○ drivers generally	drivers
● driver's perspective	commentators personal opinions
○ Esteban Ocon	drivers
● experience	success and achievements
● facing hardship	toughness
● family situation	relationships
● female representation	female representation
○ Fernando Alonso	drivers
● following the rules	competition
● form	driver's form
○ George Russell	drivers
● humanising the driver	commentators personal opinions
● judgement of character	commentators personal opinions
○ Kimi Räikkönen	drivers
● knowledge	commentators personal opinions
○ Lance Stroll	drivers
○ Lando Norris	drivers
○ Lewis Hamilton	drivers
● maturity	fitness racecraft driver's form
○ Max Verstappen	drivers
● media involvement	commentators personal opinions
● mentality	fitness racecraft
○ Mick Schumacher	drivers
● negative	commentators personal opinions
○ Nicholas Latifi	drivers
○ Nikita Mazepin	drivers
○ older generation drivers	success and achievements
● personal life	relationships
● personal opinion	commentators personal opinions
● physical fitness	fitness
○ Pierre Gasly	drivers
● positive	commentators personal opinions

- power
 - pressure
 - racecraft

 - redemption?

 - referring to old times
 - relationship between drivers
 - Sebastian Vettel
 - Sergio Pérez
 - showing emotion
 - success rate
 - sympathy
 - toughness
 - Valtteri Bottas
 - violence
 - younger generation drivers
 - Yuki Tsunoda
- toughness
 - toughness
 - racecraft
 - driver's form
 - success and achievements
 - driver's form
 - referring to the past
 - relationships
 - drivers
 - drivers
 - showing emotion
 - success and achievements
 - commentators personal opinions
 - toughness
 - drivers
 - toughness
 - success and achievements
 - drivers