THESIS

FRAMING DIVERSITY: ASSESSING CULTURAL REPRESENTATIONS WITHIN

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY'S OFFICE OF ADMISSIONS BROCHURES

Submitted by

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ABSTRACT

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This study assessed the visual diversity representations within information brochures targeted for potential freshmen and published by Colorado State University's (CSU) Office of Admissions. "The U Book" and "The Freshman's Guide" contain introductory information about CSU's application process and feature a number of photographs of CSU students engaged in various on-campus activities. This mixed methodological study assessed how the photographs in the brochures reflect and highlight CSU's official mission statement on diversity. This thesis used a simple nominal assessment of photographic representations of diversity to provide the foundation for a thematic and narrative analysis. The examination of the photographic images in these five brochures included an analysis of researcher-ascribed identities and diversity representations through Hall's (1997) floating signifiers as well as Fairclough's (1989) Critical Discourse Analysis. Ceccarelli's (1998) and Condit's (1989) work on polysemy and polyvalence were also applied to help pull out repetitive and relevant themes regarding diversity representations within the brochures. The nominal results found certain groups overrepresented (e.g., White, Asian, Black, mixed-race), underrepresented (e.g., Hispanic), or not included (e.g., Native American, Hawaiian, physically disabled). The three key themes that were found include the diverse community, the learning environment, and the active lifestyle.

Keywords: diversity representation, Critical Discourse Analysis, floating signifiers, narrative analysis, visual studies

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Chapter 1: Overview of the Study and Relevant Literature

Visual media, like photographs in a brochure, are a dominant force in the politics of identity and representation. In the United States' highly visual mass media environment, the contemporary use of representative images for advertising and other media communication is a constant and inescapable fact. The prevalence of advertising images makes the critical study of visual representations extremely important, particularly in the representation of diversity. The demographic variables found in diversity, most visibly through race and gender, are culturally and socially constructed into categories that shape who individuals are and how they fit into a given culture. The application of cultural identity through visual representation exists because the contemporary social perceptions of identity and place are shaped by visual culture (Ciochinã, 2013). Identities are also constructed for other individuals and groups through society's relationships to visual media (Ciochinã, 2013). Visual and often stereotypical representations of diversity are used in advertising, forming frameworks and semiotic understandings that affect how photographed depictions of individuals or groups are perceived through visual representations (Eisend, Plagemann, & Sollwedel, 2014; James, 2014).

The commercial use of visual media is not limited to for-profit, business advertising. Traditional business entities advertise to attract potential customers in order to sell a product or service. Universities and colleges must also advertise to attract potential student customers, and "sell" their educational services. Educational marketing programs often include advertising brochures and flyers that target potential students. Such academic advertising typically features photographs of the students and campuses to showcase individual schools, while the written text explains the options open to students who do attend. Colorado State University (CSU) is no exception, and its Office of Admissions has a specific marketing brochure designed to provide

application information and a first-look introduction to the campus. "The U Book" (UB) and its newest incarnation "The Freshman's Guide" (FG) function both as a guide for the application process as well as a first-look glimpse of campus and its culture.

Because of the emphasis CSU's diversity mission statement places on providing a welcoming environment to a diverse range of students, it is important to know if the advertising materials are representing the same environment. While there is no way to construct a document that is impervious to negative readings, potential readings can be directed towards more positive views by changing components of the representation. The following mixed methodological study is intended to help determine what and how diversity is being visually represented, in order to see what changes may help increase the potential audience of CSU's marketing program.

As a first point of contact many students have with CSU, the UB and the FG brochures can influence how a consuming public sees CSU as a whole. Because of the potential for influence, the quality and potential interpretation of the photographic images of diversity represented in the brochures are possibly more important than in other forms of advertising. CSU's diversity mission, from the website of the Office of the Vice President of Diversity, states that "Colorado State University will continue to shape and maintain a campus climate designed to welcome, encourage, and embrace differences so all community members are welcomed, valued, and affirmed" (Diversity Mission, 2014, para. 1). CSU's Strategic Plan (2006-2014) states the following under "Goal 36: Students":

> We will recruit, retain and graduate a student body in keeping with the land-grant mission of the university to provide access and opportunity to individuals from all segments of society and will create an effective learning environment that benefits all members of the campus community. We will do so by enhancing the pipeline through outreach and recruitment activities, and by developing responsive, sensitive strategies toward curricular and co-curricular advising with particular attention to the cultural and identity-related needs of students. (Strategic Directions, 2014, p. 28)

A more specific classification of CSU's diversity mission is its dedication to improving cultural diversity of each new freshman class at a land-grant university. The principal question to be asked is: How well do the UB and the FG communicate the importance of diversity as documents of first contact with potential students? The question of the success of the UB and the FG becomes more important when considering that there is no direct reference to the diversity mission in the five brochures. Instead, the brochures explain the application process, along with some preliminary information for financial aid, housing and degree program options. In the attempt to examine the question of these brochures' ability to represent the diversity mission of CSU over time without the aid of the diversity statement, this study analyzed and assessed the 2010-2014 publications of these brochures.

Each of the following chapters addresses a different portion of the project. This first chapter covers the main literature review and the formation of the research questions and hypotheses. Chapter 2 examines the methods of the study, from the theories that helped inform and establish guidelines and a framework of the mixed methodological research to the specific procedures of the study. Chapter 3 specifically examines a nominal assessment of the represented figures found within the photographs, while Chapter 4 focuses on a thematic analysis of the photographs. Chapter 5 addresses how the study helped support or challenge the theories and studies from previous research of the literature review presented here in Chapter 1. The last chapter, Chapter 6, summarizes the project as a whole, while addressing limitations and future applications of this study. The current chapter first examines the UB's and the FG's composition, content and rhetorical function. Once the five university brochures are introduced, relevant theories and previous studies covering narrative analyses as well as representation and

its influence on stereotypes and materialism are reviewed. These studies and theories inform the research questions and hypotheses that assess how and what diversity is being represented.

The Texts

As a first-look brochure, the five texts have acted as representations of what students can expect on campus once they are admitted. While the Office of Admissions only keeps a record of the last few years of the publication on file, this study has been able to focus on the last five versions of this brochure. This includes the last four editions of the UB, along with the latest version of the brochure, the FG. The UB brochures that cover the 2010-2013 application periods include details on the freshman application process, along with application materials and admission requirements for those academic years. The FG follows the same protocol for the 2014-15 academic year. The brochures provide an initial view of what the campus is like, what program and academic options are available, as well as preliminary information on financial aid and housing options at CSU. Both the UB and now the FG were available at the main Office of Admissions to prospective students who visit the campus in person. The nominal assessment of the photographed individuals, and their diversity representations, focus on comparing the results of each document's publication year to the actual demographics of the student body for that same year. The comparison between actual and represented diversity numbers are made possible through the CSU 2010-2014 Fall *Census Date Enrollment* reports for each of the four years of the UB and the most recent year of the FG. The use of fall semester enrollment is to best match the diversity of the campus at the time of the brochures' release. Because the brochures are published in August to inform potential applicants for the freshman student deadlines starting in November, the fall demographics are the most relevant numbers to compare against the brochures' representations.

The data gathered for this study focused primarily on visual photographic representations, that is, the photos of identifiable students used within the brochures. The nominal assessment of the photographed people excluded individuals in the photos who are in the background by position, level of focus or clarity of identifiable features, or otherwise cannot be accurately ascribed to any of the coding categories used in this thesis. Images of unidentifiable students (e.g., images that have been artistically re-colored to the point where they hide markers used for categorizing individuals represented) were not included in the total number of photographs, nor were they counted as part of the figures that were categorized in each brochure. Written text that offered supplemental information to the photos are considered as discourse related to the diversity at CSU or the themes found within the brochures. Other textual information, such as steps for applying, are not considered in the analysis of diversity representation in these brochures, but rather noted as general and technical information. An example of text that was included in the thematic and narrative analyses was any quotation from a student that provides voiced contributions of diversity on campus to read along with the photographic representation. To understand the way these representations function, this chapter focuses on previous research that uses and assesses representations. Access to the UB and the FG documents was provided and authorized by previous supervisors from the CSU Office of Admissions. CSU's Institutional Research was also used as a source of information, providing the student enrollment brochures that provide the comparison information available (Student Enrollment Books, 2015). To continue working with CSU's statistics, the study follows CSU's own constructions of diversity. In order to do this, it is necessary to use CSU's missions and statements in regard to its diversity and categorization of its students.

CSU's mission statement regarding diversity was used as the metric by which to judge the effectiveness of these brochures as tools for CSU's outreach. As a land-grant university, CSU is dedicated to expanding and supporting diversity in an effort to support its function as a diverse community (Diversity Mission, 2014, para. 1). CSU's Diversity website provides a detailed overview of the university's diversity mission in order to define CSU's use of the term "diversity" and the implications of its use by the institution itself. The overview reads:

> Colorado State University is committed to enhancing its diversity through the inclusion of individuals reflective of characteristics such as: age, culture, different ideas and perspectives, disability, ethnicity, first generation status, familial status, gender identity and expression, geographic background, marital status, national origin, race, religious and spiritual beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and veteran status. The University's commitment to diversity is a longstanding one that reflects the essential functions of a diverse community, spanning international boundaries, plays in the furtherance of its role and mission as a land-grant institution. (Diversity Mission, 2014, para. 1)

In order to consistently categorize student representations within the UB and the FG, CSU's diversity mission statement and overview has been used as classification tools to define parameters of this study's assessment of photographic representations of diversity in the five brochures. Another guide to the classification of identities is the fact that CSU's enrollment statistics focus on social constructions of race and socially constructed genders (e.g., male and female), rather than a more specific identity (Student Enrollment Books, 2015). For the purposes of this study, visible race and gender are considered for the ascribing of identity, rather than attempting to guess what a student's self-identified ethnicity or alternative sexual identity may be.

Additionally, each edition of these brochures is compared to the actual demographic information for each corresponding year as published by CSU in the *Census Date Enrollment,* an annual institutional research publication that provides statistical information about the CSU

community for each semester. These specific statistics for each year are compared to the

assessment of representation in the UB and the FG to see what percentages of diverse student

bodies are visually represented.

Purpose of Study

One purpose for this mixed methodological study was to ascertain what is academically

referred to as the "moral" representation of CSU's actual diversity in the UB and the FG. Wood

and Cox (1993) argue for justification not only in how subjects are defined, but how the

researchers position themselves to their subjects within a study (p. 152). One example of morals

being applied to a text is in an accurate representation of an organization or university. When

comparing represented diversity to fact-based demographics, there is a risk of showing either an

idealized construction of life on campus (i.e., overrepresentation), or an overly homogenous

population (i.e., underrepresentation). Neither of these types of representation accurately

represents the students who do attend the university. The question of truthful representation

classifies the study of these brochures as worthy according to Wood and Cox's (1993)

justification. Since brochures like the UB and the FG may be the first line of contact that many

high school students encounter when they start looking for their future college, the brochure

serves as one potential influencing factor in the student's choice of where to apply. As a result,

these brochures are potentially influential texts in the student's decision making-process.

Although the scope of this mixed methodological study of media and textual representation did

not assess for audience response, the UB and the FG exist as an important consideration for any

prospective student in how the student potentially perceives the student body as well as the

potential to fit in – a perception created, for example, by looking at the individuals being

represented within the brochure.

For the purposes of this study, the concept of "identity" is set within the confines of what can be visually assessed. Because there is no interaction with the photographed individuals, nor any additional levels of information beyond what exists within the brochures themselves, these identities must be ascribed. As a result of the printed format of the brochures, the identifications are focused on visual cues, limiting what can be identified. Hall (1996) constructs identity as being part of a common origin or sharing a characteristic with another person, group or ideal (p. 16). In this construction, the "concept of identity … is therefore not an essentialist, but a strategic and positional [concept]" (Hall, 1996, p. 17). The identities that are ascribed to the represented individuals focus on identifying elements that show a perceived common origin with others from that self-identified group.

Considering the possible variables of cultural impressions, what constitutes diversity can vary. A clearer understanding of how diversity is being represented visually and the possible ways of improving that representation can provide universities such as CSU the opportunity to attract more students than they might otherwise. This mixed methodological study analyzes different messages and types of interpretations available to consumers through several theoretical lenses. The analysis begins with a nominal assessment of the individuals represented in the photographs in all five brochures, as well as how many photographs there are overall to determine the actual numbers of representation. Again, although the study was not designed to assess student or audience use and perceptions of the brochures through engaging these audiences, the UB and the FG are assessed and interpreted from the role of the textual and rhetorical critic and from a multiplicity of interpretive readings to include as many alternative views as possible.

The use of interpretive readings to assess alternative interpretations of a single text allows a more critical perspective to be considered, but one that also has its faults. Black (1980) argues that criticism should be as interested in the critics themselves as the texts being assessed. Criticism is a psychological process, so there needs to be as much emphasis on the critic as the text being critiqued (Black, 1980). Critics are trained to consider views that may differ or contrast with their own arguments of a topic. The potential for researcher's bias in the cataloging and analysis for the current study is addressed in the thesis. In order to address the issue of researcher bias, multiple perspectives were considered in the analysis. While being careful about a critic's position, Black also argues in favor of a critic's training to appreciate and thus evaluate the alternative readings to be found. The alternative ways of looking at a text considers more carefully *how* individuals talk about something, not just what they talk about. For this thesis project, the *how* that Black refers to is the ways diversity is visually represented in the UB and FG.

There have been many studies that consider narratives and representation in their methods, analyzing how organizations like universities present their diversity for consumption by their public. The following literature review addresses several of these studies of diversity representation specifically within narratives. With this review, it was possible to construct research questions that can use existing knowledge to consider additional concerns in visual representation and narratives.

Literature Review

To understand what sort of narratives and themes can be found within the UB and the FG, it is important to understand what narratives and themes have been found in previous studies on academic and advertising materials that use visual diversity representations. Through

providing the background on narratives and diversity representation, this literature review

considers studies that emphasize a narrative analysis of diversity representation. The review also

includes studies of cultural representations to explore the potential implications of the use of

representations and their possible material consequences. These studies are intended to provide a

framework for the mixed methodological study of this thesis project to assess the representations

of cultural diversity in the brochures and suggest areas of research to guide the direction of the

study itself. Addressing these areas of study in a deductive manner, this review first considers the

narrative theories applied to previous studies. The studies of representation are broken into two

main areas: representational studies overall, and the specific applications of stereotypical

representations. Wood and Cox's (1993) work on materiality and morals in representation and

application in studies are also assessed. The first step explores how a story or narrative is created

within a given text.

   Narrative studies. Willig (2008) argues that the use of narrative analysis not only

identifies and labels the narratives that characterize a given text, but also introduces a structure

into the analysis itself. Andrews, Squire and Tamboukou (2008) edited a collection of reviews

for the use of narrative analysis, which states that most researchers usually pull narratives and

"categorize each clause according to elements of [the model in use], and then present a 'core

narrative'" within the text being analyzed (p. 27). The use of narrative in characterizing a text

comes from the link between stories and human society, guiding how people are held

accountable for personal as well as cultural narratives that are crucial to an individual's standing

as an identifiable member of human society (Andrews, Squire & Tamboukou, 2008). Andrews

et al. go on to explain that key themes, or stories of events, are a central component of narrative

research. According to CSU's diversity mission statement, the university furthers its traditional

role and mission as a land-grant institution by creating a "diverse community" that spans

"international boundaries" to continue CSU's historical narrative (Diversity, 2014, para. 1).

CSU's purpose in enhancing its diversity is based upon collecting other narratives, from different

geographic and cultural backgrounds and beliefs in order to expand its own narrative (Diversity,

2014). Similarly, Andrews et al.'s definition of narratives is not limited to the oral or written

delivery typically associated with storytelling:

> Some paintings and photographs tell stories, although not with clear beginnings or
> endings. An image depicts a moment, inviting us to speculate about what will
> happen next, or what transpired to bring the scene about. But some artists
> produce sequences of images to draw us into events and lives unfolding in
> particular times and places (Andrews et al., 2008, p. 152).

These visual forms of narrative can also be defined as semiotic representations of a series

of events that are meaningfully connected in a causal manner (Andrews et al., 2008). This

semiotic representation comes from the meaning given to and taken from signs, such as visual

identification markers. As Andrews et al. explain above, the link between visual rhetoric and

communicating information is often assessed in studies of visual advertising programs. Given

the phrase that a single photograph is worth a thousand words, the individuals within the

photographed setting have the ability to present a narrative. Visual rhetoric functions as a form of

discourse, and can be seen in the composition of a photograph (Engbers, 2013). A recent

example of visual discourse is the 2011 protest at the University of California campus in Davis,

where the photograph of students being pepper sprayed by police was translated into more

negative narratives than was officially stated by the officers themselves (Peck, 2014). The

contrast between the seated students and the standing police has been read as a narrative of the

unjust actions of the officers. The application of this narrative was extended on the Internet

through Photoshopping into a critical retelling of the event, showing the same officer pepper

spraying a variety of increasingly ridiculous figures (Peck, 2014). The rhetorical power of narratives enables the framing of an event. The use of visual media in conveying a narrative about a company or an individual is commonplace in the U.S. mass media, lending both ethos and pathos to the power of visual discourse (Watts, 2014). The constructed meanings in a mediated text may still lend themselves to alternative and conflicting readings, as noted in the 2011 protest (Peck, 2014).

Terms such as "diversity" have many connotations that can contradict one another. Some of these can potentially silence minority groups through a lack of accurate, ethnically diverse visual representation. Wander (1984) proposes a framework to include these minority "voices" by creating the third persona, changing the focus from the intended audience (first persona) and auditors (second persona) to often excluded minority groups. An image that shows multiracial individuals engaging with one another, for example, may seem to promote diversity. Alternatively, it may show signs of tokenism and objectification of race. Wander explains that the marginalized groups that are silenced through the first and second personas are most often minority groups, those who are often denied basic rights due to social factors that include race and gender. Through the third persona theory, minority groups are not the intended audience for most media, which focus on the first and second personas. Wander argues that in order to "be progressive, change must progress toward something" (p. 205). One way that representations can be used to address minority groups' concerns is to change how they are portrayed in visual media discourses. The use of stereotypes in advertising clearly marks minority groups as outsiders to the main text. Changing the way these minority groups are represented opens the floor to include them in the public discussion.

More specifically, Roberts (2004) considers how minority voices are silenced through the use of specific types of narratives. She explores how the preservation of a minority culture's narratives and stories can silence them by distinguishing them as separate and different to the dominant culture. The distinction between the dominant and subordinated minority cultures is one form of tokenism through the objectification of a culture's narratives. The tie of cultural studies into narrative studies can be described as an "increasingly significant metaphor" given its potential to assist in ethical decision-making (Roberts, 2004, p. 129). For the current study, the ethical component comes into play most strongly when considering how diversity is represented through the visible people in the photographs of the UB and the FG. What sort of story can be read from their representation? The most common example of unethical representation is tokenism, which showcases what the dominant society deems proper diversity. Fisher's (1984, 1985) work on the Narrative Paradigm explores how culture is made through the use of a common narrative along with personal stories and backgrounds that shape and form identities with in-group members, and against out-group members. The distinction between an individual's own group in contrast to other groups creates a narrative of inclusion and exclusion. Narratives of exclusion can range from stereotypes to tokenism, representations that stem from the idea of exclusion. To create the in- and out-group dynamics, narratives can use either accurate representations or alienating types of representations in their visual discourses. The uses and applications of representations extend beyond their use in narratives, as is explained in the next area of this literature review.

Representation. With the risk of tokenism come complications in representations. One way to look at representation with a critical eye is to consider how individuals categorize themselves. Turner (1987) defines his Self-Categorization Theory as the creation of "the social

self-concept," which is "based on comparison with other people and relevant to social interaction" that leads to in-groups and out-groups (pp. 126, 45). Through the creation and maintenance of identity, "a social categorization may be defined as a cognitive representation of a social division into groups" (Turner, 1987, p. 27). The importance of the distinction between members of a group and the Otherness of an outside individual or group is that self-categorization is achieved through categorizing and comparing the self to others (Turner, 1987). Turner argues that "category formation [categorization] depends upon the comparison of stimuli" in order to sort and organize identities within or outside a specific group (p. 46). The organization of identities in visual discourse can be modified by the editing of photos, from cropping to readjusting the framing in the creative application of images in a document (Peracchio & Meyers-Levy, 1994; Edwards, 2012). The level of differences to the reader's identity that are used in representations are likely to impact how the text is read as much as the use of the representations themselves.

One example of the Self Categorization Theory in action can be found in Singh and Point's (2006) study of diversity statements from 241 European corporate websites. Their results found that ethnic and gender diversity were often combined in visual representations to "show evidence of their corporate social responsibility" (p. 376). Only 174 of the 241 websites made any reference towards diversity at all. Of these references, 48% mentioned gender and 37% ethnicity (Singh & Point, 2006). Only 9% of the 241 websites actually provided statistics for female staff in managerial positions, while only 3% showed ethnic minority members in managerial positions (Singh & Point, 2006). One way the companies seemed to get around presenting more specific references to diversity was through the use of pictographic symbols, such as trophies and awards that indicated "that not only is the employer open to diversity in

terms of … responsibility, but also that [the employer] is proud to be associated with such diversity" (Singh & Point, 2006, p. 274). Given that a diversity statement's references to concepts such as gender and race can function as strategic resources for a company, it is obvious why they would be used, even if the organization is possibly misrepresenting its actual diversity (Singh & Point, 2006). As the UB and the FG function as advertising brochures that use diversity representations as part of their visual rhetoric, many of the same concerns of diversity representations from the company websites can be applied to the five brochures. In order to address a range of audiences, such as specific types of students, the application of strategies in a marketing program is as diverse as the types of strategies themselves.

Kim and Kang (2001) focus on the strategies that are used specifically to advertise to various ethnic groups rather than a general audience. What they found was that these focused advertising strategies only succeeded with the intended audience, as advertising specialized to one group tended to repel other groups (Kim & Kang, 2001). The findings from Kim and Kang's study can also be applied to a professional organization's website. In a content analysis of 163 institutional websites, Boyer, Brunner, Charles, and Coleman (2006) were able to determine the percentage of references made towards diversity (both gender and ethnic) and disabilities within the student body of the institution. In all, 91% (n=149) of the sites include at least one image of a woman and 65% (n=106) include "at least one image of a racial or ethnic minority," yet "none of the 163 sites [included] images of the physically disabled" (Boyer, Brunner, Charles, & Coleman, 2006, pp. 144-145). These results seem to showcase the strategic use of a specific discourse to engage a particular audience that they visually represent, instead of creating an all-encompassing narrative. Without more detailed results from Boyer et al.'s study, it is impossible to determine what alternative readings may be present within these websites as

the categorization requirements are structured as simply showing at least one image or textual reference. Despite this limitation, Boyer et al.'s article argues that institutions that confine their visual definition of representation of a more diverse student body "may be missing opportunities to communicate with prospective students" who may not meet the components of the stereotypical college freshman (p. 146). By representing a specific type of student, the websites studied by Boyer et al. are in essence advertising for that type of student. If universities like CSU want to advertise to as many potential students as possible, the advertising itself needs to speak to that goal while also being reflective of the issues of tokenism noted previously. The purpose of this study is to determine what the representation looks like in the brochures and if the UB and the FG achieve fidelity with the diversity goals of CSU. In future studies, this concept can be expanded to include more information. To keep the current project focused, only the UB and the FG brochures are analyzed. The potential for future applications are considered in the final and sixth chapter of this thesis.

Another factor to consider is that the intended audience of CSU's the UB and the FG is specifically freshman students. With applicant types ranging from freshman and transfer students to nontraditional adult and veteran students, the Office of Admissions has developed different brochures to appeal to each type of student. The selection of a single document from one office to review diversity representations over the course of five years limits the scope of the study to other offices that may use visual diversity representations as well. I address this concern and its subsequent limitations in the final and sixth chapter. With a focus on the intended audience, Kim and Kang's (2001) concerns of successfully creating a message for the intended freshman student audience can be applied to the UB and the FG. The question becomes, specifically, what visual representations of diversity and materiality exists within the brochures?

CSU attempts to address the various ways students can be included in the diversity of the campus community, including diversity in race and gender identity (Diversity, 2014). However, these definitions of diversity can often lend themselves in such diversity statements to tokenism, an association that can affect how students relate to specific terms such as diversity and race. Halualani, Fassett, Morrison, and Dodge (2006) conducted a study to ask university students how they defined diversity. The students initially defined race under a "raceless" category, where race is equalized into one non-White group, creating a two-party categorization pattern. The problem with the raceless category is that it defines diversity as "the 'great' equalizer," generalizing out the racial and ethnic differences in comparison to the White racial identity (Halualani, Fassett, Morrison, & Dodge, 2006, pp. 79, 72). Just as Turner (1987) argues that categorizing the self is based on comparisons and relations to others, Halualani et al. argue that "individuals experience and live out the structural formations of diversity and race in often unpredictable and contradictory ways" (pp. 89, 90). These alternative meanings to the word "diversity" reinforced the importance of using an existing set of descriptions from CSU to conduct this thesis study. The distinction in the meaning of the word "diversity" is made clear when Halualani et al. offered an alternative definition of diversity that was positive to the students they were interviewing. Once the students understood that there was a multi-faceted, alternative definition, they changed their responses from the more pessimistic "raceless" construction to a more optimistic perspective. The initial, negative definition of diversity that the students came up with may have been influenced by visual media representations of minorities who conform to the "raceless" identification in stereotypical fashions.

Stereotypes as representations. The use of stereotypes is often found in media as a way to represent diversity without taking the focus or culture away from the White majority. The

"raceless" construction by Halualani et al. (2006) creates the form of Otherness to White by functioning as an all-encompassing diversity, and in turn can support the development of stereotypes. These stereotypical representations can have far-reaching consequences even beyond the media that utilizes them. Using Turner's (1987) Self Categorization Theory, Mastro and Kopacz (2006) conducted a survey to study "the extent to which representations of racial and ethnic minorities accommodate viewers' in-group norms, rather than the valence of the stereotypical depiction, that influences real-world stereotyping and ultimately policy positions" (p. 306). More specifically, Mastro and Kopacz (2006) focused on the "extent to which portrayals of race and ethnicity deviate from the White prototype [stereotype]" in order to see if it was a better predictor of responses to those portrayals in the media (p. 310). The process of organizing individuals into groups, either into one's own or into an "Other" category, are reliant upon creating "sets of characteristics considered emblematic of the category" (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006, p. 309). These "prototypes" and emblems both form and support stereotypes by being descriptive as well as prescriptive, dictating "perceptions, attitudes, emotions, and behaviors" (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006, p. 309). The play between what to expect from the Other and how to interact with that Other comes from evaluations and ascribed identities. The "more similar an in-group or out-group target is to the relevant characteristic of the perceiver's in-group," and "the greater the accommodation of White social identity, the more favorable the evaluation" (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006, p. 309). Mastro and Kopacz's study found support for "existing research linking media consumption with racial judgments and policy preferences," in that the prototypicality of stereotypes were better predictors of future race-based policies than were evaluations of people from non-media sources (pp. 317-8). If policies can be affected by racial judgments, then the selection of images to use in academic advertising brochures like the UB and

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the FG are also likely to be affected. This study attempted to determine if the diversity representations in the five brochures reflect the actual student body, or if the diversity representations construct an alternative representation of what the student body looked like for that specific academic year (i.e., over-estimating the diversity of the student body, or under-estimating it).

Another example of the use of the "raceless" diversity in an academic setting can be found in Urciuoli's (2009) study of how the term diversity has "become institutionally entrenched" (p. 21). The raceless component is used when diversity is conceptualized as the difference between the stereotypical White male figure and Otherness in academia, because "*black*, *Asian*, and *Latino* are marked with respect to *white*, that these classifications correlate with *culture* such that *diverse* individuals possess *culture* in some inherent way, [and] that individuals embodying these classifications can be counted in some meaningful way" (Urciuoli, 2009, p. 21, italics original). Using Agha's (2007) concept of enregisterments as distinct forms of speech that are socially recognized, or enregistered, to categorize and analyze the use of the term "diversity," Urciuoli studies three pages of a liberal art college's website to determine their registers of culture. These enregisterments, or language formations, are all cultural models of action, created through sociohistorical processes by linking features of conduct to stereotypical effects (Agha, 2007; Urciuoli, 2009). Urciuoli's results showed two strong semiotic aspects in the promotional discourse. There was an emphasis of association through feeling and imagery, while the use of diverse organizations in the promotional discourse was linked to increased productivity (Urciuoli, 2009). These two associations suggest that there is "a general condition made up of objectified … elements of difference in background and ways of thinking" (Urciuoli, 2009, p. 23). Through these associations of objectified thinking, the "enactments of culture

showcased in college advertising are disconnected from structural inequalities and reduced to pieces in a mosaic of cultural and symbolic capital provided by the organization" (Urciuoli, 2009, p. 36). These enactments of culture can be represented through the behaviors that are visually represented in the photographs in the brochures themselves. The application of diversity definitions – the diversity of difference compared to the raceless non-White diversity – can change the use of diversity in visual representations.

The focus on diversity's usefulness can be linked to previously discussed studies of the media's use of representation, particularly in its use of Otherness in contrast to the dominant White group. The rationale for the emphasis on applicability can be explained in part by the use of media in advertising for specific purposes. Most commonly, the purpose of advertising is to sell a product. In the case of the UB and the FG, the product being sold is the specific experience to be had while earning a degree at CSU. The culture of the university is showcased in the visual images and diversity representations, as enacted by the individuals used to represent the student body. The represented students' responses to the stimuli in their surroundings in the photographs, from open spaces of the campus to equipment in the classroom, can bring attention to the emotional response the viewer has with the representation. The use of diversity representation as a means for creating an emotional response may be influential to a student's choice of where to apply, which in turn may lead to a material result of spending money in tuition and fees. As stated before, the potential responses assessed in this study refer to the alternative rhetorical readings that were performed from my position as the researcher, rather than assessing responses from actual students.

Materiality. The "successful" reading of a university's promotional discourse naturally has a very material impact. Cloud (1994) explains the relationship between materiality and

discourse in that material conditions give rise to a specific discourse. In turn the discourse enables the material conditions, so in essence discourse and materiality create one another. Materiality may also influence the choice of images used to represent the student body at the university. If a component of competitiveness is the representation of advanced programs and technology, then there is a material end to a student's application in order to access that product. The discourse in this case could offer a positive material response to a student's application. Are the students shown wearing the university's colors? Walking across campus between classes with their books? Working with technical equipment? All of these material concepts affect how the visual discourse in the UB and the FG functions as advertising materials. The potential for materiality and discourse to shape one another need guidelines in which to function, and so limit what can be studied to help define the materiality and discourse within a studied text. Wood and Cox (1993) argue for the limitation on what should be considered a text worthy of study, emphasizing that there is a moral obligation to the selection. Rather than becoming "too enamored of conceptual structures," Wood and Cox state that the critic's role is to explore the possible alternative readings within a text to see what their material and discourse implications may be (p. 151). This obligation, Wood and Cox argue, is as moral as it is important.

Morals. One reason for the moral concern in the use of language and representation is to consider marketing as either accurate or disproportionate in its representations of people (Winkler, 2011). Weber's (2008) example of a moral problem in discourse is the *Students for Academic Freedom* initiative, an organized resistance to the increasing academic freedom policies and diversity-focused programs in universities. The *Students for Academic Freedom* initiative rhetorically reconstructs the discursive purpose of programs focusing on gender and ethnic studies as indoctrinating, even forcing students to live with a specific mindset (Weber,

2008). The way that the *Students for Academic Freedom* initiative's argument works is altering the rhetorical construction of diversity in the university itself (Weber, 2008). Through a new discourse on how the words "ethnicity" and "diversity" function, the *Students for Academic Freedom* initiative present themselves as caring for the students' academic freedom by constructing an identity aligned with the students and their values. Weber argues that the only way to fight these negative types of discourse is to create a counter-discourse. Only through reclaiming ethnicity and diversity as positive concepts can the damage done by the initiative be corrected. The potential consequences of the *Students for Academic Freedom* initiative meet Wood and Cox's (1993) standards for a text that is worthy of study.

One way to determine if a text is worthy of study is to consider the value of the text's relationships, either already present or visually represented by the rhetorical discourse being studied. If the photos in the UB and the FG address not just students, but teachers as well, then the diversity representation would include more than a peer-based relationship. Represented relationships between people have their own material impact by showing instructors engaging with students, possibly interacting with classroom materials such as computers or lab equipment. The material impact comes from what is perceived by these visual representations, both in the type of working relationship and in the possible diversity represented in the instructor as well. Pitts (2007) found that people tend to work more willingly with those who had a perceived similar background or history. Additionally, Pitts argued that students might be more inclined to see a teacher as a role model if the teacher had a perceived similar heritage to the student. A professor of the same presumed race, for example, may be seen as more relatable to students who identify with that racial group, and so more approachable. Pitts found that the perception of diversity was also a factor in performance quality, partly through levels of interaction and

exposure to a higher-ranking figure in a relationship. Through his study, Pitts also found that by "including greater numbers of ethnic minorities among an organization's personnel [the institution] will result in greater competitiveness in the market" (pp. 497-8). In the case of the current study, the market would be a student applying and enrolling in a given university.

The potential for visual representations to function as a type of competitive edge against other organizations makes their use all the more important to analyze. When considering the function of the UB and the FG, their use of visual representations can directly influence how CSU is perceived. This perception can change depending on how other institutions represent their own student bodies and visual diversity. A brochure that attempts to address a wider range of students is more likely to be identifiable and appealing to that wider range of students. The result of Pitts' study considers the idea that the importance in the use of diversity representation discourse is not limited to images of only students. What these perceptions of similarities versus differences also suggest is that the use of diversity in visual representations may have a greater impact than anticipated.

By far the most important material consequence Pitts looked at is the level of representation within the faculty of an institution. If the school "teaches to the 'norm' (White students)," the representation may lead to the conclusion that students meeting this identity are the school's priority even if the school is dedicated to diversity (Pitts, 2007, p. 519, parentheses original). The perception of what type of students are the priorities of a specific school may arise from the level of represented diversity within brochures such as the UB and the FG. Misrepresentation, either in over-emphasizing or under-emphasizing the level of diversity to actually be found in the student body, can bring negative material consequences along with a question of ethics for using such a strategy.

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Summary of literature review. The preceding literature review explored applications and constructions of narrative analysis and representations such as stereotypes, as well as potential material and moral consequences of the application of stereotypes. Additionally, the review addressed the potential of narrative analysis and diversity representations to visual media discourse. These studies and review informed the following research questions and hypotheses. Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 report the results to see if the research questions are supported, and if the hypotheses are either confirmed or disconfirmed.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

As noted in the review of previous work dealing with researching representations, other studies focused on academic texts such as websites have been studied as a whole rather than a single document. The current study focuses on the chronological changes in visual discourse in five incarnations of a single document, which address questions of diversity representation over the course of time. To do this, each half of the study examines its own research question and hypothesis within each respective chapter. In this chapter, this section addresses the research questions before the hypotheses. The first research question focuses on the first stage of the study, to run a nominal assessment of the represented individuals and diversities.

> RQ1: What is the difference between the numerical tally of representations of minority-identity students in the UB and the FG for the 2010-2014 enrollment statistics and the actual demographics of the student body at the time of each brochure's publication?

Because the assessment of the five documents is a two-step process that first categorizes the brochures' number of visual representations (Chapter 3) before applying the thematic analysis (Chapter 4), the following research question focuses on what type of diversity was the most visible.

RQ2: What is the emphasized type of diversity that is being represented in the UB and the FG? Gender? Disabled students? Alternative heritages to U.S. American identities (e.g., international student representation)? What absences of types of diversity representations are there in contrast to what is noted in CSU's own diversity mission statement?

While examining the results in support of the previous research questions, the following hypotheses focus on the level to which diversity is represented. Considering previous research in the visual representation of diversity that addresses "raceless" diversity (Halualani et al., 2006; Urciuoli, 2009), the first hypothesis addresses the results of the nominal tally of representations, specifically.

H1: There is a significant variance between the demographics of the actual student body compared to the level of apparent representation within the UB and the FG. This variance will show a higher percentage of constructed White male student representation in contrast to other types of students.

Based on the literature of the first and second personas in comparison to the third persona in addressing the intended audience (Wander, 1984; Roberts, 2004), the following hypothesis focuses on addressing questions raised by the use and types of diversity that CSU lists in its diversity mission statement compared to what it emphasizes in the brochures. The response to the following hypothesis was assessed through the discussion analyzing the themes and narratives that were pulled from the numeric analysis of the photographic representations of diversity within the UB and the FG brochures.

H2: The representational depictions in the UB and the FG are constructed with a focus on domestic U.S. American freshmen. This representation focuses visual diversity through U.S. race and gender performance rather than visually constructed representations of international, non-American or disability diversity.

By addressing some of the same concerns in the narrative section of the literature review on the use of representations, this study attempts to expand upon previous research on the use of diversity representations in academic advertising.

Chapter Summary

  In closing, the use of representations in visual media such as the UB and FG brochures offer a glimpse into life on the campus being advertised. The purpose of the UB and the FG makes their function as a first-look at CSU important, particularly in how they emphasize diversity of the student body through visual representations. Despite the potential to become competitive against other universities through a show of diversity, there are questions of the ethical use of visual representation and the problems of overrepresentation and tokenism. The next chapter, Chapter 2, addresses the theories specific to performing the two steps of this mixed methodological study and the specific procedures that determine what the levels and types of diversity are used in the UB and the FG. The research questions and hypotheses noted above are examined in the third and fourth chapters with the results provided for the two parts of the study – the nominal assessment and thematic analysis.

Chapter 2: Methods and Procedures

There are several steps to consider in any assessment of visual representations. Using the information from Chapter 1's review of how narratives and representations function, this chapter, Chapter 2, addresses how this mixed methodological study was performed. The assessment of "The U Book" (UB) and "The Freshman's Guide" (FG) has to be conducted in two steps. The first step evaluates the percentage and categorical types of visual diversity representations, while the second step considers the use and framing of visual representations. This means the first set of methods must code the types of individuals in the photographs. To do this, I was required to ascribe identities in order to categorize photographed individuals. The UB and the FG are limited texts in that they are printed brochures. They only provide a surface level of information about the people in the photographs and their visibly represented diversity. The lack of interaction with the individuals being represented in the photographs create the necessity to ascribe identities to these individuals based upon visual elements before being able to review and assess the narratives and themes to be found. The following exploration of theories for studying the five brochures addresses first how the identification and ascribed diversity of the individuals visually represented in the brochure are determined. Once I, as the researcher and interpreter of the texts, ascribed identities I then sorted the representations into categories based upon Colorado State University's (CSU) student enrollment demographics for the Fall of 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 (Student Enrollment Books, 2015). CSU's categories for diversity help determine which visual cues are used to ascribe an identity to the individuals represented, and how the process of ascription functions. For example, a visually represented Caucasian woman in a wheelchair would be classified for coding purposes in this thesis as White, female, and disabled. These categories match the same labels that CSU's student enrollment statistics use to

identify their own students. The result of the nominal assessment is used to support the findings from the thematic analysis, which consider alternative ways of reading a single rhetorical text.

In order to proceed, this chapter begins with the first step in this mixed methodological study, the ascription of identity to the visible figures in the UB and the FG. This allows for the categorization and subsequent comparison to the actual student body. The second step of the study is the narrative and thematic analysis, which includes Fairclough's (1989) Critical Discourse Analysis as a primary method for reading the nominal results. Once these theories are explained, the specific steps and procedures of each part of the study are examined. As pragmatic implications and limitations of this study are addressed with the potential for future research, these concerns are discussed in the final and sixth chapter rather than in the current chapter. First, it is necessary to consider how to ascribe a photographed person a researcher-ascribed identity.

Determining Identifications

In order to study the visual representations of the individuals presented in the UB and the FG, it is necessary to limit how photographed individuals fit into coded categories. This is needed to create a consistency for sorting diversity representations within and across brochures. The process of categorization requires a certain level of ascribing or attributing identity (Martin & Nakayama, 2010) to determine the signifiers of race. In one of his recorded lectures, Hall (1997) explored race as a floating signifier and thus a "discursive category" (p. 6). The reason for the construction of signifiers as discursive is that "all attempts to ground this concept [race] scientifically, to locate differences between the races, on what one might call scientific, biological, or genetic grounds, have been largely shown to be untenable" (Hall, 1997, p. 6). Orally quoting the rhetorically savvy Du Bois, Hall also explores the idea that race is a badge of

social heritage, a token or a sign, and so functions discursively rather than factually. "The meaning of a signifier can never be finally or trans-historically fixed" because "*race works like a language* … signifiers refer to the systems and concepts of the classification of a culture to its *making meaning* practices" (Hall, 1997, p. 8, italics original). As seen in previous research on representation and stereotypes, Hall agrees that "the propensity to classify sub-groups of human types" is a "very profound kind of cultural impulse" because "Until you classify things, in different ways, you can't generate any meaning at all" (p. 2). The "use of classification as a system of power [can be seen in] the ascription of clear masculine and feminine identities and the assumption from that that you can predict whole ranges of behavior and aspirations and opportunities from this classification" (Hall, 1997, p. 2). Through Du Bois, Hall explains that race can be as simply defined as the differences between the colors of skin and hair, which are some of the signifiers that help in the prescription of identity. The application of perceived identity upon another is a process that Martin and Nakayama (2010) describe as attributing, or ascribing identities to an individual. The attributed identity may clash with the avowed, or the self-prescribed identity into which individuals categorize themselves. These layers of identities, both avowed and attributed, can change to adapt to a given situation such as those that can be found in academic admissions brochures. Some of the core symbols – meanings shared by a cultural group – can be labeled in many of the same way that floating signifiers function. The stereotypes these symbols or signifiers are associated with create the expectation of a particular identity and associated behaviors (Martin & Nakayama, 2010). These visual symbols used to represent identity through the ascription of race function as the signifiers for the current study.

The best way to use symbols such as floating signifiers is to understand the assumption of what behaviors come from such an identity. Butler (1990) explored how the artifacts and

behaviors of men and women demonstrate that gender is a social performance. Certain feminine and masculine traits – length of hair, style of dress, perceived interactions – are socially associated with certain behaviors and identities. For example, in the U.S., skirts are often seen as being feminine in design, thus the joke so frequently heard in U.S. American humor concerning Scottish kilts. While Butler (1990) focuses on gender, the application of performativity is not limited to gender. Signifiers can also be found when performing racial identity, as society is dominated by "naturalizing discourses that tell us *what* we are and therefore *who*" (Chambers & Carver, 2008, p. 34). These signifiers can be used as "snapshots" of performativity to help assess the identities of those being perceived to act in a certain way.

In order to consistently ascribe identities to the same performances to those represented in the brochures, performances of these identities were also used. Due to the limitations of ascribing identity to the photographed individuals, features such as social class, in-state or out-of-state students were not considered for the numerical assessment of the individuals represented in the UB's and the FG's photographs as these factors are not as easily represented through floating signifiers. In order to best categorize the students who are being represented in the UB and the FG, the same categories that students are sorted into by their applications with the Office of Admissions were used to categorize the students being represented (Student Enrollment Books, 2015). Additional factors that do not have clear signifiers in each photograph are considered separately in the thematic and narrative analyses. An example of these additional factors would be how students (and teachers, as the case may be) are interacting in the presented scenario. The interactions being presented lend themselves to a number of interpreted narratives, depending upon the identities of the reader.

As can be easily noted, the use of visual signifiers to determine an individual's identity is a potential problem in assessing what representations exist. This concern is more fully explored in the final chapter, Chapter 6. However, the study does include one additional step to address this issue. Using inter-coder reliability methods (Compton, Love, & Sell, 2012; Landis & Koch, 1977), I worked with two of my graduate student peers to determine the accuracy of my identity ascriptions to the represented individuals within the brochures to determine the validity of my assessments of the visual narratives. I instructed my peers in how I performed the study, both in visual cues and labeling options, and then located the individuals I had originally assessed in the brochures. We then recorded how many of the identities I had ascribed to the figures matched their ascriptions. The comparison between my identifications to those of my two peers helps support the assessments and analysis of the representations in the current study.

Critical Discourse and Narrative Analysis

Once the individuals represented in the brochures have been ascribed an identity, it is necessary to determine how these numbers and levels of representation can be organized into a comprehensible narrative through themes. The type of images used determines what themes and compositions are used in the brochures. Fairclough's (1989) Critical Discourse Analysis focuses on three main components in order to analyze not only the processes of production and interpretation in a text, but also the relationships between these two processes. The first component, description, deals with the "formal properties of the text" itself; the second step, interpretation, focuses on the "relationship between text and interaction," through the idea that a text is a product; and third, the explanation "is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context" (Fairclough, 1989, pp. 26, 109). Fairclough goes on to explain that researchers "can refer to what goes on at each of these stages as 'analysis', [sic] but it should

be noted that the nature of 'analysis' changes as one shifts from stage to stage," and that "analysis is generally thought of as a matter of identifying and 'labelling' [sic] formal features of a text in terms of the categories of a descriptive framework" (p. 26). Another way to break down these three layers of analysis is to explain the focus on the written text (e.g., written references to content in the photographs), discourse practice (e.g., the consumption of the brochures by the audience), and discursive events (e.g., activities within the photographs) (Fairclough, 1989). For the UB and the FG, the description comes from determining what the relationships are between the results of the numerical assessment of each brochure and the corresponding year's demographics. Are the brochures over-representing or under-representing a certain type of identity? The comparison between the actual demographics and the represented demographics of CSU allows for the labeling of the formal features of the diversity representations into categories for the framework of the narrative of the five brochures. The interpretation stage considers the alternative readings that may be taken from the brochure, through interacting with the pages and the printed diversity representations. As previously noted, this study does not attempt to ascertain actual responses by an audience, but rather consider alternative readings in order to best determine what alternative narratives may be read. The last stage of Critical Discourse Analysis, explanation, can be addressed through what alternative interpretations may suggest as well as what factors may influence various interpretations.

The discourse Fairclough considers for the analysis process itself refers to "the whole process of social interaction" where a text is simply one part of that interaction (Fairclough, 1989, p. 24). Media accounts for "a not inconsiderable proportion for discourse in contemporary society [which] involves participants who are separated in place and time" (Fairclough, 1989, p. 49). Fairclough emphasizes the importance of studying media discourse by explaining that a

"single text on its own is quite insignificant" as "the effects of media power are cumulative, working through the repetition of particular ways of … positioning the reader" (p. 54). "Media discourse is able to exercise a pervasive and powerful influence in social reproduction," such as visual representations, "because of the very scale of the modern mass media and the extremely high level of exposure of whole populations to a relatively homogeneous output" (Fairclough, 1989, p. 54). One of the repetitive elements used in the UB and the FG is the visual component, which averages out to about 34 photographs overall per issue. Fairclough explains that "the relative social significance of visual imagery is increasing dramatically – think of the degree to which one of the most populous and pervasive modern discourse types, advertising, works through visuals" (p. 28). Working through the three stages of Critical Discourse Analysis, it is important to understand that the second stage, interpretation, can lead to several different explanations. The information that goes into the message and medium is not always the information that is taken back out of them.

Hall's (2011) encoding and decoding model was developed as a "statement on the theory of meaning production and reception within cultural studies" (p. 1). Encoding and decoding occur when a message is created and encoded before the receiver decodes and interprets the information. Communication events often use the encoding and decoding process in both directions. In most media, the process only functions one way (Hall, 2011). In his theory, Hall identifies three areas that encoding and decoding occur in: the dominant, and unquestioned code; the negotiated, critical code; and the oppositional, challenging code. A key factor in understanding these three codes is that the "default" assumption is that encoding and decoding occur through a dominant perspective (Hall, 2011). These codes do not require being independent of one another as multiple codes can be both encoded into and decoded out of a

single message (Hall, 2011). The 2011 expanded version of Hall's original theory was utilized

to include more of the potential complications with encoding messages, as there are variables to

consider for multiple readings of the same message. Each of these types of readings offers an

alternative narrative, with often personal or cultural reasons for specific interpretations. Walter

Fisher first introduced his construction of the Narrative Paradigm as a new way of looking at the

world, assuming that "the world is a set of stories through which we create and re-create our

lives" (Hobart, 2013, p. 90). Specifically, Fisher (1984) explains that his use of narration is as a

"theory of symbolic actions – words and/or deeds – that have sequence and meaning for those

who live, create, or interpret them" (p. 2). Fisher's paradigm is "meant to reflect an existing set

of ideas shared in whole or in part" by acting as a "paradigm in the sense of a philosophical view

of human communication" (Fisher, 1985, pp. 347, 351). Fisher's construction of narrative is

applicable to Hall's encoding and decoding pattern by explaining how backgrounds and personal

narratives can be encoded into or decoded out of a message.

The differences between readings rely heavily upon the self-avowed identities of those

performing the readings as backgrounds and cultures often influence methods of interpretation.

Ceccarelli (1998) discusses the use of multiple readings of a text by categorizing them into three

distinct areas: resistive reading, strategic ambiguity, and hermeneutic depth. Resistive reading

focuses on how the consumer can choose how to interpret the media, while hermeneutic depth

creates a guide for how to read a specific text. Each of these polysemic readings focuses on

complimentary components in controlling how a reader creates meaning from a text. Strategic

ambiguity differs from the other two types of readings in that it is designed to have multiple

readings that all end in praise of the given text. There is more reliance on the author's intention

in having several meanings, while hermeneutic depth considers what may be the author's

intentions for what narratives should be pulled from the text. Both of these constructions meet the qualifications to address a potentially diverse student body applying to CSU. Even so, the readings themselves are not the only steps to consider. Condit (1989) argues that polyvalence is more applicable than polysemy, as polyvalence considers the factors that make the text capable of carrying multiple readings in the first place. The reader is able to take what he or she wants from a text through polyvalence, which can result in strategic ambiguity by having a praiseworthy reading to those who consume the text. Polyvalence lends itself more to the author's intention of how the text is to be read, while also considering the potential and contradictory "pleasure" to be found while pursuing an oppositional reading (Condit, 1989).

By understanding how there are many different ways exist in how to construct and interpret a narrative, it is possible to consider more than just one interpretation for this project. These interpretations complete the study in determining what and how representations are used. Based on the preceding literature, the following procedures address how the two stages of the study were conducted. As previously stated, the study of the narratives and alternative readings is possible only after visual signifiers categorize the representations of diversity. The numerical tally of the represented identities presents a narrative that relates to the actual narrative of CSU's diverse community. The following section addresses the components of the study from the categorization and labeling of the represented individuals before exploring how the narrative and thematic theories assess the discourse and narrative presented by the represented figures within the five brochures.

Procedures of Study

While most of the studies used to inform this project focused on using either the numerical assessment or narrative study of representations, this study requires the use of mixed

methodological analyses. The first step is primarily to consider what diversity is being

represented. Included in this first step is a comparison to the actual student demographics at

CSU. Once this information has been identified, it makes it possible to consider how the

narratives themselves either exclude or overuse the representation of such figures.

The first stage of the study examines the numerical assessment of the figures that are

represented within the UB and the FG, and are used to determine the number of representations

to be found within the texts. A total of fourteen categories based upon the university's

organization of diversity for admissions applications are used to organize the tallied

representations (Student Enrollment Books, 2015). The eight racial categories to be used to

assess the level of ethnic representation within the tallied images are as follows:

- Hispanic/Latino
- Asian
- Black (African-American)
- Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- Native American
- Mixed-Racial
- Other (Unknown)
- White (Student Enrollment Books, 2015).

Among these eight racial categories were additional counts to confirm the number of

photographs that are used in each brochure as well as the number of people who have been

counted overall. On average, the total number of photographs per brochure is 34 photographs.

The figures to be analyzed are those who are clearly identifiable within the photographs

themselves. Figures that are too small, blurred, or colored in the background of a photograph

and therefore no longer possess visual signifiers were not included in the assessments. The last

four identification categories address the social gender binary that are visually recognizable (i.e.,

male and female), students who are clearly represented as being international students (i.e., non-

U.S. American citizens, through clear cultural signifiers such as attire and behaviors), or are

visibly/physically disabled (i.e., based upon visual cues such as mobility assistance, including arm or leg casts).

To find the numbers that were then compared to the results of the study's first step, it has taken looking at numerous sources to find statistics. Most of the statistics the study uses as a comparison tool comes from CSU's Institutional Research's publications, specifically the *Census Date Enrollment* reports. This publication breaks down student enrollment by semester, allowing for a comparison to the fall enrollment statistics. What is not included in these numbers is the breakdown of disabled students. A limited amount of information has been found on the Resources for Disabled Students (RDS) website, allowing for a comparison of two years' numbers. The third chapter addresses where this information was gathered in more detail as it pertains to the results of the nominal assessment.

As there is no additional information beyond the printed image of the individuals in the brochures, a system of ascribing the labels, as discussed earlier, must be implemented. Hall's lecture on race as floating signifiers (1997) is used to determine which individuals were ascribed which identities. Butler's (1990) argument that social roles such as gender are presented through performance is also used to assess the attributing of identities (Martin & Nakayama, 2010) based upon perceived performances of identity. The results of the numerical assessments of the represented diversity within the UB and the FG were collected separately for each year's brochure and charted. An additional set of charts shows the actual demographics of the student body to match the categories for ascription for the years represented by the brochures to compare the actual diversity of the campus to the level of visual representation within the five brochures. As the majority of the written text in the UB and the FG is focused on the application guidelines

rather than diversity information, they were assessed with the narrative analysis rather than being

marked as representations for the numerical tallying of visually represented individuals.

Once a comparison between the two sets of data was achieved (i.e., the results found in

the brochures compared to the actual demographics of diversity on campus), a narrative and

thematic analysis was applied to help me interpret the most common patterns to be found from

the sets of data obtained from the numerical assessment of the representations of diversity. The

analysis used Fairclough's (1989) Critical Discourse Analysis, Fisher's (1984, 1985) Narrative

Paradigm, Ceccarelli's (1998) use of polysemic values with strategic ambiguity and hermeneutic

depth, and Condit's (1989) polyvalence. Included in the analyses are the possible themes and

narratives to be found in what differences may be seen between the represented levels of

diversity and the actual demographics of the student body during the academic year for each

publication. The analysis chapters, Chapters 3 and 4, report these results and address how the

research questions are supported and the hypotheses are either confirmed or disconfirmed. After

that, Chapter 5 includes a thorough discussion of the results from the study that are intended to

explore how these results function within a larger framework of previous studies and literature.

As has been noted in Chapter 1, the following research questions and hypotheses each

address a specific half of the study. The first two items attempt to learn what the types of

representations are used in the brochures.

> RQ1: What is the difference between the numerical tally of representations of
> minority-identity students in the UB and the FG for the 2010-2014 enrollment
> statistics and the actual demographics of the student body at the time of each
> brochure's publication?

> H1: There is a significant variance between the demographics of the actual
> student body compared to the level of apparent representation within the UB and
> the FG. This variance will show a higher percentage of constructed White male
> student representation in contrast to other types of students.

The second research question and hypothesis consider how these levels of visual representations, and the ways these representations are used, can affect the themes and narratives directly.

RQ2: What is the emphasized type of diversity that is being represented in the UB and the FG? Gender? Disabled students? Alternative heritages to U.S. American identities (e.g., international student representation)? What absences of types of diversity representations are there in contrast to what is noted in CSU's own diversity mission statement?

H2: The representational depictions in the UB and the FG are constructed with a focus on domestic U.S. American freshmen. This representation focuses visual diversity through U.S. race and gender performance rather than visually constructed representations of international, non-American or disability diversity.

To examine these questions, Chapters 3 and 4 report the results while determining the confirmation or disconfirmation of the hypotheses and research questions as they pertain to each half of the study.

Chapter Summary

In closing, this second chapter has focused on the mixed methodological procedures of the study itself. The importance of using two steps and two methods of data collection in this study is to consider a more complete picture of the narratives and uses of representations in the UB and the FG. As the thesis moves on to the nominal assessment (Chapter 3) and the thematic analysis (Chapter 4), the results of the two parts will determine the support or disconfirmations of the corresponding research questions and hypotheses.

Chapter 3: Nominal Analysis of the Brochures

Over the last five years, there has been a 5.5% increase in the number of students with non-White racial backgrounds at Colorado State University (CSU) (Student Enrollment Books, 2015). This increase demonstrates, in general terms, the success of CSU's efforts to attract a more diverse student body. Advertising materials designed to provide images of a diverse student body potentially help to create a positive first impression for prospective students, including those students from cultural minority groups. Photographic images of diversity on campus provide a unique opportunity to showcase representations of CSU's diversity.

To keep the results of the two halves of this mixed methodological study clear, the analysis of the visual representation within the brochures has been broken into two chapters. The current chapter, Chapter 3, provides an assessment of the photographic images from the last four years of "The U Book" (UB) and the first year of its successor, "The Freshman's Guide" (FG) with regard to the frequency (i.e., nominal counts) and breadth of images of diversity that are represented. This nominal assessment includes a discussion of the changes in the photographs used between publications through a five-year span of time. The final section of the current chapter considers how the results address the research questions and confirm or disconfirm the hypotheses. The following chapter, Chapter 4, provides a thematic analysis by examining the three main themes of diverse community, learning environment, and active lifestyle accounted for within the brochures. This separation between the two parts of the study is designed so the information from the nominal assessment can be used as foundational information to help answer questions posed for the thematic analysis. By understanding the types of diversities being represented through the nominal assessment, the thematic analysis is able to determine how diversity is being used within the brochures.

To best understand how this study frames the concept of diversity through the brochures

visual representations, these results focus on diversity of identities that are non-White or non-

Male, meaning that a minority-identity group would include women, non-White racial

backgrounds, and disabled students. The research question and hypothesis state;

> RQ1: What is the difference between the numerical tally of representations of minority-identity students in the UB and the FG for the 2010-2014 enrollment statistics and the actual demographics of the student body at the time of each brochure's publication?

> H1: There is a significant variance between the demographics of the actual student body compared to the level of apparent representation within the UB and the FG. This variance will show a higher percentage of constructed White male student representation in contrast to other types of students.

These questions address the percentage of visual diversity representations within the

brochures. The nominal results provide information on what types of diversity are being

represented. Again, the significance of how the images use composition and discourse with

representation is addressed in Chapter 4 to illuminate the three main themes – diverse

community, learning environment, and active lifestyle – that emerged from the analysis of the

data set.

Nominal Accounting of Representations

As discussed in Chapter 2, the use of broad (and potentially limiting) visual cues was

necessary to ascribe identities found in the brochure to identifiable figures in order to make sense

of the visual identities represented in the UB and FG photographs. The identity types used to

assess and ascribe individual identities in the photographs were visual depictions of social gender

constructions (male/female), racial ethnicity and backgrounds, and disability status, that is,

demographic categories used in CSU's diversity mission statement and enrollment classifications

(Diversity Mission, 2014; Student Enrollment Books, 2015). These ascriptions of identity were

based on visual components, including skin tone, facial features, hair color and style, and type of dress. While these visual signifiers are limited markers for accurately ascribing one's own avowed identity, they are the only source of information the brochures offer for the purpose of coding identity representations. Within the student enrollment figures there was a category for students who, for one reason or another, had not established a racial identity with CSU (Student Enrollment Books, 2015). The current study was able to identify several figures by gender, but these figures did not have enough visual cues to determine race. These unknown racial students were compared against the unknown racial students who were listed in the enrollment books. The only additional sources of identifiable information within the brochures come from a few select quotes from students who are featured, including name and major. Any other form of identification is not available. To help address the challenge of ascribing identities to textual representations, two of my graduate level peers who I provided orientation and instruction to also reviewed the brochures for inter-coder reliability (Compton, Love, & Sell, 2012).

In order for the process of interpretation from my peers to be comparable to my own process, I provided some instructive training for them. I explained the process I was using to begin identifying figures, and I explained the university-established categories I was using for identity ascription. The process included explaining how CSU categorizes diversity in its enrollment statistics. Once the categories for identity were established, I located the same figures in the photographs that I had identified previously, so that my two peers would be comparing the identity of the same individuals I had ascribed an identity to using the coding categories laid out for the study. While there was some debate as to the more specific racial identity of many of the figures being represented, there was no disagreement in the researcher-ascribed gender identities being represented. It was also necessary to adapt the found racial

identities to meet CSU's categorizations. Using the results from both peers, there was an

average 91.1% match in ascribing identities compared to my original ascriptions. This

percentage of agreement in identification is well above the minimum 80% match Landis and

Koch (1977) found to be needed for an "almost perfect" agreement in coding (p. 165). While I

used my own results for the study, by confirming such a high agreement rate in coding

individuals I am able to argue for the validity of my assessment of the brochures and their visual

narratives.

The following sections examine the results of this nominal tabulation to determine how

well the images in the UB and FG reflect CSU demographic categories. In the last section of this

chapter, the results of the nominal assessments address the corresponding research question and

hypothesis.

Nominal ascription of identity. The results of the nominal assessment of the

identifiable figures in the photos across years of the brochures found a general increase in the

visual representations of diversity in the student body. The five following sections of this

chapter review the results for each of the brochures on an individual/yearly basis, including the

differences between publication years. These results are partly assessed through how the

findings mimic CSU's own enrollment statistics.

The *Census Date Enrollment* report, published every semester by CSU's division of

Institutional Research, presents CSU's enrollment figures broken down by various criteria

including gender and racial identity (Student Enrollment Books, 2015). These demographic

breakdowns are used in the following tables as the first column of percentages for the

comparison between the diversity of student body representations accounted for in the brochures.

An important note is that the CSU Institutional Research's publication of enrollment reports have

historically not included the number of disabled students, despite the fact that the number of

students using Resources for Disabled Students (RDS) has increased every year (T. Koss,

personal communication, January 26, 2015; *RDS History*, 2015). The limited number of

disabled student statistics taken from the RDS website listed a rough estimate of over 1,300

students in 2011, making up 4.8% of the student body that year (*RDS History*, 2015). The only

specific statistics to be found covered 2012, constituting 8.6% of the student body, almost double

what had been recorded the year before (*RDS FAQ*, 2014). Therefore, it has been necessary to

note in the following tables when there is no available statistical information (N/A) for a given

year in the university's census report (i.e., the 2010-11 UB, the 2013-14 UB, and the 2014-15

FG). While the assessment conducted for the thesis searched for signs or discourse of visibly

identifiable or identified international students within the brochures, their inclusion or exclusion

is more important in answering the questions posed for the thematic analysis in the chapter that

follows, Chapter 4. For this current chapter, international students are not addressed. Chapter 4

refers back to this chapter's tables to explore the use of international students within the UB and

the FG.

The second column found in the tables shows the results from my nominal assessment of

the texts in percentages. To best understand how close the diversity representations within the

brochures mimic the diversity of the campus itself, my tallied results of the photographed

representations within the brochures are converted into percentages in order to compare group

sizes. I arrived at the percentage for the figures by counting up the total number of individuals

who were ascribed a nominal identity (where possible) for each diversity category, and then

dividing the total of each category amount by the total number of individuals counted. An

example of this is dividing the 2010-11 brochure's sixty-five students with a coded White

identity by seventy-seven students representation coded for overall, resulting in 84.1%

representation of the student body that was identified in that year's brochure (see Table 1 below).

Through the change or repetition in the photographs, the specific numbers of usable visual

representations varied to different extents each year. These changes are considered as part of the

assessment for each brochure in the following five areas.

   2010-11 UB. As the oldest of all five of the documents, the 2010-11 UB helped establish

a baseline of anticipated statistics to be found in future brochures (Table 1 below). As expected

by the repetition of many of the photographs in later editions, the following statistics can be seen

mirrored in many of the later brochures.

Table 1

2010-11		
Category	% CSU Total Enrollment	% The U Book*
Hispanic/Latino	7.1	1.2
Asian	1.8	3.8
Black	1.7	2.5
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.2	0.0
Multi-Racial	2.5	3.8
Native American	0.4	0.0
International	3.9	0.0
White	77.1	84.4
Other	5.2	3.8
Male	48.7	49.3
Female	51.3	50.6
Disabled	N/A	0.0
Additional Information	Total Number of Images	Total Number of People
	30	77

("Fall 2010" Student Enrollment Books, 2010)

   The ascription of identity was ascribed to individuals who were visually clear enough

(i.e., not blurred in the background) to use visual markers such as skin tone, facial features and

hair. While there was some text-based information in the form of student quotations with their

name, these quotations were only included for a select few images. As can be seen in Table 1

above, the biggest area of emphasis in visually identifiable representations are racially White

students at 84.4%. What is interesting is that the coded percentage of visual representations between certain minority racial groups including Asian and Black identities are represented in higher numbers than actually existed on campus, while the number of coded representations for Hispanics is significantly lower (1.3% and 2.6% more Black and Asian respectively). This overrepresentation of certain minority racial groups brings up the question of presenting a more accurate version of the actual diversity on campus compared to a more idealized image. In the same way, the limited number of figures identified as Hispanic in comparison to CSU's actual enrollment numbers may be of concern for future brochures.

When considering Table 1's results above in who is overrepresented and who is underrepresented, it is important to note that there are two racial categories that were not used for coding any representations. No one was ascribed an identity that was Hawaiian/Pacific Islander or Native American. While there were several figures in the brochures that may have had either of these two racial identities as part of their heritage, the level of clarity was not high enough to identify racial background. These figures were given a gender identity through signifiers such as their hairstyle and choice of clothing, but were labeled as having an unknown racial identity. Another characteristic of the photographs to consider is their composition and placement of these unknown students, frequently taking the photograph from an angle or even behind the student. The composition of the photographs eliminated the ability to see most of the facial features that could be used to ascribe a more specific identity than simply non-White. In a similar fashion, no student is shown in a situation or with any physical aids to suggest disability of some type, eliminating the presence of visible disability within the brochure. These three categories of identity – Native American, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and disabled – were not coded for in representation throughout all of the brochures, including the 2011-12 UB.

2011-12 UB. Most of the photographs from the previous document survived the

transition to the next three brochures, maintaining the 2010-11 brochure's function as a baseline

for comparison. Twenty-seven out of the original thirty photographs were reused in the 2011-12

document. While these changes do not affect the number of photographs and average number of

represented individuals overall, there was a noticeable shift in the visible representations of the

male/female genders (Table 2 below).

Table 2

2011-12		
Category	% CSU Total Enrollment	% The U Book*
Hispanic/Latino	7.7	1.3
Asian	1.8	4.0
Black	1.9	4.0
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.2	0.0
Multi-Racial	2.7	2.6
Native American	0.4	0.0
International	4.2	0.0
White	75.3	82.6
Other	5.9	5.3
Male	48.3	52.0
Female	51.7	48.0
Disabled	4.8	0.0
Additional Information	Total Number of Images	Total Number of People
	30	75

("Fall 2011" Student Enrollment Books, 2011; *RDS History*, 2015)

The visible ratio of men to women in the 2011-12 brochure has changed to represent

more men than women, a shift from both the previous brochure and the actual demographics for

that year. In exchange for this reduction in gender diversity is the increase of racial diversity.

The drop in the number of White visual representations compared to the minority ethnic groups

is small (77.1% in Table 1 to 75.3% in Table 2), but is also an important shift to consider when

reviewing these numbers. However, there are still no coded figures that were ascribed as having

either Hawaiian/Pacific Islander or Native American identities. Instead, the number of students

who were labeled as "other" has increased since the 2010-11 brochure. The 2011-12 brochure is

also the first opportunity to compare the number of disabled students to those represented given the publication of figures by RDS. This category continues to have no visible representations within the brochure.

One of the photographs that changed did not affect the tally of the results, but offers an example of how I was able to use my two graduate peers for inter-coder reliability (Compton, Love, & Sell, 2012). The new photograph didn't change the ascription of identity as my two peers labeled the represented figure the same identity I had ascribed. We agreed that the first figure in Image 1 below looked like a European Caucasian background, so we ascribed the identity of a White woman based on the available categories used from the university demographic labels. To make this determination, the use of hair (the brown color and slight wave/curl left mostly loose and long), skin (pale in tone), and facial features (more rounded, Caucasian eyes, nose and mouth) provided the visual cues to ascribe both gender and racial identities. These same features were used to identify the figure in Image 2 below as a White woman. In addition, the use of attire showed a more socially coded feminine style and so female ascription (the pearl jewelry and more form-fitting shirt and pants along with the long hair, along with other physical characteristics of the person in the photographs).

Image 1

Image 2

(*The U Book 2010*, 2010; *The U Book 2011*, 2011)

While Images 1 and 2 are encoded the same, the other photographs that were changed in the 2011-12 brochure were responsible for changing the specific demographics being represented. One of the photograph changes took an image of two women (one coded White, one coded multi-racial) and replaced it with the photo of a single coded Black woman. This change from two women representations to one new photo maintained the visual racial diversity, but reduced the visibility of gender diversity. The same shift increasing racial diversity and reducing gender diversity occurred in the last photograph to be changed out in the 2011-12 brochure (Images 3 and 4 below). Again, I used physical features and clothing to ascribe identity (darker skin and looser clothing helped code a man, also coded as Hispanic, compared to the three White women in Image 3 with visibly pale skin, long hair and more form-fitting and/or revealing clothing).

Image 3   Image 4

(*The U Book 2010*, 2010; *The U Book 2011*, 2011)

In Image 4, the original four figures were replaced with a new trio of students, centering an individual who was also coded as a Hispanic man. The figure whose face is not seen on the right was identified as a White woman by my two peer coders based on her hair color and length. The second man in Image 4 is one example of a figure that was coded under the unknown racial category, yet was identified as male. Although the strong angles of the figure's face, short

haircut and style of shirt collar were coded as male, there was not enough facial information to identify and ascribe the representation to a demographic race category even with the use of visible skin tone. These images show a more direct change in how the new photographs were able to increase the number of men and racial diversity while decreasing the number of women and gender diversity. By prioritizing one type of diversity over another, the photograph raises the question if there is a preference in what type of diversity exists on campus. As mentioned previously, diversity and minority groups are labeled for this study as anyone who is not encoded as a White male student.

To summarize the changes between the 2010-11 and 2011-12 versions of the UB, the most significant edits involved reducing the number of women represented while increasing the level of non-White group numbers. This trend of racial diversity versus gender diversity continued into the third document.

2012-13 UB. As the table below demonstrates, the 2012-13 brochure continues to show an increase in the visibility of racially diverse figures compared to the White male figure (Table 3 below). Through the repetition of the photographs, there has been little change in the numbers of visual representations overall. From the 2011-12 brochure, only two photos were changed. Of the original thirty photos, twenty-five were left intact in the 2012-13 brochure.

Table 3

2012-13		
Category	% CSU Total Enrollment	% The U Book*
Hispanic/Latino	8.4	1.2
Asian	1.7	3.8
Black	1.9	3.8
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.1	0.0
Multi-Racial	3.0	5.1
Native American	0.4	0.0
International	4.6	0.0
White	73.6	80.5
Other	6.2	5.1
Male	48.3	51.9
Female	51.7	48.0
Disabled	8.6	0.0
Additional Information	Total Number of Images	Total Number of People
	32	77

("Fall 2012" Student Enrollment Books, 2012; *RDS FAQ*, 2015)

While the 2011-12 brochure changed its diversity representations through the changes in photographs, this was not the only reason for images to change. One example of this is a photograph that was used for aesthetic reasons as a background for other information and for written text referring to an overview of CSU's statistics, offering the only reference to the demographics of the student body. The first photograph to be exchanged with another both show a scenic image of the campus, dotted with figures identifiable only as students with backpacks. The second photograph to be replaced began with only two students sitting in what looks like a dorm room. By the tone of their skin, their style of loose, baggy clothing and lighter, shaggy haircuts of light brown hair, the two figures were coded as White males. The photograph that replaced it shows two figures that, through the same type of signifiers, were also coded as White males. In the back of the room, two more students join these foregrounded White male students. By their hair length and physical shape, these two individuals were coded as a male and a female of a mixed racial background, as they both have darker skin (not coded as tanned skin) and darker hair, compared to the two coded White male students. This change more accurately

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depicts an increase in diversity in CSU's enrollment numbers, as it contributes to the fifteen non-White students who are visibly identifiable within this academic year's brochure. While the numbers between men and women remained the same as in the previous brochure, the change in diversity representation shows more focus on representing non-White students than in previous editions. The focus on racial versus gender diversity may also be read as still being more focused on supporting one over the other. Through increasing the percentage of non-White students in contrast to the traditional White male student, the brochure does show that it supports at least some forms of diversity.

In the 2012-13 brochure, the percentage of all represented categories still do not quite meet the actual demographics of CSU's student body (Table 3 above). Even so, an interesting result from these shifts in percentages is that as the amount of White students attending CSU goes down in relation to minority racial students, so too does the amount of represented White students go down in relation to represented minority racial students within the brochure. The categories for Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Native American, and disabled students remained unused while previous categories including Asian and Black decreased in represented percentages. In contrast, the number of coded unknown racial identities and multi-racial identities increased with these changes in photographs. As in the 2011-12 brochure, the 2012-13 brochure shows an increase of racial diversity represented while maintaining the same basic percentage of men outnumbering women (see Table 3 above). These changes in the level of racial identity that begin to more closely mimic CSU's enrollment statistics suggest a change in the desired emphasis of visibly represented diversity. The change may also be linked to the number of students who enroll at CSU who do not have a White racial background. By increasing the level of visible diversity, the brochures can attempt to represent a more diverse

student body. In the fourth brochure, these changes and constructions of diversity are pushed the farthest in the percentage of represented diversity out of all five of the brochures.

2013-14 UB. The last year of the UB depicted the highest number of diversity representations of the entire study (Table 4 below). One reason for this shift is that there were five new photographs in this edition rather than changing out only two or three. What makes the 2013-14 UB the most diverse of the brochures is the fact that, even with its ratios of diversity representation, it still used the average of seventy-seven students. The brochure increased visual diversity representations of both gender and racial background while maintaining the same number of people as in previous brochures. The five new images switch back the percentage of men versus women to the levels of representation found in the first brochure (*The U Book 2010*, 2010; Table 1 above). In addition, it is in the 2013-14 UB that the relationships between the total numbers of minority racial identities versus the White population come the closest to representing the actual demographics of the student body out of the five brochures (Table 4 below). Even so, these numbers are still quite inaccurate, both in overrepresentation and underrepresentation.

Table 4

2013-14		
Category	% CSU Total Enrollment	% The U Book*
Hispanic/Latino	8.9	2.5
Asian	2.0	6.4
Black	1.9	3.8
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.1	0.0
Multi-Racial	3.2	6.4
Native American	0.4	0.0
International	5.6	0.0
White	72.4	76.6
Other	5.7	5.1
Male	48.5	48.0
Female	51.5	51.9
Disabled	N/A	0.0
Additional Information	Total Number of Images	Total Number of People
	30	77

("Fall 2013" Student Enrollment Books, 2013)

There were no visible representations of students who were coded as Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Native American, or disabled. While the numbers of certain groups such as Asian and Black identities have also risen or fallen in frequently dramatic increments, the percentage of the White population has steadily decreased throughout the four UB brochures (84.4% in 2010-11, Table 1 above; 82.6% in 2011-12, Table 2 above; 80.5% in 2012-13; and 76.6% in 2013-14; Table 4). The consistent decline in the amount of White students being represented is an interesting result given that the percentage of White students on campus has continued to consistently decrease at the same time. The five new photographs in the 2013-14 brochure also realigned the representations between men and women to show a more accurate depiction of the women enrolled on campus at just over 51%, while men make up the other 48% of the university's population.

As has been the case before, the 2013-14 brochure's five new photographs directly impact the results of the tally through the identification of the new figures in the images. The most noticeable change in the brochure comes off of the cover itself, changing two of the four

photographs which make up four "quadrants" in the design (Images 5 and 6 below). The

photograph in the upper top left quadrant in Image 5 changed the image from coloring over a

photograph with a green layer of color on top of the photo of students to coloring over a scenic

image in Image 6. In previous assessments, the two students in the upper left quadrant were

coded as being an unknown man and an Asian woman walking together (coded by their facial

features and hair, as well as their clothing style and physical build). While the image of the two

of them walking was colored over, the image retained several light values, enabling some visual

cues such as lighter skin tones and facial features to be identifiable. Just opposite it, the

photograph in the upper right quadrant of Image 5 only coded the figure walking in the middle of

the picture as a White woman (pale skin color, lighter, long hair, and feminine-coded clothing

(Hardison, 2012)). The other figures in the photograph were not included in the ascription of

identities.

Image 5   Image 6

(*The U Book 2012*, 2012; *The U Book 2013*, 2013)

One of the most interesting changes in these four photographs is that the two researcher-

coded minority students are no longer colored over (their facial features, hair and clothing now

have additional information of skin and hair coloring rather than just light and shadow values).

This change in location and clarity of the figures places these minority identity students as more important than before as they are no longer half hidden by the color-over panel. The other important shift in how these photographs construct the scene is that two minority racial figures are shown actively engaging with the researcher-ascribed White woman. While the general identity coding of these three figures is not different compared to the previous images (i.e., two coded minority students and one White student, two women and one man), the change in visibility and identification uses coded figures who are diverse and by their placement emphasized as being important. This image places importance on the visibility of both racial *and* gender identity. From the advent of the cover page and these two changes, the brochure takes a shift in diversity tone and visual representation.

Even with these positive changes in representing students with a minority identity of either gender or race, the White male student is still prominently visible. The picture in the lower left quadrant of Images 5 and 6 shows masculine Caucasian features with pale skin and no visible hair beneath the skiing cap and mask, suggesting a short haircut and a Colorado sports active lifestyle. One important note to consider in these more progressive visuals is the activity that is being seen. Instead of walking on campus like the three minority figures, the White male is shown in a situation that establishes a skiing or other snow-related activity from the snow-covered scenery of likely the local Colorado area to the equipment he is wearing. As snow-related activities are frequently expensive, the representation can be interpreted to suggest that the White male is coded as the identity that is participating in this activity. The three figures together are walking across campus, an activity that requires no expenses aside from those typical for students attending a university.

The change of a three-student photograph to an eleven-person group shot also changed the number of women being visually represented (Image 7 below). The original image showed three figures working with cans, coded as two White males and a White female (e.g., the style of their clothes, along with their fair toned skin, hair lengths and jaw lines).

Image 7

(*The U Book 2013*, 2013)

The new photograph (Image 7) not only adds eight more women to the demographics of the original image (visible in their coded gender identity through long hair and more feminine features), but also includes one representation of a woman who was ascribed a non-White racial background. More importantly, this image places the two White men (in red clothing) in the back of the large group, focusing the composition on the women who are circled around the cans. By physically connecting the women to the cans from an angle that looks down on the scene, the composition and angle of the photograph helps to more intimately connect the women with the task at hand. This also offers a visual example of activities that women are participating in which communicates a visual representation of women as often stereotypical support mechanisms of care-taking and support for such activities as the Food Bank, as identified through the sign displayed in the background of the photo.

Image 9 (below) also emphasized more racial and gender diversity compared to its predecessor, Image 8 (below). The importance in the shift is that Image 8 included seven women and six men (coded by their hair styles, style of dress, and facial features), all of who had the coloring and ascribed identity of White students.
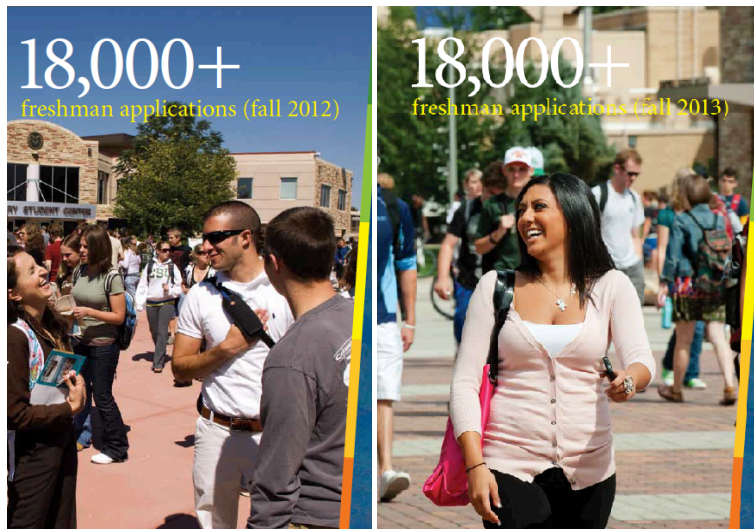

Image 8   Image 9

(*The U Book 2012*, 2012; *The U Book 2013*, 2013)

Image 9 retains some of the demographics by showing three coded White men and a White woman (cropped out; coded through skin tone, hair length, coloring and style of dress), but adds into the immediate foreground a woman who was ascribed a non-White identity (coded by her hair texture and color, facial features and her darker skin tone that was not coded as tan). The composition in Image 9 places women in the front as the primary focus of the photograph, while the men are part of a blurrier background. Image 8 has mostly men in the foreground as clearly identifiable figures. This change between Images 8 and 9 again displays diversity representation in both visible gender representations as well as racial representations.

When considering Images 10 and 11 (below), it is important to note that the thematic analysis of the photos is discussed in Chapter 4. However, these two images not only change how the visible diversity can drastically change, but also how these changes can influence how

the three themes of the diverse community, learning environment, and the active lifestyle are read. Images 10 and 11 specifically relate to the theme of the learning environment in that they focus on the relationship between a teacher and a student.

Image 10   Image 11

(*The U Book 2012*, 2012; *The U Book 2013*, 2013)

One of the main factors that suggest a teacher-student relationship in Images 10 and 11 is that one of the two individuals looks older than the other, cueing the traditional representation of the teacher-student relationship. Another is that the two figures appear to be focusing on the same problem, and are trying to work through the problem. This construction is shown through the behaviors of the older figure explaining something to the younger, or the younger individual working to explain something to the older. The style of dress that the two older figures use compared to the student figures also constructs the identity of an instructor. Rather than wearing informal t-shirts and casual clothing, both of the instructors are formal in either a tie and dress shirt, or a coordinated scarf and sweater. The last main guide to determining this teacher-student relationship is the position the two figures have to one another in each image. The instructor is positioned as a guide, pointing out areas to the student while explaining or physically situated above the student and looking down. The student is shown as having less active body language

than the instructor in Image 10, showing that she is listening to his instructions. Alternatively, in Image 11 the student is the active one, while the teacher listens and waits to see what the student is saying in order to answer a question or assess the student's explanation of something. Although it is important to show diversity within the student body, students may prefer teachers who have a perceived similar cultural background to their own, in order to perceive a connection to the teachers themselves. By changing the photograph to show visible diversity within the faculty, the learning environment theme is directly impacted in how it may be read. Seeing diversity in potential instructors (e.g., gender, race, and ability) may be as influential as seeing potential peers in the decision of where to apply.

To summarize the changes in the 2013-14 UB, the selection of new photographs support both racial and gender diversity in significant ways. The overall numbers of visible gender and racial diversity has increased since previous brochures as well as juxtaposing the images to emphasize the visible presence of non-White, non-male figures. As was noted at the beginning of this section, the 2013-14 UB showed the most accurate percentage of diversity representations compared to its corresponding enrollment statistics of the five brochures. The redesign of the UB into the 2014-15 FG in its most current iteration of a university brochure drastically changes how visual representations are used and function within the brochure.

2014-15 FG. When considering the FG's results (Table 5, below), it is important to understand that the percentages are based on only sixteen people (as compared to roughly seventy-seven representations of people in previous brochures). Through a total of six completely new images, the number of people visually represented and identifiable has decreased. For this reason, one student who is visibly identified as having a minority racial or gender background now represents a much larger percentage of the student body in the brochure

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(e.g., there is one coded Black male student, but out of 16 students he represents 6.2% of the brochure's population). This change in the overall number of representations is striking because the UB had seventy-five to seventy-seven individuals represented in each edition of the brochure. Because of the change in the overall number of people being identified within the FG, the results from the FG at a glance looks the most diverse of the brochures when compared to earlier results of the UB brochures (Table 5 below versus Table 4 above).

Table 5

2014-15		
Category	% CSU Total Enrollment	% The U Book*
Hispanic/Latino	9.5	0.0
Asian	2.2	0.0
Black	2.1	6.2
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.1	0.0
Multi-Racial	2.7	12.5
Native American	0.5	0.0
International	6.9	0.0
White	71.6	68.7
Other	4.4	12.5
Male	48.7	56.2
Female	51.3	43.7
Disabled	N/A	0.0
Additional Information	Total Number of Images	Total Number of People
	6	16

("Fall 2014" Student Enrollment Books, 2014)

The change in the overall number of photographs and identifiable individuals in the FG is not the only notable shift between the FG and the UB editions. Every single photograph was either written over, or blurred for artistic effect. This reduced the number of visual signifiers that were used in previous brochures to ascribe identity, particularly facial features. In the UB, the images were frequently placed like printed photographs in a photo album; acting as examples of what the text was referring to. In the FG, they are used as part of the visual graphic design and no longer stand alone as photographic examples. The images function as backgrounds upon which information about CSU and the application processes are imposed on. The UB did use

some images as these background elements, but focused the use of such images to scenic

photographs rather than portraits. What makes the statistics of diversity for the 2014-15 FG

document important to this study is that many minority racial groups were visually eliminated

from the FG with the choice in photo selection and use. This result was surprising, considering

that this brochure was printed the academic year after the most visually diverse UB brochure

from 2013-14.

Image 12 below offers an example of how the photographs were used as background

elements rather than as sources of identification information themselves. While some visual

identification information was gathered from the three figures visible (e.g., two men with their

short hair and looser shirts, and a woman in her longer hair and v-neck shirt), only the woman

was ascribed a racial identity (White) as her pale skin and hair was enough information to ascribe

a racial identity. The two men, by virtue of the artistic blur of the photograph and the use of

brown/sepia tones, are racially unidentifiable and thus were coded as having unknown racial

backgrounds.

Image 12

Image 13

(*The Freshman's Guide 2014*, 2014)

Another important change in the FG is the manner in which written textual information is provided. Rather than focusing on paragraphs of text to provide in-depth information, the bulk of the information is sorted into a type of brief snapshot of statistical and numeric information (Image 13). The design of these "quick-fact bubbles" mimics a more corporate, snapshot layout of information. Many corporate companies use these short "blurbs" as part of their advertising materials to provide information to customers (Eisend, Plagemann, & Sollwedel, 2014). The textual information used in previous brochures to help ascribe identities (e.g., student quotes with their name) was removed in favor of focusing on these quick-fact bubbles (Image 13).

The changes in the design and formatting also reduced the amount of researcher-coded representations of non-White, non-male students. By emphasizing the White male student type over all other types, the brochure may be interpreted as showing what type of student identity is the most prominently used by CSU in its brochures. One reason this question of emphasizing the most common type of visible student becomes so important in this particular brochure is because of the elimination of certain groups being represented at all. While there were no identified Native American, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, or disabled students in any of the five brochures, the FG also eliminated identifiable Asian and Hispanic students. Both Asian and Hispanic students were represented in all of the other brochures (Asian students were represented between 6.4% to 3.8% of the student body, while Hispanic students were represented between 2.5% to 1.2%).

While considering some of the questions posed by the nominal assessment for this study, the last section of this chapter examines how the results of the tallies respond to the research question and hypothesis. These establish an understanding of what types of diversity are being

visually represented and in what quantities within the brochures in order to determine how the brochures use levels of diversity representations in their advertising materials.

Research question and hypothesis. In order to assess what diversity representations are emphasized in the UB and the FG, it is important to examine what types of relationships can be seen between the different types of ascribed identities in the years of brochures under study. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the purpose of this nominal assessment for the study would allow for a comparison between the representations of diversity in the brochures to CSU's annual enrollment figures. The construction of diversity for this study has been different types of identities listed in CSU's diversity mission statement that differ from the White male identity including race, gender and disability. The research question asked;

> RQ1: What is the difference between the numerical tally of representations of minority-identity students in the UB and the FG for the 2010-2014 enrollment statistics and the actual demographics of the student body at the time of each brochure's publication?

The results of the study found that there was a general difference between the represented numbers of racial minority to White students. The difference in numbers was also present between the represented genders. In relation to the numbers of men being represented compared to women, there was no consistent difference, which makes answering the research question more difficult than anticipated. The complication arises most clearly when considering the 2013-14 UB (Table 4) versus the 2014-15 FG (Table 5). In three of the five documents, there were more men visibly coded than women. While there were several instances when the percentage of groups that were represented were actually higher than the actual demographics, there were always more White students being represented in comparison to those with a minority identity. The three most notable identities that were not included were Native Americans, Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders, and physically disabled students. The results concerning gender

were significant only in that the brochures were often exchanging which gender was represented the most. Despite the fluctuation between brochures, the 2013-14 brochure showed that it is possible to be moderately faithful in a visual representation of CSU's actual enrollment numbers, particularly in gender representation. What this research question examines is the issue that there were some groups who were never represented. This concern becomes a vital part of the analysis of the three themes, the diverse community, learning environment, and the active lifestyle. In Chapter 4, the issue of disabled students as well as international students not being visually included or referenced in the images is addressed in more detail.

Along with the research question, the nominal portion of the study also offered a hypothesis to address the types of diversity represented. The hypothesis reads:

H1: There is a significant variance between the demographics of the actual student body compared to the level of apparent representation within the UB and the FG. This variance will show a higher percentage of constructed White male student representation in contrast to other types of students.

Just as answering the research question proved to be complex, answering this hypothesis has proven as difficult. The lowest numbers of White students overall were in the 2014-15 edition of the FG, showing 68.7% out of sixteen coded students (Table 5, above), and the 2013-14 UB edition (Table 4, above) with 76.6% out of seventy-seven coded students. The first part of the hypothesis is supported as none of the minority groups outnumber the represented White individuals in any of the five brochures. It is the second part of the hypothesis that can be answered differently, depending upon which brochure is being considered. In the 2011-12, 2012-13, and 2014-15 brochures, men were shown more frequently than women as identifiable figures. For these three years, the White male focus of the hypothesis is confirmed. For the 2010-11 and 2013-14 years, the hypothesis is only half confirmed in its focus on White students rather than male students. What these numbers show is that, for over half of the brochures, the

hypothesis is supported in the visual emphasis on White male students. Categories such as Asian and Black were overrepresented but still low in percentage compared to White. The Hispanic category remained under-represented, while Native American, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and disabled students were not noticeably represented at all in any of the five brochures.

Chapter Summary

In closing, there can be many questions raised by simply looking at the numbers of diversity representations accounted for in this nominal assessment of the UB and the FG. This chapter, Chapter 3, has focused on answering questions of what groups are being emphasized visually to determine which groups are being underrepresented or overrepresented compared to CSU's diversity statistics for each year (Student Enrollment Books, 2015). The second half of this study in Chapter 4 is intended to complete the picture of visual representation use in showing diversity at CSU, which was started by these nominal results. In the next and fourth chapter, the analysis focuses on the narrative analysis of the images being represented and the saturation of the three themes of the diverse community, learning environment, and active lifestyle within specific types of images.

Chapter 4: Thematic Analysis of the Brochures

In any advertising program, it is important for the audience to feel connected to the figure in the ad in order to sell the product (Eisend, Plagemann, & Sollwedel, 2014; James, 2014). These figures must represent something that the audience not only expects to see, but something that with which they can identify. The concept of connecting to a figure in an advertisement is equally true for Colorado State University's (CSU) admissions brochures. The previous chapter, Chapter 3, addressed the numbers of visual representations within "The U Book" (UB) and "The Freshman's Guide" (FG) in order to understand what types of diversity were used as representations and in what quantities. The focus of this chapter, Chapter 4, is to address the second half of this mixed methodological study and analyze the ways diversity is visually represented and constructed. Within the brochures three main themes function as parts of the advertising package – the diverse community, learning environment, and active lifestyle of the students and culture on campus. Connecting these three themes are components of cooperation, diversity and a perceived connection. The current chapter focuses on determining how diversity is being presented and used within the brochures, and how these methods of visually presenting diversity may be translated in order to find evidence to support the research question and confirm or disconfirm the hypothesis. The following sections include a review of how each theme is visually constructed within the photographs as well as possible interpretations of each theme through different theoretical lenses. The last section of this chapter addresses the final research question and hypothesis.

CSU's diversity mission statement defines diversity through several categories, including the use of gender, racial background and disability status (Diversity Mission, 2014). The Resources for Disabled Students (RDS) Office also emphasizes the need to include different

types of disability as part of the visible diversity of the campus (*RDS What We Do*, 2015). This

chapter's analysis directly responds to how these categories of diversity are represented, as well

as how these types of diversity can be interpreted:

> RQ2: What is the emphasized type of diversity that is being represented in the
> UB and the FG? Gender? Disabled students? Alternative heritages to U.S.
> American identities (e.g., international student representation)? What absences of
> types of diversity representations are there in contrast to what is noted in CSU's
> own diversity mission statement?

> H2: The representational depictions in the UB and the FG are constructed with a
> focus on domestic U.S. American freshmen. This representation focuses visual
> diversity through U.S. race and gender performance rather than visually
> constructed representations of international, non-American or disability diversity.

From Chapter 3 we learned that there were several racial groups that were never clearly

included (e.g., Native American, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and disabled), underrepresented

(e.g., Hispanic), and overrepresented (e.g., White, Asian, Black, and multi-racial). To determine

if a given group was being over- or underrepresented, the percentage of representation from the

brochures was compared to the fall enrollment statistics that CSU's division of Institutional

Research publishes for each of those years (Student Enrollment Books, 2015). Using the

nominal assessment from Chapter 3 as background information, the analysis in this chapter

works to either support the research question or confirm or disconfirm the hypothesis. The

following analysis ascertains how the diversity within the five brochures is being visually

represented, along with how that diversity can be interpreted when consuming the brochures.

Themes and Narratives

As previously noted, Chapter 3's examination of the types of diversity emphasized within

the five brochures enables the current chapter to focus on how that diversity is being represented,

thematically. The visual methods used to showcase diversity focus on the photographs'

composition and application, forming the three themes of the diverse community, learning

environment, and the active lifestyle. The figures within the photographs are shown engaging

with one another, which can be interpreted in a variety of ways depending upon the reader's

intentions and own personal background.

What became one of the most important components in creating these three themes were

the thematic saturation (Glaser, 1965) of certain types of photographs used in the brochures (*The*

U Book 2010, 2010; *The U Book 2011,* 2011; *The U Book 2012,* 2012; *The U Book 2013,* 2013;

The Freshman's Guide 2014, 2014). The levels of visual saturation were also used to determine

their order of importance to the common narrative of campus life within the brochures. The

organization of the themes begins with the diverse community, learning environment, and active

lifestyle. In the following sections, each theme is examined through the use of specific examples

that exemplify the visuals of the theme. The following three thematic sections include

Fairclough's (1989) Critical Discourse Analysis, Hall's (2011) encoding-decoding model,

Ceccarelli's (1998) polysemy through strategic ambiguity and hermeneutic depth, and Condit's

(1989) polyvalence model as methods for translating alternative readings of the themes. The

fourth and final section of this thesis addresses the corresponding research question and

hypothesis.

The three important factors of cooperation, diversity and perceived connection that were

found in the study of each of the themes need to be considered in how the themes create a

comprehensive narrative. The visual use of these factors united the themes through the overlap

of their application to the brochures to create a common narrative. The first factor is the sign of

cooperation, allowing group images to show a unified community and not simply a crowd of

individuals. The second of these factors include two different definitions of the term diversity.

First, diversity can be defined as a variety in the types of students who are visible within each

image. Second, diversity can be defined as a variety in options of activities and contexts.

Perceiving a connection to the photographed figures provides the reason for the use of the

themes in the brochures by visually representing several types of students. By showing

cooperation between visually represented individuals who utilize both definitions of diversity in

the brochures, it can be easier for the audience to identify with figures within the photographs.

The most frequent image to be found in the brochures was that of the diverse community.

        Theme one: the diverse community. An important component of any university

campus is, of course, how students engage with one another. The factor of cooperation as

mentioned above not only affects how students might look at the university, but how they might

imagine themselves in a similar situation. The most prolific visual was that of students simply

hanging out together in casual settings (44 images out of a total of 128 different photographs

throughout the five brochures). The physical settings ranged between being on campus and off

campus. Very few images showed only one student, visually emphasizing the importance of

groups over individual students. The diverse community theme combines both the construction

of diversity for both representation and options, as well as a show of cooperation.

        Image 14 below is an example of the diverse community that combines visible diversity

in race and gender in a public, social setting. As explained in the nominal assessment in Chapter

3, the diversity in the figures is based upon their physical appearances (e.g., hair color, skin

color, clothing types, and hair styles). The visual components continue to push this construction

of the community by placing the four dominant figures in an apparent circle. By positioning the

four students (a coded Black male and three White women, coded through the man's darker skin,

stronger features and a bald hair cut commonly seen on men in contrast to the women with paler

skin tones that were not coded as tanned skin, and lighter or reddish long hair) in a manner where

they are facing the center of the photograph, the composition of the photograph focuses on the coded Black male as the center of the image, given his location and that he is the only one "facing" the camera. The body language used (relaxed arms hanging by the sides of those standing, the one arm propped up by the woman who is seated) shows a friendly conversation, while also listening to something the woman on the far right is saying. By looking towards the woman on the right rather than directly facing her, the group appears to be taking turns speaking, as the others look towards the current speaker.

Image 14

(*The U Book 2013*, 2013)

Through the central focus of the figures' positions within the photograph, the students show a more community-oriented structure of participating in turns rather than being caught in a crowd. Visible facial features are set in smiles, suggesting that they are enjoying the conversation at hand. The perceived connection the audience can have with this photograph comes from showing how a group of gender and racially diverse students are able to engage in a friendly conversation. By showing more than one type of diversity representation in a group, potential students reading the brochure may find it easier to feel connected with one of the types of diversity being represented.

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Images 15 and 16 below are set in different contexts (walking in a city or sitting in a dorm room) compared to Image 14 above (on campus), but maintain visible representations of gender diversity. Image 15 changes the context the students are shown in, as they are actively walking rather than standing and sitting together in a group. Instead of their bodies being angled to face one another, their heads turn to engage with as many in the group as possible. The coded White woman in the middle is unable to look to both sides at the same time, but while she looks to the coded White woman on the right, she is also facing the coded White man on her left with her body through her shoulders. These visual gestures towards the others connect all three represented students into a complete group.
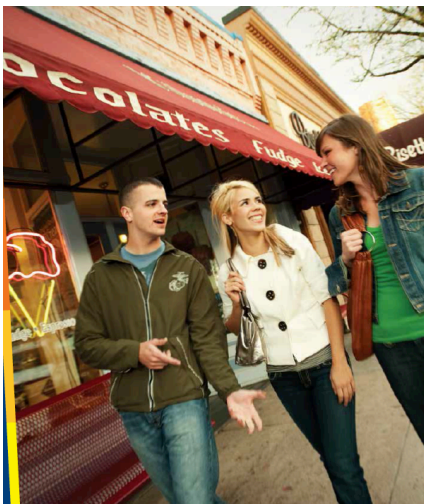

Image 15   Image 16

(*The U Book 2013*, 2013)

Even the man in Image 15 has his hands pointed towards the middle of the group, keeping the focus of the photograph in the middle of the picture. All three figures are smiling at one another, again apparently enjoying the conversation at hand. The group is also more active than the students in Image 14 (above). Instead of standing in a circle, the three figures in Image 15 above are walking somewhere. It is likely that they are on their way to something rather than going home, given that they are not carrying anything but handbags and the lighting suggests an

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afternoon excursion. The photograph shows more energy by being shot at an angle to the students rather than on a horizontal line as Image 14 above. The diversity of the community is supported through the visible gender diversity (two women with one man), as well as possible variety in the types of events they are attending by walking to the location. A perceived connection may be felt in seeing students actively going somewhere other than to class.

The visual signs of the gender and racially inclusive community are shown in Image 16's group of students (above). While the two figures in the foreground are angled to face one another more than the two figures sitting in the back, there is still an open "V" shape to their positions that includes the other two students. The identities of these figures were coded as two White men in the front (from their skin tone, clothing, hair styles and color), with two mixed-racial students in the back coded as a man and a woman (by the hair length and darker skin tone that was not assessed to be tanned skin). By placing the two White students in the foreground of the photograph, the composition places them physically closer to the reader of the brochure. This framing also places the White students as the focus and so authority of the event (Fusco, 2003). From the physical positions the students are in, the two in the foreground are performing for their "audience" in the back. The two students on the dorm bed in the back are facing the rest of the room and the other two students, watching the two performers with their musical instruments (a guitar and a banjo). While the woman is holding something in her hands (perhaps a cell phone in a case, given the size and color), she is not looking down and instead is showing engagement with the performance through her smile. This type of engagement is different than has been previously represented within the theme of the diverse community. Instead of representing every individual actively participating in the event at hand, there are only two active people playing the musical instruments. The other two students are a passive audience. The

diverse community is shown as having diversity in the types of interactions available to students by showing more than just conversations. For some students, the quieter, less active type of situation may be easier to identify with than meeting on campus (Image 14 above) or off campus in a new town (Image 15 above).

Within three photographs, the diverse community theme is represented through three different contexts and three different types of engagements. These engagements include conversing on the campus, walking through the city, and playing music in a dorm room. There are a limited number of images that show only individuals, and even fewer photographs have any written textual information associated with the student through student quotes and names. Often, these quotations speak to the diverse community specifically such as the quotes listed below (taken from the UB and the FG), showing how students are connected to the diverse community even when they are not visibly engaged with anyone in a given photograph. These written text statements are one layer of information that Fairclough's (1989) Critical Discourse Analysis focuses on.

The analysis considers three major layers of analysis that overlap one another. The first step in the discourse analysis focuses on the written text that supports the theme itself. The second step addresses the creation and consumption of the texts, which was not used for this specific study. The third step analyzes events as sociocultural practices. Through the first level of analysis, the first four brochures reused statements of diversity and community, while the fifth brochure took a different approach and thus form in referring to the diverse community. To study the language of the brochures, the following statements can be applied to Images 14, 15 and 16 above;

> That "you'll forge relationships with students and professors who inspire you;"
> "make friends with the kinds of students who are drawn to CSU; smart, motivated

and down-to-earth;" "you'll sense the connection between CSU and the greater community [of Fort Collins]."

(*The U Book 2013*, 2013)

Applying to CSU "is an invitation to join a family."

(*The Freshman's Guide 2014*, 2014)

The "forg[ing]" of relationships are visible in photographs that show students engaged with one another in social settings. Through seeing other students who were also "drawn to CSU," students can identify with the figures being represented and perceive that the viewer may be drawn to CSU as well. The connection to the "greater community" is shown as students walk through Old Town, Fort Collins on a social outing (specifically Image 15 above). Being attracted to CSU can be found in that attending CSU is like "an invitation to join a family" on campus of similarly minded people. Following the third layer of Fairclough's (1989) discourse analysis, the study of sociocultural practices and events within the images can be found in the social interactions. The social components within this theme come from both the types of socializing being shown as well as the various contexts when these social events occur. Cultural components are seen in groups that include at least one visible identity that is not identical to the others, such as racial or gender background. The perceived interaction between students shows CSU's community both as already being diverse in options for conversations and social interactions while encouraging more diversity engagements through showing diverse groups.

One possible decoding of the images follows the dominant position of the university's positive message of a diverse community (Hall, 2011). The images are intended to show a diverse group of students able to participate in the CSU community. Diversity, as defined by CSU's diversity mission statement, is shown through the inclusion of students with non-White or non-male identities (Diversity Mission, 2014). This definition allows the dominant decoding of this theme to show how diverse and community-focused the campus is. Ceccarelli's (1998)

constructions of polysemy, specifically strategic ambiguity and hermeneutic depth, also create a

dominant and positive reading of the images as progressive and supportive of the diversity being

shown. The use of strategic ambiguity focuses on having alternative readings of a single text

that converge in praise of that text. For the diverse community, two positive interpretations

include that CSU is supportive of a diverse student body, and that CSU already has a diverse

student body. Both of these positive readings fit into the construction of hermeneutic depth as

being the intended reading of the diverse community theme.

     In contrast, a negotiated or oppositional decoding of these images and the diverse

community theme could question the representations in the number of White students to non-

White students (Hall, 2011). While the numbers may be accurate as to the general proportions of

the student body between White and non-White students, the proportion may seem less friendly

to a student with a non-White background. There is some visible diversity in the student body as

15.6% to 31.3% of the visibly represented student body was coded as non-White, compared to

the 22.9% to 28.4% of avowed non-White students at CSU (Student Enrollment Books, 2015).

An oppositional decoding could extend the argument further and question why there are more

images of White students compared to minority students. There was a very limited selection of

images that do not include a White student in some capacity. The emphasis of White students

within the images shows not only a higher number of White coded students, but also a dominant

presence of White students in CSU's culture, as evidenced in the foregrounding of White

students in Image 16 above (of the four students in the dorm room). If the images consistently

show at least one White student, then it may be read that there is not enough diversity to allow

such social events to occur without White students. In addition to the overall presence of White

students, the oppositional perspective could argue that showing some type of diversity in most of

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the photographs is little more than tokenism. No group picture exists without some sort of visible gender or racial diversity in the identifications of the individuals, bringing to question why there are no images of anyone with the same overall visible identity (e.g., a group of only female White students, or a group of only male Black students). The oppositional decoding considers mostly the composition of the images in which figures can be identified and how they are positioned within the photograph itself. Through the repetition of a White student engaging with a non-White student, the diverse community theme can be considered tokenistic in its use of visible diversity in the brochures. The negotiated decoding at least considers that there is at least a visible show of diversity in its assessment of the diverse community theme.

Condit's (1989) construction of polyvalent readings offers two main views of how the diverse community theme can be read. The first considers the groups of diverse students who are engaging with one another as a positive sign of diversity. Everyone is actively engaged with one another in support of the interaction in which they are participating. This mimics the dominant decoding from Hall (2011) and Ceccarelli's (1998) strategic ambiguity and hermeneutic depth as reinforcements of a positive representation of CSU's diversity mission statement. The second view through polyvalence suggests that, given the proportion of White students being represented, CSU has not yet achieved the diversity it seeks to support as listed in its diversity mission statement (Diversity Mission, 2014). The lack of more visible diversity may deter students of diverse identities from feeling the perceived connection to the figures represented. The negative view of the diverse community theme can be matched to the negotiated and oppositional readings through Hall's (2011) construction of the encoding-decoding model.

When considering ways of being able to change how the diverse community theme is

read in order to limit these negative translations, the choice of increasing the levels of visible

diversity can lead to more complications. While there is a significant difference between the

actual enrollment numbers at CSU and the percentage of representations in the UB and the FG

that would allow for an accurate rise in the amount of visible representations, there is also the

risk of trying to over-represent the existing diversity. The moral question of how accurate the

visual diversity is to the campus can be addressed in considering the brochure's visual

representations of diversity that does not actively exist on the campus. The purpose of the

negotiated and oppositional readings is to find a negative interpretation of a given text, making it

difficult to use more diversity without raising concerns about the moral implications of

overrepresentation. Alternatively, the next two themes, the learning environment and the active

lifestyle, are constructed in ways that make addressing these negative translations less complex

than the diverse community through an increase in visual representations.

Theme two: the learning environment. In an advertisement for a university, it is

important to show students what their academic life looks like as much as their social life. The

second theme of the learning environment represents CSU's academic opportunities by showing

students either working with an instructor (Image 17 below), or working with equipment

pertaining to their major (Images 18 and 19 below). As explained in the nominal assessment of

the teachers and students in Images 10 and 11 in Chapter 3, these images rely on visual markers

to make a determination of what the situation is within the photograph. For the learning

environment, there are additional markers used to determine the specific relationship between the

figures being visually represented, particularly between students and teachers.

One of these new factors is the apparent age of the figures in relation to one another, based upon the intended high school student audience for these freshmen admissions brochures. In the previous chapter, Chapter 3, the instructors and students in Images 10 and 11 were identified through their racial and gender backgrounds as well as the differences between the two figures in each photograph. The older figure was placed into a position of authority compared to the student, either by pointing out something on a board or physically standing over the student. Given the nature of these physical positions, there is logic behind ascribing the teachers as guides for the student's understanding, or listening to something that the student is explaining. In Image 17 below, the same construction is used between the coded, older teacher who is directing the younger student's learning by pointing to content on a computer screen. The two figures in Image 17 were ascribed the identities of being an older White male teacher and a younger White female student. While the instructor is pointing to something on the computer screen, he is not the one handling the control of the computer. The student appears to be working through a class assignment, given that she is in the computer lab with the instructor present. The position of the woman's right hand, while cut off in the photograph, is angled to use a right-handed computer mouse. By working jointly on a problem, the instructor and student are cooperating together to complete the action in the scene.

Image 17

NANCY TAO '10
MUSIC AND CHEMISTRY MAJOR
Graduate student, Yale University
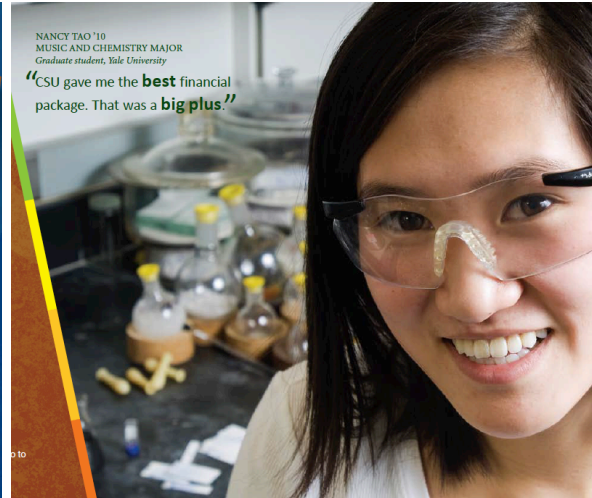"CSU gave me the **best** financial package. That was a **big plus**."

Image 18

(*The U Book 2013*, 2013)

Images 18 (above) and 19 (below) offer examples of students working in the learning environment that has an absence of an instructor in the context. What makes these two images part of the learning environment theme is the equipment the students are shown to be working with, presumably through some sort of assignment. While Image 17 shows a teacher and student working with equipment in a computer lab, the process of learning is focused on using equipment. Image 18, however, uses the image of science lab equipment as a backdrop, where the ascribed Asian student is prepared to work with the equipment on her own. The woman's preparation for working is clear in that she is wearing safety goggles, and from the white of her visible clothing, she is possibly in a lab coat. Her smile suggests her eagerness to work with the equipment behind her. Because there are no visible textbooks or instructors, the student can be read as about to conduct her own experiment. She is facilitating her own learning. However, there is a complication in how this photograph is presented. While it shows diversity in that it is a researcher-coded Asian woman working in a science lab, the emphasis of a coded *Asian* woman with the lab equipment and smile could be read as highly tokenistic. The "model minority" (Freedman, 2005) construction of the hard working Asian American is a clear read in

how the student is presented. When looking at the Asian woman in Image 18, the reader

physically looks down at the student while she looks up; she is situated specifically to guide the

reader's eye from her face to the lab equipment. The included quotation emphasizes how lucky

the student is because CSU's financial aid is a "big plus," suggesting that the student would not

be in the position she is without some sort of outside assistance, which is shown with upward

gratitude for being able to attend CSU as she is represented (*The U Book 2013*, 2013).

Image 19

(*The U Book 2013*, 2013)

In Image 19, the three students have equipment they are working with out in the field,

rather than being confined to a lab. Carrying equipment on their backs, the books they are

holding and looking at suggest they are working through an assignment. In addition, the three

students standing together suggest a group project that they are working on – focused

engagement around student work in context, *in situ*. The photo's composition shows not only

students who are turned towards each other, quite possibly communicating while working

through their assignment, but also students who get to experience a diversity of educational

situations beyond lecture halls and labs. By showing students actively using equipment

outside/outdoors in a non-classroom environment, Image 19 offers a glimpse into the diversity of

what the learning environment itself can look like.

To follow the first layer of critical discourse analysis, the written text within the brochures helps to frame the activities and interactions in the photographs:

> "Your mind will thrive in our challenging learning environment;" a student quoted to say "There's a different atmosphere of learning at CSU – instead of focusing on grades, you're in it [your field of study] because you love it"
>
> (*The U Book 2013*, 2013)

> "The knowledge, experience and connections you gain at CSU set the foundation for a bright future."
>
> (*The Freshman's Guide 2014*, 2014).

The "challenging learning environment" and "different atmosphere of learning" are shown in the photographs through students actively working in the field (Image 19 above). At the same time, a student's "love" of a field can be seen in the student smiling in her laboratory gear (Image 18 above). Both the idea of being academically and intellectually challenged support the conception of being in a given field of study "because you love it." The dedication a student can feel towards a field that they love can find both "knowledge" and "connections" through interacting with instructors from those same fields, as noted in Images 10 and 11 from Chapter 3, and Image 17 above. A dominant reading of the learning environment theme focuses on cooperation between students and their instructors to create a positive learning environment. Through the first layer of the textual analysis, the emphasis on the adventure of learning at CSU is advertised through the "challenge" of setting "the foundation for a bright future." Instead of referring to diversity specifically, the written text offers an opportunity to read how students are actively working through their educations to set up that bright future promised by the brochures.

As mentioned previously, the second layer of analysis focuses on the consumer of the text, which is not included in this specific study. Following the third layer of analysis, the focus on discursive events as sociocultural instances emphasizes students working together in specific learning environments on specific assignments. Many of the instances included an instructor as

a figure of authority who was actively passing on knowledge to the students. As mentioned previously, the three main themes of the diverse community, learning environment and active lifestyle are connected through the use of three factors of cooperation, diversity and the perceived connection. These three factors can be seen in both the student-student and teacher-student relationships in the learning environment. These relationships are encoded to be positive constructions of the learning environment, supportive of diversity in its students, its academics, and its educational opportunities. In addition, Image 11 from Chapter 3 shows an ascribed Asian woman as an instructor, adding diversity to the representation of faculty.

A dominant encoded message for the learning environment theme is that teachers who have experience in the field are working with younger students, which is a logical representation given the freshmen audience of the brochures. The learning environment is shown as active engagements between students and teachers rather than the stereotypical passive audience in a lecture hall. They are also working in labs and out in the field instead of being confined to the classroom. The strategic ambiguity of these readings can be seen through different types of student-teacher relationships, offering more than one positive type of interaction with which students can identify. An interpretation through the hermeneutic depth polysemy construction argues that the images that create the learning environment theme show how CSU's teachers are willing to work with a variety of students.

Despite the positive show of diversity cumulating within the learning environment between teachers and students, there are several complications that alternative types of readings might find. First, the use of the one coded non-White female instructor in Chapter 3's Image 11 is a double-edged sword. While the visual shows that there are more than just White male instructors at CSU, the fact that only one of the five brochures shows a non-White, non-male

instructor opens the door to important questions as to why there is only the one visibly diverse representation. A negotiated translation could suppose that, as there is diversity within the student body, presumably there would be teachers of different backgrounds. While most instructors are represented as White males, many of the students who were shown with these instructors had different racial and gender identities ascribed to them based on physical aspects such as skin tone and facial features. If there is visible racial and gender diversity within the student body, then presumably the faculty body would also be diverse. An oppositional reading would address the proportion of representation within the faculty more directly, questioning what the faculty looks like or is expected to look like if only one model is emphasized (White and male). The use of one instructor who has a different identity to the general represented model can also be read as tokenistic, as it raises concerns about what is the actual diversity of the faculty.

The polyvalent readings for this theme again focus on two dominant sides, a positive and negative view of the learning environment theme's components. A positive reading would focus on the visual representation of teachers working with a diverse range of students. The reading can be extended in that one brochure shows a teacher that embodies both a gender and racial minority identity (i.e., the Asian woman from Image 11 in Chapter 3). Both teachers and students work cooperatively to create an open learning environment that includes students of many identities and backgrounds. On the other hand, a negative interpretation of the learning environment theme could say that CSU is comprised primarily of White male teachers, as they are the only ones consistently represented. The visual emphasis of the White male teacher over any other visible teacher may also be read as being the dominant or preferred type of teacher. The options available for reducing the severity of oppositional readings are more open than in

the diverse community, as the potential criticisms from using the oppositional readings are focused on the types of instructors that are visible rather than the learning environments themselves. If there was a greater diversity in the perceived identities of teachers shown beyond the one Asian female, her presence may not seem as tokenistic, particularly if both gender and racial diversity types are used in the photographs.

Compared to the diverse community, the learning environment theme offers a less complicated method for trying to address concerns of under- or overrepresentation brought up by the negotiated and oppositional translations. The last of the three themes, the active lifestyle, is also constructed in a way that may be easier to address concerns raised by alternative readings in relation to the diverse community and learning environment. However, the active lifestyle theme offers a new kind of complication in how it is constructed compared to how it is visually represented.

Theme three: an active lifestyle. In both its use of scenery pictures and written narrative, the CSU brochures clearly take pride in the outdoor activities that are available due to its location near the mountains, including open campus spaces, river canoeing and hiking trails. The pride in the local landscape around CSU is reflected in the written text of the UB and FG brochures, advertising the region and local community almost as much as the academics of the school itself. The written text offers an adventurous take on how students would have a variety of options to become active and explore the surrounding areas:

> "As you're hiking up Horsetooth Rock or cruising down a snowy slope."
> (*The U Book 2013*, 2013)

> "Deep down, Fort Collins has the soul of a mountain town."
> (*The Freshman's Guide 2014*, 2014).

Photographs including areas around CSU have already been found in both the diverse community and the learning environment, including the city scene in Image 15 above from the diverse community. The difference between Image 15 above (i.e., the three students strolling Old Town, Fort Collins) and Image 20 below is the amount of physical activity required to achieve the situation within the photograph.

300+
days of sunshine per year

Your **place** is what you make of it. But it sure helps when you're in a place like Fort Collins.

As you're hiking up Horsetooth Rock or cruising down a snowy slope, you can count on getting a natural tan (we have more than 300 days of sunshine per year). And when you walk downtown for a night out, you'll sense the connection between CSU and the greater community – and you'll find out why Fort Collins is one of *Money* magazine's "Best Places to Live."

To see why Fort Collins is such a great college town, go to **admissions.colostate.edu/location**.

Image 20

(*The U Book 2013*, 2013)

Rather than casually walking down the street or strolling across campus (as seen in previous photographs), the figures in Image 20 had to have worked their way into that situation. The elements of cooperation and diversity are both clearly shown in the two photographs within Image 20, in that groups of figures have worked together to hike up a snowy mountain, or canoe down a river together. They must be conscious of each other to achieve arriving at their destination as a cohesive whole. Particularly in the top photograph in Image 20, the composition of the photograph shows that the group members are intentionally posing together, not randomly added into the background. The two photos also show diversity in the types of activities available, as well as the time of year activities are available. The top photograph shows a clear day with the snowy backdrop of the mountains, suggesting a winter day. The contrast in the

lower photograph in Image 20 shows a bright summertime day on a river, likely the Poudre River that runs through Fort Collins. Scenic photographs of CSU show students actively walking or biking across campus as another form of physical activity in which students can participate.

One important factor to consider in these photographs is the social status of the students in each situation. While the photographs of students in outdoor and adventurous contexts are shown as White and predominantly male, suggesting a higher social class, all students can be seen walking across campus no matter what their social or financial status. As exciting as the hiking or canoeing may seem, these activities may not be open to everyone who would attend CSU. The social class and financial considerations for these events are explored in more detail in the following negotiated and oppositional translations of the active lifestyle theme.

Image 21   Image 22

(*The U Book 2013*, 2013)

On campus there are several opportunities for engaging in the active lifestyle beyond walking across campus. Image 21 above shows a student climbing the rock wall at CSU's Recreation Center, one example of the few images showing a student on their own. The angle of the event is dramatic, showing an upward shot towards the student in order to emphasize the

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difficulty, skill and strength needed to perform the task at hand. The ascribed White male student is focused and determined, pulling himself up one handhold at a time. The construction of this image is strong and powerful as well as highly masculine, confined only by the visibility of the windows behind him rather than appearing to be outside. The photograph also covers over half of an entire page within the UB brochures it is published in, placing it as one of the biggest photographs that was included in the UB brochures. While the student is shown as being alone, there is still a construction of cooperation in the image, as rock-climbing indoors requires someone holding the other end of the rope. As much as skill is needed, cooperation is also needed between the two participating in the rock-climbing event. Another opportunity for diversity in options includes participating in active events as a spectator. Image 22 above shows a crowd of CSU students cheering for their team. Cheering for CSU's sports teams offers students a way to connect to other students through the active lifestyle theme without having to be active. By standing and cheering for the team, students can engage in the sporting event even though they are not playing the game themselves.

The critical discourse analysis of the active lifestyle theme explains how an active lifestyle can be linked to the community at CSU as well as the community of Fort Collins. Most of the active lifestyle is represented through group activities, making them social and cooperative as well as diverse. There are more opportunities for students to see what they may be interested in doing while at CSU. The written text of the active lifestyle theme focuses more on references to the area surrounding CSU rather than the campus. Through the first layer of the critical discourse analysis, the references to Fort Collins offer an interesting shift from life on campus to life off campus. One way the shift can be read is that CSU is offering more than just the academic side of a student's life. There are adventures to be had in the city itself as well as the

Fort Collins area beyond campus. The discursive events of the third layer of analysis focus on the activities being shown. From rock climbing and walking across campus to hiking in the mountains and exploring the city, there is a variety of types of events that students can see themselves attending. There is also the traditional college event of attending a sports game, a social as well as physical activity to participate in that focuses on the active spirit of CSU itself. The sports game is also a form of a cultural college event.

These positive interpretations of the active lifestyle have a dominant decoding of life at CSU as being exciting and a fun challenge. Through strategic ambiguity and hermeneutic depth, there are both the social benefits of actively playing together as well as physical benefits. There are several representations of options of activities that are on and off campus. Whether a student prefers the great outdoors or the Recreation Center, traveling through the city or cheering at a CSU game, there are many ways of reading a positive version of the active lifestyle. The intended reading of the active lifestyle theme through the hermeneutic depth offers the physical benefits of the active lifestyle, as well as the social benefits. The students who are in groups while participating in an activity are shown as smiling, enjoying the situation as well as the company. They are going out on adventures hiking together, or paddling down a river together, using the social as well as the physical aspects of the active lifestyle theme to create an exciting sociocultural event of student participation.

One important issue to consider in these images is who is participating in which events. While the figures in the photos of Image 20 above were not clear enough for actual identification for the nominal assessment, they were almost coded as all White male figures. Diversity is shown through the variety of *events* rather than the variety of *students* engaging in these activities. The only image for the active lifestyle theme that shows a non-White figure beyond

simply walking across campus is the group activity of cheering for the CSU team, which includes a coded Black male in the background (Image 22 above). The ascribed figures participating in the rock climbing or outdoor adventures are shown as mostly White, mostly male, and from the gear often needed likely of higher social and economic status. Whether the gear is rented or owned, simply partaking in many of these activities – canoeing down the river, or rock climbing – costs quite a bit of money. CSU offers free home games to students, eliminating many of the costs associated with attending CSU-based sports games. Despite the free tickets that would allow all students to attend the sports games, no matter what their social status, the majority of the figures in Image 22 above are White, and most of them are male.

Another important area to consider when looking at the photographs that form the active lifestyle theme is the lack of visibly coded or contextually cued disabled students. Without the visible presence of disabled students, the activities presented suggest that only able-bodied students can participate in these events. Even scenic shots of the campus show students either walking or bicycling, rather than using crutches, wheelchairs, or a seeing-eye dog. A negotiated reading could argue that the variety of activities shown (i.e., rock-climbing indoors versus hiking or canoeing outdoors) hint at unseen options open to all students no matter their physical situation. The oppositional reading could emphasize the point that that the brochures only show able-bodied students engaging in this theme. Even the crowd cheering in the stands are all standing, with no visible supports such as wheelchairs or crutches. The lack of visible aids used by students could be interpreted as disabled students not being able to participate in the active lifestyle at CSU. Given that there are cognitive disabilities as well as physical disabilities, the visual format of the UB and the FG require identification marks to be visible, leading to the use of visible mobility aids. Specifically, by showing rock-climbing, mountain hiking, and canoeing

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(Images 21 and 20 above), disabled students may feel excluded from the perceived active CSU experience by not seeing any representations of other, more visible forms of disability.

There are many benefits to showing these exciting forms of physical activity, as previously noted. By not including any activities that are open to disabled students, nor showing any disabled students participating in any events, this theme may affect how disabled students view CSU as a whole. If there are no disabled students visible, individuals who are disabled in one way or another may feel too much in the minority to feel comfortable in attending CSU. As has been examined in the use of visible diversity of faculty, it is important for potential students to perceive a similar background to potential peers at CSU. One solution to the issue of the lack of disabled students may be to offer representations of disabled students participating in activities to include them in the active lifestyle narrative. Alternatively, the active lifestyle theme itself could be adapted to be more inclusive of students who may engage in different levels and types of activity instead of emphasizing the two options of active engagement versus passive observer.

The formation and use of the three themes of the diverse community, learning environment and the active lifestyle and their key features of cooperation, diversity and a perceived connection all function as invitations to potential student applicants. The research question and hypothesis below focus on what narratives are being represented and how the brochures use those representations.

Research question and hypothesis. While the three themes of the diverse community, learning environment, and active lifestyle within the brochures have been applied to the brochures, the specific type of freshman student that the images may appeal to the most becomes an important question. As noted in Chapter 3, the first research question and hypothesis focused

on determining what type of diversity was being shown and to what extent. This chapter, Chapter 4, has focused on how those representations have been used within the brochures. More specifically:

> RQ2: What is the emphasized type of diversity that is being represented in the UB and the FG? Gender? Disabled students? Alternative heritages to U.S. American identities (e.g., international student representation)? What absences of types of diversity representations are there in contrast to what is noted in CSU's own diversity mission statement?

The type of diversity that the five brochures focused on the most was gender, rather than racial diversity in comparison to the White male student. Overall, coded White students were the most prevalent racial group represented, followed by Asian, Black and mixed-racial students. Either individually or as a whole, racial minority groups never outnumbered the White population being represented in the brochures. In two of the three brochures, there were more women being represented than men. As previously noted, there were no representations of any disabled students, nor were there any visual cues to identify international students. The lack of visible physically disabled students among other groups is in conflict with CSU's diversity mission statement (Diversity Mission, 2014). It also has conflict with the "goal of RDS [which] is to normalize disability, including chronic health conditions, as part of the culture of diversity on campus" (*RDS What We Do*, 2015). To answer the posed research question above, the White population outnumbers all other racial groups, while two of the five brochures showed more women than men. While the representations of men outnumber women over half the time, the most visible diversity compared to the White male student is gender, specifically White women. The answer to the research question helps to frame the results of the hypothesis.

More specifically, the hypothesis focused on how the brochures may represent not only U.S. American diversity, but also international diversity. There were two important reasons for

using international student representations as part of the hypothesis. The first is based upon CSU enrollment statistics, which list international students among their domestic student racial categories. Some examples of visual cues for identifying international students included clothing styles that are not socially constructed as typical of American students (e.g., robes and headwear such as hijabs). The second reason for this hypothesis emphasizes the types of images that were anticipated from the brochures. As the purpose of the brochure is not only to explain how to apply to the university, but also argue why students should attend CSU, there is a list of program options for incoming students including majors that are available. The brochures also offer an opportunity for diversity representations that could include promoting the study abroad programs CSU offers. As many international students come to CSU as exchange students, showing international students could be one way of demonstrating international diversity and promoting international programs to potential freshmen. However, the hypothesis assumes that the brochures are not advertising for off-campus programs. More specifically:

> H2: The representational depictions in the UB and the FG are constructed with a focus on domestic U.S. American freshmen. This representation focuses visual diversity through U.S. race and gender performance rather than visually constructed representations of international, non-American or disability diversity.

Through this study, the hypothesis was fully confirmed. Rather than showing diversity through visible and discursive coding of international programs and students, the UB and the FG demonstrated diversity only through U.S. American cultures. The only type of attire seen is stereotypical of American students (t-shirts, jeans, and hoodies, among others). There were only representations of activities or events that would be typical for American students at an American university campus. While actual international students often dress in typical American clothes while attending CSU, there was nothing to visually suggest a non-American dress-diverse identity among any of the represented students in the brochures. In supporting the

hypothesis, the brochures represented a generic appearance of either White American, or American-minority backgrounds and co-cultures. To fully consider the hypothesis, a look at the written text was also evaluated. There were no written references to international students or study abroad programs in any of the text, instead focusing on the opportunities students would have on the campus itself. As has been mentioned before, the lack of disability diversity is problematic on several levels. The lack of disability representation confirms the final portion of this hypothesis in that there were no visually disabled students in any of the five brochures. There was also never any reference to the RDS Office or programs for disabled students. Because there was not even a written textual comment to address international programs or disabled student programs, the UB and the FG brochures are focused on stereotypical domestic freshmen applicants.

Chapter Summary

In closing, Chapter 4's narrative analysis has considered several ways of looking at how diversity is represented in the UB and the FG from the intended, dominant readings, towards negotiated and oppositional translations of the themes. The narrative analysis completes the study started by the nominal assessment in Chapter 3. Overall, the study has found that there were several groups of identities that were not represented (e.g., Native American, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and disabled students), underrepresented (e.g., Hispanic), or overrepresented (e.g., White, Asian, Black, and multi-racial). The limited representations of racial diversity positioned White women as the most diverse group that was represented within the photographs of the brochures. Depending upon how the diverse community, learning environment or active lifestyle themes are read, there are many ways to assess how these three themes are presented and used through diversity representations. In the following chapter,

Chapter 5, the results from both the nominal assessment (Chapter 3) and the thematic analysis (Chapter 4) are discussed while considering the current study's relevance to literature on visual representations and narrative studies (Chapter 1).

Chapter 5: Discussion

There have been many studies of how visual representations of people and diversity are used and what it communicates. The purpose of this thesis has been as much to expand these studies of visual representations as to determine the visual representations used in brochures published from Colorado State University's (CSU) Office of Admissions. As examined in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, the construction, framing, and amount of diversity representations in "The U Book" (UB) and "The Freshman's Guide" (FG) influenced the narrative themes, specifically the diverse community, learning environment, and active lifestyle. By using – or not using – certain types of diversity as visual representations, the brochures were able to create narratives that were inclusive to some types of students and exclusive to others. While the value of the current study can be seen in its consideration of how representations are used in CSU's advertising, this chapter demonstrates how it also expands the existing literature.

Following the organizational pattern from the literature review in Chapter 1, this chapter first examines the current project's results with previous work in narrative studies. The second section addresses visual representations, including the potential of stereotypes being used as representations. Narrative studies and representational studies are the two main areas of the literature review and this current chapter. The third and last section combines materiality and morality studies, as their function is similar in design. First, the following section briefly reviews how a narrative can be constructed from visual representations.

Narrative Studies

As one of the two most important areas of research in the literature review, visual and written cues can be used to find a narrative within an otherwise limited text such as printed brochures. The two main types of narratives to be found are core narratives and common

narratives. These are created through alternative readings, including the third persona. The following four sections address each of these areas of study, beginning with how a narrative can be constructed through various elements.

Core narratives within a text. As the current study found, there are many ways of determining a narrative in a given text. For the study, the thematic saturation of different types of images (Glaser, 1965) identified three main themes – the diverse community, learning environment and active lifestyle. According to Andrews, Squire and Tamboukou (2008), the use of a narrative in characterizing a text comes from the link between stories and human society. These components can be categorized before the core focus of the narrative is explained. Some of these characterizations come from key themes – stories of events – that are considered as a central component of the narrative research itself. In my study of the UB and the FG, these narrative characterizations were focused on the constructions of cooperation, diversity and a perceived connection. These key elements helped to combine the three dominant themes of the diverse community, learning environment, and the active lifestyle into a cohesive narrative. The three themes each covered a different component of the core narrative of campus life (i.e., social, educational, and physical components of living on campus). Andrews et al. (2008) offers the explanation that an "image depicts a moment, inviting us to speculate about what happens next, or what transpired to bring the scene about" (p. 152). The photographs in the UB and the FG are snapshots of moments on campus, leaving the interpretation of the activity and energy up to the imagination of those viewing the scene. Are students walking home, or are they walking to an event? Or are they on their way to class? What's the score in the game that the students are cheering for? The current study was able to support these definitions of creating a core narrative and how it functions within a given text. One method of reading the core narrative of the UB

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and the FG is that life at CSU is an adventure. These adventures can include studying a favorite field as well as interacting with other college students in a variety of situations. The three themes of the brochures also use the concept of common narratives to create their idyllic image of college life at CSU.

Common narratives of identification. While the themes of the diverse community, learning environment, and active lifestyle offer common narratives of diversity and cooperation, the most common narrative within the UB and the FG is that of identification. Fisher (1987) created a model that explains how a common narrative to a certain group of people can create their culture. The Narrative Paradigm explores how personal stories and backgrounds converge into the common narrative of the culture to shape and form identities with in-group members, and against out-group individuals. The distinction between those in a group and those who are not part of that group creates stories of exclusion that range from stereotyping the outsider to tokenizing them. For a sales brochure such as the UB and the FG, it is important to create a narrative that encourages potential students to feel included in the narrative being presented. The three major themes are designed to invite the viewer in, and connect them to the figures being represented in the brochures. By showing figures engaged in a variety of activities and situations, the themes offer a broad selection of situations for students to see and in turn connect to the common narrative. The way readers can identify with the narrative can vary depending upon the individual background of the reader. These different ways of identifying with the representations were examined through different theoretical readings using Fairclough's (1989) Critical Discourse Analysis, Hall's (2011) encoding/decoding, Ceccarelli's (1998) polysemy, and Condit's (1989) polyvalence. The current mixed methodological study considered alternative readings of each of the three themes, all of which considered different standpoints.

Alternative readings of a narrative. In the study, various theoretical lenses were used to find alternative readings to the three themes of the diverse community, learning environment and active lifestyle, including Fairclough's (1989) Critical Discourse Analysis. One of the benefits of rhetorical studies is the option rhetoricians have in considering a wide range of readings and interpretations. Black (1980) argues that this benefit is also a responsibility of the critic, to consider these alternative readings when studying the narrative within a text. Engbers (2013) expands upon alternative readings by explaining how visual rhetoric functions as its own type of discourse, such as the composition within a photograph. For the current study, the three themes were pulled from the thematic saturation of images (Glaser, 1965). The composition helped determine the discourse, such as showing an instructor and student together to contribute to the learning environment, or a group of hikers supporting the active lifestyle. The relationship between the figures, the physical setting, the angle of the image and the distance of the camera to the figures all contribute to the composition and thus discourse in each photograph.

An example of how visual discourse can function in a photograph was found in Peck's (2014) article on the 2011 protest at the University of California campus in Davis. The photograph of the police officer pepper spraying the students created a discourse that had many readings, including negotiated and oppositional interpretations that were not the "official" narrative given (Peck, 2014). These alternative negative readings of a discourse offered examples in determining alternative readings in the UB and the FG. Instead of the dominant, intended reading of an engaged, diverse student body, there were many instances in the brochures that could be read as tokenistic or preferential towards White identity. This is particularly the case when considering the visual exclusion of certain groups. By not showing a particular group, (e.g., Native Americans, Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders, and physically disabled),

the discourse speaks to what type of diversity may be desired. While these alternative readings, both positive and negative, are based on the same text, individual backgrounds and experiences can change how the discourse is read in each photograph. The use of rhetorical criticism as used in this study allows for the researcher to consider more than just one interpretation of a text, including the consideration of who is not getting a chance to be represented.

The third persona of minority groups. One theory addressed earlier in the literature review that considers these "voiceless" groups is Wander's (1984) construction of the third persona. Wander argues that in order for something to be "progressive, change must progress toward something" (p. 205). The progressive change that Wander refers to is providing a space for often neglected minority groups, who are frequently represented without a voice and so become token figures of minority groups. While the third persona explains the construction of these voiceless tokens, Wander argues that progress needs to move forward and allow these groups room to speak for themselves. In the UB and the FG, this progress has not yet occurred. There were only a few select opportunities for students to "speak" for themselves through quotes, and most of these were focused on clearly represented and coded White students. The brochures show visual photographic representations of diversity, but are still silencing certain groups through restricting their engagement with the reader. Most minority groups are either represented as part of diverse groups, or are never included in the first place. The limitation in silencing racial minority voices can best be examined in the 2014-15 FG. This brochure reduced the number of figures who were identifiable, eliminating certain groups that had been present in earlier brochures (e.g., coded Asian and Hispanic racial identities). The FG, compared to the earlier editions of the UB, can be read as being the most silencing of the third persona by not only eliminating visual representation of certain groups, but also through eliminating students'

quotes. Roberts (2004) extends the research of silenced minority groups through an examination of how the use of a given narrative can silence minority groups while trying to preserve their stories. By marking a minority group's cultural stories and narratives as different and separate from the dominant culture, the narrative changes to emphasize the tokenism of that culture through objectification. One example that was found in the current study was in Image 18 of Chapter 4, where the Asian student is represented as a "model minority"-type figure (Freedman, 2005).

The use of narratives in a given document is focused on assessing and relating to its discourse, which are applicable to the printed UB and FG documents. In order to have these narratives in these discourses, visual representations need to be "say" something to the reader. As with determining a common or core narrative, the use of visual representations come with the potential for creating even more problems than already exist from the specific use of certain types of diversity representations. The next section considers how visual representations affect how a narrative can be read, as well as some issues that were considered for the current study.

Representations and stereotypes

As has been mentioned before, there is the risk of tokenizing individuals in order to increase the visible diversity within a given document, including the UB and the FG (Freedman, 2005). The balance between a more faithful representation and the potential for under- or overrepresentation offers a visual representation paradox. Most of the literature review in Chapter 1 considered questions regarding the use and application of diversity, which range underrepresentation to overrepresentation of certain groups. In the following section, there are six main categories to consider when reviewing how representations work within a given text and discourse. It is necessary to start with some definitions of diversity, as this study has found

many alternatives to defining how diversity itself is constructed and represented. Similar to some of the narrative studies, the method of distancing other groups through representations and stereotypes address both the power of visual portrayals, as well as the power of audience-centered narratives. To begin with, it is important to address the definitions of what "diversity" itself is and means.

Defining diversity. In the three themes of the diverse community, learning environment and active lifestyle, there were two predominant definitions of diversity. The first was used for performing the mixed methodological study, and was based on CSU's diversity mission statement (e.g., diversity as defined through gender, ethnic, racial and disability backgrounds; Diversity Mission, 2014). The second definition, acting as a key component for all three themes, was split between diversity of personal identity and diversity in situations and options CSU provides to its students. Halualani, Fassett, Morrison and Dodge (2006) found that the most common definition of diversity was a simple difference between White and non-White identity. The two-sided definition of the "raceless" diversity creates a problem of turning diversity into a "'great' equalizer" by generalizing differences associated with most forms of diversity, including race and gender (Halualani et al., 2006, pp. 79, 72). Depending upon an individual's background, the reader's relationship to the concept of diversity can vary as well. Based on a certain definition of diversity, an individual can influence how they relate to representations of diversity, providing the alternative readings addressed in narrative studies. The definition of diversity used in the current study is based on CSU's categorizations of identity (Student Enrollment Books, 2015). However, to compare certain types of visual representations as diverse in relation to something else, some of the "raceless" construction of diversity was applied as a theoretical base-line for comparisons.

How diversity is represented. As noted in the literature review of Chapter 1, there are several studies that have found areas of concern in how visual representations are being applied, and what representations are being used for diversity visibility. In a comparison between the current study to the study that Boyer, Brunner, Charles and Coleman (2006) performed using a content analysis of institutional websites, there were many similarities in what was being represented and to what extent. Boyer et al. focused on the same classifications of diversity (e.g., gender, racial background, and disability) that CSU's diversity mission statement describes and was thus used by the current study (Diversity Mission, 2014). Counting the number of representations of individuals who were specifically female, non-White or disabled, Boyer et al. found almost identical results to what was found in the UB and the FG from CSU. The highest percentage of visible diversity focused on gender, followed by racial minority groups. Between the two studies (i.e., Boyer et al.'s and the current study), there was also similarity in the lack of visibly disabled individuals.

Boyer et al. found that use of visual representations of diversity was applied strategically, creating a specific discourse of diversity intended to attract a specific type of audience. What the specific strategy the analyzed websites from Boyer et al.'s study were using, however, is unknown. While a lot of information can be gleamed from understanding the use of diversity as a competitive tool, Boyer et al.'s study does not offer any additional information about how these representations were used or what they looked like specifically. The composition of the photographs were not explained, nor were there any references made as to the nature of the representations. Boyer et al.'s (2006) study only considers the use of one image on a website to count them as showing diversity. As useful as Boyer et al.'s study has been in determining the value of studying the UB and the FG as representations of an organization, Boyer et al.'s study

also reinforced the need to provide a more complete picture of the situation at hand. The current study would have been lacking a great deal of information if the thematic analysis was not included with the nominal assessment in a mixed methodological study design. The need of using both the nominal and the thematic analyses of the study emphasize the value of knowing how a representation is used as well as how often it is used, rather than focusing on one or the other. What the results of Boyer et al.'s study also noted is the importance of using visual representations to attract potential clients. Boyer et al. explain that by using certain types of visual identities in their advertising, institutions like CSU are essentially advertising for that type of student, even if other sources emphasize the support of diversity on campus.

The "raceless" diversity. As mentioned previously, when diversity is defined as simply dominant and non-dominant racial identity, it becomes a two-sided "raceless" construction. If you do not have a White identity, you are grouped into a generalized non-White category. Urciuoli (2009) offers another definition of diversity, which is constructed simply as being different from the "classic" White male college student. According to Urciuoli, individuals with other backgrounds, including Asian, Black and Latino are "marked with respect" to White students (p. 21). By placing those with a non-White identity into a single, "raceless" category, groups can create an out-group stereotype "made up of objectified … elements of difference in background and ways of thinking" (Urciuoli, 2009, p. 23). The distinctions in the manner of looking at those with a different background can reduce the enactments of another culture into "a mosaic of cultural and symbolic capital" (Urciuoli, 2009, p. 36). Through the tokenization of visual depictions of diversity, it is easy to create a narrative of otherness to that group. To establish a base-line model of student identity to find diverse identity representations, Urciuoli's (2009) construction of a "typical" White male college student was used so that gender identity

(e.g., female) could also be considered a type of diversity. The power of rhetoric and visual discourse is demonstrated through how the composition and framing of a visual identity representation can be posed to the viewer and thus read in a number of ways. The potential in visual discourse can also be found in the construction of in-group versus out-group narrative.

Othering outside groups. In his Self-Categorization Theory, Turner (1987) argues how the creation and maintenance of identity is "a social categorization [that] may be defined as a cognitive representation of a social division into groups" (p. 27). Without an "other" group to compare against, it is impossible to create an identity because self-categorization is reliant upon categorizing and comparing the self in relation to others. This concept of self-categorization expands upon the understanding of the in- and out-group constructions found in Fisher's (1987) concept of the common narrative that shapes in- and out-group identities. One example of the use of Othering in the UB and FG brochures is the difference between instructors and students in the learning environment theme. Through the composition of the photographs and the visual age demographics of the individuals, the older figure is shown in the more official instructor's position. By making a distinction between younger students and older professors, there is a narrative of Othering older figures in order to make the point of maturity and experience of experts over time. For the most part, the brochures, acting as a sales ad, need to create an in-group narrative that invites a freshmen-aged audience to connect to and thus want to participate in the photographed scene.

The power of portrayals. In Chapter 4, the analysis of the themes of the diverse community, learning environment, and active lifestyle included three key elements of cooperation, diversity and a perceived connection that were found and linked the three main themes together. The last key element of a perceived connection to the visual representations in

advertising can make or break the effectiveness of an ad. Mastro and Kopacz (2006) applied Turner's (1987) self-categorization theory to a survey of the effectiveness of visual representations. Using a survey to assess the power of stereotype representation on real-world policymaking, the study focused on how the "extent to which portrayals of race and ethnicity deviate from the White prototype [stereotype]" can influence the response from an audience (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006, p. 310). Characteristics that are considered "emblematic" of certain people are used to categorize these groups through focusing on the differences between the person identified as the other, and the person performing the act of Othering (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006, p. 309). In evaluating the power of representation and portrayals, including those within the UB and the FG, the level of similarity and difference between the figures represented and the audience reading the text impact how well the representations are received. The visually represented clothing and behaviors of the identified students are indicative of only U.S. American cultural identities, which suggests that the prototype of the current study is an American White male college student as constructed by Urciuoli (2009). Any characteristics that are emblematic of other groups, including darker skin, help create the perceived identity of a non-White racial background. By focusing on American cultural backgrounds, the UB and the FG have a greater chance of getting a more favorable evaluation by the dominant, domestic audience (Mastro & Kopacz, 2006, p. 309).

Audience-centered narrative. The emphasis throughout the UB and the FG brochures has been, of course, to advertise to a specific audience: future freshman students. Kim and Kang (2001) focus on the types of strategies in advertising that are directed towards specific groups, predominantly ethnic minority groups. Their study found how strategies that worked for one particular group tended to repel other groups. This focus in audience, by repelling alternative

audiences, makes the creation of a narrative that appeals to a wider audience more complicated. For the UB and the FG, there is only one intended audience; domestic freshman students. Beyond the intended audience, there is no specific identification for a particular type of student who is desired at CSU. What explains the possible effectiveness of the brochures in their use of visual diversity representations as a vehicle to identify the students they are interested in is through the consistent rise in the number of non-White students who have enrolled at CSU over the past five years (Student Enrollment Books, 2015).

Although it is important to increase the diversity being represented in the UB and the FG to attract more students who are being underrepresented or not represented at all, there is also a concern of the temptation to over-represent students in order to be competitive. This concern raises the question of ethical and moral uses of visual representations.

Materiality and Morals

As with any type of advertising, the use of visuals is a complicated balance between showing an ideal construction of a situation, and being ethical about the decisions being made. The main purpose of using a diverse group of figures is to offer as many opportunities for the audience to identify with the represented figures. Through the use of identification between audience and represented individuals, visual representations can become powerful if potentially problematic strategies for an organization to use in connection to materiality and morals.

Identifying with a representation. When first considering the issue of materiality and morality in diversity representation use, an article by Wood and Cox (1993) immediately came to mind. The material results of using visual discourse as found in the UB and the FG has moral as well as material consequences to CSU depending upon how those representations are presented and read. Rather than being "too enamored of conceptual structures," Wood and Cox argue that

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researchers need to pick a text to study that is actually worthy of being studied (Wood & Cox, 1993, p. 151). In addition, they state that researchers and rhetoricians need to consider alternative readings within a text to determine what material and discourse implications they may have. The current study has attempted to consider both of these concerns, first by addressing a brochure whose use makes it an important document to study. The UB and the FG act as a first-contact source to CSU for students, making the use of visual diversity representations important in often being the first experience potential students have with the types of diversity that are considered important to represent. Wood and Cox's (1993) second concern in material and discourse morality is addressed in the current study through considering multiple readings of the three themes of the diverse community, learning environment, and active lifestyle, using different theoretical lenses.

The material implications of discourse is examined in Pitts' (2007) study, which considers how understanding multiple interpretations of a given image can help an organization, such as a university, connect to its audience. Pitts found that people tend to identify with figures that are perceived to have some similar heritage or characteristics to that of the person who is performing the association. Pitts also found that by "including greater numbers of ethnic minorities among an organization's personnel [the institution] will result in greater competitiveness in the market" (pp. 497-8). To link back to Wood and Cox (1993), a university advertising brochure uses visual representations of diversity as part of its competitive edge against other universities. However, there is the moral question of how accurate the discourse actually is in its visual representation. The concern of misrepresentation, either in over-emphasizing or under-emphasizing the level of diversity to be found, brings up complications that can create negative material consequences. If students do not see themselves represented

within a given document, such as the UB or the FG, they may not feel welcome and so decide not to apply, thus not paying tuition to the university. Alternatively, students may feel negatively about CSU if the represented diversity is much higher than actually exists on campus when they come to visit.

Students with a white identity are frequently overrepresented within the UB, with only the change from seventy-seven to sixteen identifiable students in the 2014-15 FG enabling the representation of the White population to be significantly below the actual enrollment numbers (68.7% represented compared to 71.6% of avowed White students; Table 5, Chapter 3; "Fall 2014" Student Enrollment Books, 2014). An example of the lack of representation can be found in the enrollment numbers of Native American and Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students, who were never apparently represented in any of the five brochures.

Chapter Summary

In closing, this chapter has examined theories from the literature review in Chapter 1 concerning narrative studies, representations, and material and moral questions to determine how they relate to the current study's results of diversity representations in the UB and the FG. The current study was able to help support many constructions and earlier findings, including what types of diversity are generally emphasized and how certain compositions of visual representations can influence how a text is read. In addition, the mixed methodological use of two types of studies – the nominal assessment to help inform the thematic analysis – helped to expand upon earlier studies that provided a limited explanation of the use of visual representations. In the next and final chapter, I review the entire thesis project and offer some suggestions to change how the three themes are presented in order to better serve CSU's diversity mission statement and goals.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Throughout the process of conducting this mixed methodological study of "The U Book" (UB) and "The Freshman's Guide" (FG) and their use of visual representations of diversity, there have been considerations of limitations and future applications of the results. In Chapter 1, the literature review constructed the research questions and hypotheses, which Chapter 2 used in part as a guide to create a mixed method construction of the two stages of the study. Chapter 3 addressed the nominal assessment of the results from the study, while Chapter 4 explored the narrative and thematic analysis. Chapter 5 returned to the literature review to compare the results of studies and theories in previous research to the current study's results and to highlight the contributions of this thesis project to the overall literature of diversity representations. This final chapter summarizes the steps and procedures of the study and its subsequent results.

The first step in this chapter is to summarize the methods and procedures of the study before addressing the results of the nominal assessment. In examining the three main themes of the diverse community, learning environment, and active lifestyle, there will also be a brief discussion on the influencing factors of cooperation, diversity and perceived connection to the representations. The limitations of the study are addressed before exploring what may be future applications using the results found from the study. By considering the pragmatic function of future applications, I offer some proposals for using the current study's results to showcase potential adaptations and/or suggestions for consideration by the producers of Colorado State University's (CSU) brochures for future editions of the FG.

Summary of Study

As a two-part, mixed methodological study that needed two chapters to fully explore the results, this summary addresses how each part was constructed before considering the results. In

determining the use of visual representations of diversity in a brochure such as the UB and the FG, CSU's own diversity mission statement was applied as a guideline of what types of diversity to look for as well as a measure of diversity's importance to the university. The mission statement explains that, "Colorado State University will continue to shape and maintain a campus climate designed to welcome, encourage, and embrace differences so all community members are welcomed, valued, and affirmed" (Diversity Mission, 2014, para. 1). Through this understanding, the stereotypical college experience that is pictured in the brochures benefits from the presence of diversity.

The first part of the current study examined the nominal tally and its results, and then followed with the narrative analysis. The methods used for the study were designed to address as much of the research questions and hypotheses as possible in order to determine how visual diversity representations are used in the UB and FG.

Methods of study. The first step in the project was to assess what the numbers of representations are for each brochure. This process of ascription required being able to ascribe an identity to the identifiable figures in the brochures. Using Hall's (1997) floating signifiers, Butler's (1990) performativity of identity, and Martin and Nakayama's (2010) ascription of identity to the figures being represented in the brochures, I used visual cues to identify and thus ascribe identities. The categories used to categorize identities included race (e.g., Asian, Hispanic, Black, White, etc.), gender (e.g., male/female), and status (e.g., disabled or international), all of which are labels taken from CSU's enrollment statistics and Resources for Disabled Students (RDS) website. Visual cues included physical features such as hair color and style, skin tone and facial features. Social performances in dress and perceived behaviors in the photographs also informed assumptions of identity. Once an identity was ascribed to an

individual, the individual depicted in the photo was categorized under as many labels that could be arguably ascribed to the representations. This includes a separate tally for race, gender, and disability status (e.g., a coded White woman in a wheelchair). To determine a percentage of representations in comparison to CSU's enrollment statistics, there was an additional set of tallies to count the total number of figures identified, as well as how many photographs across all brochures that contained identifiable representations.

For the thematic analysis, the level of thematic saturation (Glaser, 1965) of certain types of images was used to construct the three dominant themes, including their order of importance to the brochures. The researcher-interpreted themes – the diverse community, learning environment, and active lifestyle – were broken down by detailing the visual elements of the photo and the presented image within the brochures. The three key elements found within the themes and linked them together were components of cooperation, diversity and a perceived connection between the audience and the figures being represented. Once the three themes were determined, they were read through several theoretical frames to determine alternative readings. The most important of these theories were Fairclough's (1989) Critical Discourse Analysis, which considers three layers of textual information in determining a narrative. To help expand the types of interpretations to consider, the study also used Hall's (2011) encoding-decoding model, Ceccarelli's (1998) use of polysemy, and Condit's (1989) application of polyvalence. These alternative readings offered both positive and negative interpretations of the themes and the visual representations within the photographs. Once the study itself had been completed, I used two types of assessments in order to examine the results of the two parts of the study – nominal and thematic. In order to address both types of analysis in this mixed methodological

study, the following research question and hypothesis were used as guides for examining the data

set from the nominal assessment.

> RQ1: What is the difference between the numerical tally of representations of
> minority-identity students in the UB and the FG for the 2010-2014 enrollment
> statistics and the actual demographics of the student body at the time of each
> brochure's publication?

> H1: There is a significant variance between the demographics of the actual
> student body compared to the level of apparent representation within the UB and
> the FG. This variance will show a higher percentage of constructed White male
> student representation in contrast to other types of students.

Nominal results. The first part of the study, the nominal assessment and categorizing of

individuals that were identifiable was conducted first in order to set up a general understanding

of what types of diversity are represented. In each brochure, there were certain photos that were

replaced with new photographs that changed the specific numbers of the nominal assessment for

each brochure. Changing some of these specific photographs did influence how the main themes

were presented, but primarily influenced the percentage of representations. While the

percentages of individual groups would change from year to year, an important finding of this

step was that there were several groups who were *not* represented at all. These groups included

some of the coded racial categories (e.g., Native Americans and Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders), as

well as international students and disabled students. The percentage between men and women

fluctuated, resulting in two of the five brochures showing more women than men. The higher

representation of women more accurately reflected CSU's gender demographics, as found in the

Student Enrollment Books (2015) published by Institutional Research. Interestingly, the results

varied between over-representing some groups and under-representing others in disproportionate

numbers of represented figures compared to CSU's actual demographics. To support the first

research question and either confirm or disconfirm the first hypothesis for the nominal

assessment, White women were the most visible type of diversity within the brochures. There was an emphasis on White racial identity, but not necessarily on a White male identity, as found in previous studies (Urciuoli, 2009). These findings were used in considering the second half of the study of the thematic and narrative analysis.

      Relevant themes. When looking at the three main themes of this study – the diverse community, learning environment, and active lifestyle – it is important to note that there were three main elements that consistently linked all three themes together into a cohesive whole. These key elements focused on cooperation, diversity and a perceived connection to the representations. The concept of cooperation is important for creating the sense of community and unity. Figures are shown to be interacting and working together, creating a show of a friendly atmosphere. Without cooperation, the concept of community is missing from the three themes. The second component addresses two types of diversity. For the purposes of the study, the concept of diversity focuses on different backgrounds and identities. However, the key component of diversity offers an additional meaning in showing diversity in options. There are numerous contexts students are seen moving through, as well as participatory activities. The variety of options for interaction, engagement and learning can be used to make CSU seem more appealing. The final key element to the three themes is the perceived connection that is being attempted to link the reader to the figures represented. As the brochures are a type of sales ad for CSU, they contain persuasive material for an intended audience. The perceived connection between the audience and the visual representations could be made when students see themselves in a situation, hence the importance of showing as much diversity as possible to increase the number of opportunities students have to identify with the brochures. To assess how the themes work within the brochures to construct a narrative that potential students can identify with, the

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following research question and hypothesis were considered while examining the thematic analysis.

> RQ2: What is the emphasized type of diversity that is being represented in the UB and the FG? Gender? Disabled students? Alternative heritages to U.S. American identities (e.g., international student representation)? What absences of types of diversity representations are there in contrast to what is noted in CSU's own diversity mission statement?

> H2: The representational depictions in the UB and the FG are constructed with a focus on domestic U.S. American freshmen. This representation focuses visual diversity through U.S. race and gender performance rather than visually constructed representations of international, non-American or disability diversity.

Based upon the levels of thematic saturation (Glaser, 1965), the three main themes found were organized into a hierarchy of importance to the brochures. The order starts with the diverse community, followed by the learning environment and the active lifestyle.

Diverse community. By addressing both the diversity and the community of the campus, this first theme is one of the two most important themes in the brochures. CSU's diversity mission statement clearly identifies areas of diversity that it supports, such as ethnicity and disability (Diversity Mission, 2014). The specific selection of photographs that represent individuals with different identities and backgrounds is one type of strategy that the brochures use to connect to their audience. By being able to identify with the representations, the third element of perceived connection can take place. The representation of community, however, is more complex, so the diverse community theme constructs community by using visual cues of cooperation and friendliness within the composition of the photographs. Rather than just showing a classroom, for example, students are talking to and working with one another. This visual representation of a situation is distinctive because the work may be social or volunteer based. One reason the diverse community theme is beneficial to the brochures is the link it creates between the campus community and the diverse demographics of the student body. The

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combination of diversity and community are shown through groups interacting with alternative identities to show more than one type of represented student. Diversity is an integral part of CSU's community, as clearly stated by the CSU diversity mission statement through being a land-grant university (Diversity Mission, 2014). By repeating the visibility of diversity and community in almost every group presented, diversity becomes a part of the community. Through alternative theoretical lenses, however, a negative interpretation could see the emphasis on showing at least one type of diversity in every image as tokenistic (Freedman, 2005). The following themes – learning community and active lifestyle – fit within the overarching core narrative of the diverse community. The combined construction of diversity and community as a part of CSU is reflected in the learning environment theme as well, albeit with different areas of emphasis to the social interactions of the diverse community theme.

   Learning environment. Community is not only constructed through purely social interactions. The learning environment at CSU continues to expand the application of community through representations of academic situations. Photographs that represent this theme focus on students working together on a class project, identified through textbooks and class equipment. There was also the distinction between students working together and students working with a representation of an older teacher. The use of diversity in the learning environment does not have to be focused on the students, as it can also be used with representations of instructors (i.e., an Asian female instructor in Image 11 from Chapter 3 compared to the otherwise represented White male instructor). In addition, diversity can show students actively working towards a goal. An example of these goal-oriented situations includes the equipment and setting of a science lab for a future experiment. Rather than a lecturer in the front of a classroom, the environment is focused on an interactive teaching moment. The only

prominent image of a classroom in the brochures shows a teacher explaining his writing on a board to a student who has apparently approached him after class. By placing the participants in a one-on-one engagement, the image shows a more intimate image of the relationship between teachers and students at CSU. The relationship between instructors and students is as important to the learning environment as are represented relationships to student peers. Through the framing of the photographs as diverse in people and academic opportunities, the learning environment is constructed as a more intimate and exciting view of the students, instructors, and academic possibilities on campus.

  As much as the theme is focused on education, the learning environment also uses community to connect the students with each other and their instructors. The distinction between the learning environment and the diverse community is the task at hand: the students are engaged in educational rather than social activities. A negative reading of this theme, however, emphasizes the fact that the majority of instructor figures were White and male, using only one photo that showed someone with a different identity and background (i.e., the Asian woman from Image 11 in Chapter 3). This limitation in diversity representations within the faculty can be as damaging as a similar lack of representation in the student body. One way to address this lack of representation without as much risk of tokenizing the one key faculty figure that is visible as being diverse is to add instructors who are diverse. If there isn't a specific type of diversity emphasized (e.g., racial background or gender identity), the appearance of tokenism should go down. The final theme of the three brochures can also benefit from the use of more visual representations, as the visuals used to create the active lifestyle are largely focused on coded White students.

Active lifestyle. An important element to any university is team spirit. CSU's brochures represent university "Ram pride" not only in organized sports events, but in the students' own social and adventurous excursions. Part of the diverse community and learning environment is supported by group activity, which expands into the active lifestyle through activities that go beyond social or academic situations. While some photographs framed individual students, most of the photographs emphasize a group construction. The photos depict a team of students who hike to the top of a snowy mountain, or paddle down a river. CSU's own team spirit is strongly represented in the audience in the stadium, cheering for the team and decorated in green and gold in clothes, accessories and even body paint. The students actively stand and wave as they cheer, engaging with the other spectators as much as the players in the game they are watching. An important component of these compositions are that the audience is represented while the athletic team players themselves are not. The emphasis is on the regular student who can participate in any of the presented situations. However, the most common depiction of these students is White male students. In addition, without any visibly identifiable disabled students, the composition of the active lifestyle theme focuses on the most limited representation of students of all three themes. Instead of constructing a specific group to represent the active lifestyle, the theme would need to be restructured to be more inclusive of other identities (e.g., disabled). Negative readings of the active lifestyle theme may address the lack of representation of disabled students and the overrepresentation of White male students within the theme, arguing that the structure of the theme is designed to be exclusive towards certain economic backgrounds and physical capabilities. While the diverse community and learning environment themes need more visual representations of diversity, the active lifestyle theme needs to be adjusted to be more inclusive of the groups that have not yet been added.

In addressing the research question and hypothesis posed for the thematic analysis of the study, the focus of the brochures emphasizes gender over racial, disabled or international types of diversity. As anticipated, the brochures were predominantly constructed with an interpretive read of a domestic U.S. American audience rather than an international audience. The represented individuals in the photos, while at times diverse, perform coded signs that can be readily associated with American cultural diversity. All together, these three themes of the diverse community, learning environment and active lifestyle have created a narrative that considers how CSU depicts diversity visually within the UB and FG brochures. The results of the thematic analysis were supported and in part informed by the nominal assessment, which conducted a specific comparison of diversity representations and CSU's actual enrollment numbers.

Conclusions from results. The primary result from the assessment of the brochures is that, as advertising materials, the product being sold is not just a college education, but a college *experience*. The college experience CSU offers is represented through stereotypical constructions of college life including the social engagements with other college students, working towards a desired future career, participating in adventurous extracurricular activities and supporting the team spirit. While CSU explains quite clearly the level of importance placed on diversity so that "all community members are welcomed, valued, and affirmed" (Diversity Mission, 2014, para. 1), diversity is not explicitly stated in the UB or FG brochures as an added value to earning a degree at CSU. Instead, the predominant diversity that is visually represented is shown through a select number of female and non-White racial identities as well as a stereotypical variety of options for engagements with other students, teachers, and the local area around the CSU campus.

As the method of using visible markers to determine another's identity and background is frequently inaccurate and highly problematic, the method for conducting the nominal assessment for this study includes some limitations in its design. After addressing the limitations and the steps taken to reduce the impact of the limitations have been addressed, this final chapter concludes with a review of future studies that this project may help set up.

Limitations of Study

As explained in Chapters 2 and 3, there are some limitations to the nominal assessment of the study that influenced the count of visible representations. Two main limitations were taken into consideration when conducting the study itself, including the use of visual signifiers for identification and the overall scope of the project.

Visual signifiers and broad categories. The first and probably most important of the two limitations arise from the manner in which visual identity information for the study was categorized. As has been briefly mentioned before, all identifications and presumptions of behaviors are based upon visual identity cues, such as skin color and perceived behaviors (Martin & Nakayama, 2010; Butler, 1990; Hall, 1997). The only additional information that was available was the occasional student quotation about the topic at hand, be it activities on campus or academic opportunities. My own identity in looking at the images is as a White, middle-class, non-disabled woman. To determine the level of inter-coder reliability of my study (Compton, Love, & Sell, 2012), two of my graduate school peers (avowed White middle class women) also reviewed the images to code the same figures. I instructed them in the same methods I used and located which figures I had identified in order to make the comparison between my two peers and my own results as reliable as possible. There was a 91.1% match in the ascription of racial identity, and 100% match in the ascription of gender identity. In addition to using my two peers

as additional coders, the thematic analysis was designed to pull the themes through various theoretical lenses to offer more than one interpretation of what the images represent and mean.

Scope of project in studying one text. The second limitation of this study has been the scope of this project, which has considered how diversity is being represented in only one brochure. While the UB and the FG were chosen specifically because of their use as a first-look sales brochure, there are many other brochures published by CSU and its Office of Admissions that would also be important texts to study. The issues of studying one brochure, even over a five year period, offers a strong argument for expanding the scope of this project for future studies to determine what themes are used to represent CSU as a whole. The study may extend to other brochures and offices at CSU, as well as the website or other forms of media that CSU uses.

Despite these limitations, the study's results found several ways in which certain identities were overrepresented, underrepresented, or excluded from the visible diversity. Given the results, it is possible to use these results to inform future decisions about how to develop the FG in the future. The next and last section of this chapter address future areas of research as well as some pragmatic suggestions on how the results of this study can be used to inform CSU's advertising documents and diversity mission.

Future Application

Studies of visual representation in CSU's UB and FG can be used to determine how adaptations and potential changes to the brochure affect the themes and types of representations used as new students and new demographics become part of CSU. Focusing on potential future studies and pragmatic functions using the results of the current study, the following section

addresses concerns that were previously raised regarding the repetition of the photographs used in the brochures as well as the constructions of the themes themselves.

Suggestions for future research. While assessing the visual representations of diversity within the UB and the FG, there were two factors that became clear that could benefit future studies of visual representations. This study was able to use inter-coder reliability to assess the level of agreement between three coders of the same identity (Compton, Love, & Sell, 2012; Landis & Koch, 1977). To make a new study more applicable, it would need to include more researchers with different avowed identities for a stronger inter-coder reliability result. In addition to more diverse researchers, the inclusion of focus groups who can not only offer what they see but also how they feel about certain types of representations can offer a new dynamic that was not used in this current project. Their input would offer some comparisons for the researchers' own assumptions of how certain images are received by certain demographics. These additions would expand upon the mixed methodological process used in the current study, which had also expanded upon previous research in understanding how visual representations can demonstrate diversity.

Pragmatic function of study. The most obvious use of the current study is to consider what is being represented in the UB and the FG, and what may be potential areas to change and adapt for future editions of the FG and other forms of advertising materials. Through certain types of photographs, the themes and their key elements can be changed in their presentation and use. One example of changing a theme to be more inclusive is the lack of disabled student representations regarding the active lifestyle theme. To change this negative reading, images including disabled students participating in some sort of physical activity can change the reading and the tone of the representation of the theme. The importance of the perceived connection to

the photographed individuals makes even a small amount of representation capable of affecting interpretations of the theme in both positive and negative ways. An example of how one photo can change the perception of a theme is in the learning environment theme, where the identity of an instructor changed from a coded White male to a coded Asian female between the 2012-13 and 2013-14 brochures add diversity to the faculty. Each brochure has demonstrated the selection of images to either repeat or change, thus altering or maintaining themes and representations from year to year. One suggestion the current study offers is to carefully consider which images should be included in future images, and which images should be replaced with new, more diverse representations.

Repetition of photographs. Throughout the study there has been a question of why certain images were replaced while many were not. Most of these images maintained the levels of representation as well as preserved the dominance of the diverse community over the learning environment and active lifestyle themes. For the FG, all of the images from the UB were replaced and reduced in number from an average of thirty photographs to a total of six. While all three themes survived to the FG, only the diverse community remained as a strong theme. Both the learning environment and the active lifestyle themes were reduced to just one visual representation. By virtue of reducing not only the number of photographs and figures to identify (e.g., an average of seventy-seven figures dropped down to sixteen) but also the types of diversity to be represented, the FG's design raises the question of how important the learning environment or the active lifestyle themes are to CSU. The reduction of the learning environment specifically may be seen as problematic, given that the brochures are advertising for a university. As assessed in Chapters 3 and 4, all three themes are important in how they are linked together to create a cohesive image of the campus through visual representations. If it is

desired to change the themes or their level of importance to the brochures, the use of photographs and text would have to be adapted to create the new image that is desired.

Adaptation of themes. The main reason for wanting to adapt the themes of the diverse community, learning environment and active lifestyle from what they have been constructed as for the last five years is to address a concern of exclusion. Physically disabled students among others were not included in the visual representations, enabling related negative interpretations of the text. Although the current study is limited in what types of disability can be visually represented, there is also a limitation concern behind CSU's lack of including its growing disabled student population among other statistics that are referred to in the diversity mission statement such as gender and race (Diversity Mission, 2014). By either including more groups in visual representations or restructuring the themes to be more inclusive of these groups, identities that have been previously excluded from the narrative can be included while addressing concerns raised by potential negative interpretations. An example of changing a theme to be more inclusive is the third theme, the active lifestyle. While including more activities and visual representations of diverse students, including disabled students, is important, the active lifestyle theme must use situations that are welcoming to these other types of students to change the theme itself. These changes in framing the themes would also have to include new written textual information to provide the supplemental information found in the original themes, such as "hiking up Horsetooth Rock or cruising down a snowy slope" (*The U Book 2013*, 2013). By changing the level of represented and included diversity, CSU can potentially increase the diversity within its student body as well as increase the number of total applicants to the university.

By taking two types of methods and applying them together to a given text, this project has offered a new way of assessing visual representations. Rather than attempting to combine the specific steps of each method, this study has focused on finding correlations between the results of each half of the study in order to find the layers of meaning being created by the visual representations. In addition, by comparing the results of the visual representations of diversity to actual diversity statistics, this study has found a third type of information that can be applied to understanding both the nominal assessment and the thematic analysis. The benefit of this project to other communication studies scholars is that its construction is flexible enough to be applicable to many types of communication texts, including a university brochure's construction of visually represented diversity. It also provides a process that allows one part of the study to inform the other side. Should a researcher want to use this two-step, mixed methodological process in assessing the rhetoric of a visual representation, they can adapt the specific categories as needed to their project. The current project has built off of previous studies to expand the understanding of how visual representations of diverse identities and cultures function within advertising materials, while considering how their rhetorically diverse audiences might receive these types of representations.

In Closing

The purpose of this thesis project has been to determine what the visual diversity representation has been in the last few years of "The U Book" and "The Freshman's Guide" used by Colorado State University, and how those representations have been framed within the brochures. From the results that were found through this mixed methodological study, including a nominal assessment and thematic analysis of visual representations, the three themes of the diverse community, learning environment and active lifestyle were found and tested through

several theoretical lenses. Both the nominal assessment and thematic analysis found areas that CSU may want to address in future publications to increase its potential audience and diverse demographic reach. These areas include modifying the use of visible diversity representations of groups that were either underrepresented or overrepresented, as well as adapting the themes to be more inclusive in their design. By changing the themes to be more inclusive in the future, CSU may also be able to reduce the intensity of potential oppositional readings of the themes. The design behind creating advertising brochures lends itself to making edits in order to increase the positive interpretations of the brochures' themes. To create more detailed propositions for future publications, there would have to be further studies conducted to determine what may be the most effective way of representing diversity at CSU. A step that may benefit these future studies that was not part of the scope of the current study could assess actual audiences' responses to the texts.

My previous studies in media and intercultural communication have made the use of visual representations in advertising and media a fascinating area of study. When it came to determining a topic of study for my thesis project, the use of the UB and the FG in the Office of Admissions became of interest while considering CSU's dedication to its diversity mission statement. This study has provided an eye-opening analysis of how visual representations of diversity are used in a printed format, and an experiment to see how people may interpret the same images differently. I have also experienced how complicated and inaccurate it is to ascribe another individual an identity based on only visual cues. Through this study, I tried to read a single text through a variety of translations, rather than only acknowledging that these alternative readings exist. Now that I have read one text through alternative perspectives, I will never look at or relate to a figure in an advertising brochure the same way again.

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