

Overcoming Ethos: How To Give Sport Broadcasters Credibility Who Did Not Play Their Sport
at a High Level

Tyler Hill

A Senior Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment.
of the requirements for graduation
in the Honors Program
Liberty University
Spring 2024

Acceptance of Senior Honors Thesis

This Senior Honors Thesis is accepted in partial.
fulfillment of the requirements for graduation from the
Honors Program of Liberty University.

Richard Previte, Ph.D.
Thesis Chair

Christopher Amos, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Christopher Nelson M.F.A.
Assistant Honors Director

Date

Abstract

A common assumption among viewers of broadcast sports is that broadcasters who have not participated in the sport they are discussing do not have the same credibility as broadcasters who have played Division 1 or professional sports. These broadcasters may not have the same level of *ethos*, which is known as one of Aristotle's three pillars of credibility. This thesis examines different approaches to build up credibility among broadcasters who do not have experience as Division 1 or professional athletes. The methodology includes a review of scholarly and popular literature to discover what is known about credibility in sports broadcasting and apply it to an original script demonstrating ways to increase credibility of broadcasters.

Keywords: ethos, sports broadcasting, credibility.

Overcoming Ethos: How To Give Sport Broadcasters Credibility Who Did Not Play Their Sport at a High Level

There is a thought that has been expressed that someone who hasn't participated in the sport they are discussing at the highest level, doesn't have the same ability to speak about the sport as a former player. For example, in the realm of sport broadcasting many former athletes are broadcast personalities. These personalities may be looked at as more credible regardless of the points they make and their accuracy. In this study I examine scholarly and popular literature and propose different ways to build up a broadcaster's credibility. This is applied by creating an original script for a television segment where the broadcaster is not a former professional athlete. Then an analysis is given on how I attempted to present the broadcaster as credible. Further details will be discussed in the methodology section.

Background

The 2023-24 NFL season has come and gone, packed with storylines. One that has been held throughout most of the season is analytics in the game of football. Analytics have risen to prominence in sports like baseball, basketball, and football. According to Data Science Connect (2023, August 12), a company that centralizes data on their website, had this to say about analytics in sport. "The use of data in sports is increasing as technology and analytics advance. Teams are utilizing this data to gain a competitive edge and enhance player performance." This has caused controversy, as does anything that is new breaking into the sport world. A strong example of the controversy came after the NFC championship game on January 28th, 2024. The Detroit Lions and the San Francisco 49ers were in the 3rd quarter of that game when Lions coach

Dan Cambell decided to go for it on 4th down, which is what the data models for these types of decisions would have suggested. The Lions failed to convert and went on to lose that game (ESPN, 2024). Several fans players, and media members bashed Cambell for that decision, and specifically bashed analytics used to make in-game decisions at all. One of these critiques came from George Kittle , who is a tight end for the San Fransisco 49ers, was quoted in a press conference as saying, “Why do analytics people say that momentum is not a real thing? "I had this conversation with Pat McAfee and he was like, 'Yeah, all these people say momentum is not real.' That's just the biggest load of horse crap I've ever heard of in my entire life." (Bender, 2024 Sporting News, para. 3). This tweet from @ProFootballTalk has gotten 4.4 million views as of January 30, 2024. “A coach told me earlier today that analytics was just a way for people who never would have gotten jobs in football to get jobs in football. To understand that is to understand why they get so defensive whenever anyone questions analytics.” This tweet that received 4.4 million views as of January 30, 2024, highlights a very popular sentiment in the football coaching community that only those who are either coaches or former players should be getting jobs in football, not perceived outsiders.

But how does this apply to broadcasting? Just as I have seen a sentiment among some coaches that jobs for the teams themselves should only go to men that are in the “football fraternity”, the same applies to broadcasting. For example, you can look at the current on-air staff for Fox’s NFL pregame show. The host is not a former player, but the other 5 people on the desk are Terry Bradshaw, Howie Long, Michael Strahan, Jimmy Johnson, and Rob Gronkowski. These are all former NFL players or coaches, and very successful ones at that. Fox is not alone in

this; they are the norm across all networks across sports. For live broadcasting the same principle holds, a non-athlete is in the role of play by play, and a former athlete or coach is placed in the role of analyst.

I believe that part of the reason this is the norm across the world of football broadcasting is because of the “football fraternity” mentality. Without the experience of playing at a high level, (for this paper playing for an NCAA Division 1 level school or in a professional league is considered high level), you are not capable of giving credible analysis of what is happening on the field. This sentiment from networks and employees leads to people, who are very knowledgeable about a certain sport, being shoved out in favor of former players. This also can lead to better players getting chosen over others as well.

Tom Brady, who is widely regarded as the greatest quarterback of all time, is about to replace Greg Olsen as Fox’s number one analyst. This is despite Olsen getting rave reviews for his skills in the booth. From the outside looking in, it seems as though the only reason that this move is being made is because of the credibility that automatically comes with the name and football accomplishments of Tom Brady. Research backs this sentiment up. In Joes Torrijos’s paper “Accountable sports journalism. Building up a platform and a new specialized code in the field”, he cites David Charels Rowe. Rowe states “The limited range of sources has been mainly drawn ‘from the ranks of celebrity athletes, coaches and administrators, thus further isolating the sports desk from the world beyond sport” (Rowe 2007, pp. 400-401). Rowe even goes further and says that this limited pool networks pick from is a net negative for sports journalism and broadcasting. He points out that it leads specifically to a lack of response to real social issues

outside of sports when they do hit the sport world. For example, he uses the coming out of Michael Sam and Jason Collins. These are NFL, and NBA players respectively. He also points to stories of child abuse in the NFL, controversies surrounding the Australia vs India cricket match, and more. (Rowe 2007, pp. 400-401).

Is it true that only high-level athletes and coaches can be successful broadcasters? Many would say no. There are hundreds, maybe even thousands, of resources to become more knowledgeable about the game of football specifically. These resources include books on formations, defensive strategy, offensive strategy, specific positions, and much more. On YouTube there are endless amounts of videos of coaches teaching their philosophies on every aspect of the game. Podcasts are another medium where someone can expand their football IQ. Today this kind of information is not hidden within a few select individuals or organizations. Therefore, I believe it is beneficial, but not necessary, as a broadcaster to be a former player or coach.

Problem and Purpose

However, broadcasters that are not former high-level players are missing one crucial aspect of credibility. That is ethos, one of Aristotle's three pillars of public speaking. Aristotle wrote about his three rhetorical appeals in his book *On Rhetoric* around the fourth century B.C. His work is still used in the teaching of communication to this day. Indeed, the editors of *The Rhetoric of Western Thought: From the Mediterranean World to the Global Setting* call it "the most important single work on persuasion ever written" (Dlugan, 2010).

Ethos literally translates to “habit,” “custom,” or “character” (Kelly, 2022, p. 1). This pillar of rhetoric has to deal with a speaker’s credentials, both their personal character and their experience in the field. For the sake of this paper, we will focus on the credentials. For example, the credentials of Michael Strahan being his accomplishments as a player like being a 4 time All-Pro in the NFL.

Therefore, the main problem this paper addresses is how a broadcaster who has not played the sport at the Division 1 or professional level overcome a lack of credentials? The purpose of writing this paper is to explore several ways to do this using both audio and video strategies. Before seeing if there are tried and true ways to give a broadcaster credibility in the eyes of the audience, is credibility even important in media?

Literature Review

The following is a review of scholarly and popular literature relevant to discussing credibility of broadcasters.

Importance of Credibility

Credibility is essential in the media. According to Matthias Kohring, “Credibility is fundamental to news media; without it journalism cannot exist” (Kohring, 2007, p. 1). This applies to all forms of journalism, broadcast included. According to Paul Pederson, Aristotle’s ethos, pathos, and logos are found in sportscasting. Instead of the public sphere being the town square, it is now the media sphere (Pederson, 2013, p. 41). This might be social media,

television, podcasts, or radio. This causes ethos to be associated with feelings about the broadcasters and their statements on strategy, rules, and statistics (Pederson, 2013, p. 41).

In addition to the claims made by Kohring, Tom Bradshaw (2021), looked into a similar issue in his paper “Benefit or burden? Social media and moral complexities confronting sports journalists”. He conducted a study where he interviewed 10 sports journalists in the UK and had 3 separate journalists keep diaries for 6 months. What he found was that when it comes to ethical issues the growth of social media has led to both positives and negatives when it comes to the jobs of sports journalists. Online abuse can cause some to self-censor, which can be perceived as not being truthful. Thus, these journalists, if found out, may be seen as not credible by the viewing public.

But is ethos specifically required to be seen as credible? Surely people could look past a lack of credentials if someone is using sound logic and reasoning. Aristotle himself thought this should be the case. He actually went so far as to say that logos should be the only required appeal. However, this is not the case. Aristotle recognized that logos alone is not sufficient to be persuasive in a public arena, which earlier in this paper was equated to the world of media (Dlugan, 2010). Therefore, you do need ethos, logos, and pathos to be persuasive in the career of sports broadcasting.

So, as I have stated, credibility in the eyes of viewers is crucial to the job of a sports broadcaster. And as previously mentioned, broadcasters that did not play or coach at a high level are missing the piece of perceived credibility. Ethos is made up of a person’s character and credentials that have come from your experience. And with sports this is a unique issue. In most

other fields, you can get experience at almost any time to supplement your resume. With sports that is not an option. If you didn't play football in college, you can't go back and do that. And if you did not start a coaching career early you are most likely not going to break in after a certain age. What adds to this is how ethos is the easiest of the three appeals to see in a person. You can very easily look up someone's experience in a field, especially in sports. If a speaker seems unenthusiastic, unprepared, or inexperienced, the audience is more likely to discount the speaker's argument regardless of what it even is.

On the other hand, a knowledgeable, authoritative, confident speaker is much more likely to win an audience over. (Kelly, 2022). If someone is knowledgeable and confident but does not have the experience, then they need to emphasize what you do have. In this case the way they speak.

Steps Toward Credibility

In my opinion broadcasting is an art, so because of that it can be subjective. One person may like listening to Mike Tirico, while someone watching the same game may hate him. Some listeners may like a more animated style. Others prefer someone who is even keeled for most of the game and only becomes animated for the biggest moments. It really is up to certain tastes in how a broadcaster chooses and develops his style.

However, there are steps that a broadcaster can take to help build up their credibility. The first of those is preparation. John McGuire cites Bob Costas, who has won 28 Emmys and has worked in broadcasting since 1973. Costas says that all good sportscasters share the trait of

intense preparation before a broadcast (McGuire, 2009, p. 6). McGuire also identifies giving time and score, location of the ball, descriptive language, and varying excitement depending on the situation as crucial factors to a broadcaster. He talks about these 5 traits in relation to basketball play by play over the radio, but like Costas says about preparation, these can apply to other mediums as well. Other sports live play by play have scores and game time that the listener wants to know, a ball the sport is centered around, and exciting moments that require more excitement in your voice. This also holds for studio television as well.

Looking at preparation first, Costas highlights this because he has seen it as a trait that is in all great broadcasters (McGuire, 2009, p.6). If you are unsure in what you are saying in any realm it will knock credibility. In live sports this is even more true since action is happening so fast. The same time constraints are in live studio television. Segments may run as short as 2 minutes and you need to concisely communicate information. There is no time to stutter or gather your thoughts by looking at your notes. According to the Pew Research Center in 2012, the median time of a package on national news was 2 minutes and 23 seconds, and local news is even shorter. The median of local news packages was 41 seconds. That is not a lot of time to flush out stories, and the only way to do that well is to be prepared.

Language is the other piece of broadcasting that I want to focus on. Broadcasting is communicating through language, so of course it is important. People need to enjoy how you talk both in the sound of your voice and the vocabulary that you use. Judee Burgoon (1978), analyzed the sound of a person's voice, and how that affects people's perception. She points to fluency, clarity, and pleasantness as three qualities that are all interrelated. Clarity is the skill of

communicating information clearly, fluency being the use of appropriate jargon, and pleasantness referring to the mood of the broadcaster. These qualities lead to a general judgement of a broadcaster's ability and are all under the umbrella of pleasantness. She also cites volume and intensity as interrelated aspects of broadcasting, named intensity dimensions. These two leads to a potency judgement. Linking with both pleasantness and intensity dimensions are variety and rate. Finally, she points out that these vocal attributes work together, and viewers perceive them that way (Burgoon, 1978, p.5).

Therefore, audiences assign credibility generally based on vocal differences, but that is not all. Looking past the different dimensions of vocal perceptions, different vocal features affect different facets of one's credibility (Burgoon, 1978, p. 6). For example, Burgoon found an association between a broadcaster having greater pleasantness and being perceived as more competent, more composed, and more sociable. Another correlation she found was that greater variety links to greater perceived sociability and extroversion (Burgoon, 1978, p.6). Clarity improved a broadcaster's perceived credibility and volume giving more credence to extroversion.

Voice has a great effect on the perceived credibility of a broadcaster, and in specific ways. But which aspect does it have the most effect on? Burgoon (1978) concluded that vocal characteristics are good at predicting competence and composure judgements. These characteristics are less powerful in predicting character, sociability, and extroversion (Burgoon, 1978, p.6). In summary, vocal characteristics are big factors in viewers determining whether who they are listening to is credible or not.

Another vocal aspect that can affect credibility in a negative way is the choice to brand yourself as a storyteller. In broadcasting, a common piece of advice is to sound conversational. What this means is to try and not sound robotic as you're reading a script off of a teleprompter or performing from memory. People don't want to hear a monotone voice just speak; they want to feel like they are a part of the conversation around a topic. Broadcasters cannot just swing all the way to the other side though either. Brian Calfano (2022) looked at the viewer perception of broadcasters that brand themselves as storytellers. He asked five hundred respondents to read a story about zoning ordinance. They then responded on a five-point Likert scale that asked about story bias, sensationalism, trivialization, fair portrayal, and reporter bias. In every single category except for fair portrayal the storytelling article was seen in a negative light. In the open-ended response portion of the study Calfano (2022) asked, "When you see the term 'storyteller' used to describe a journalist, what comes to your mind?" (p.191). Out of 1,733 responses sixty-seven percent of them responded with either "extremely negative" or "negative". Compare that with just over twelve percent of responses that put down "positive" or "extremely positive". (Calfano, 2022, p. 191).

Through Burgoon's and Calfano's research, I believe that we can comfortably say that sports broadcasters can take steps with how they speak to add credibility. They can do this by increasing their fluency, clarity, pleasantness, volume, and intensity. They also can tweak how they brand themselves, as well as the style of broadcasting they choose. However, this is not the only way that they can add credibility. M. Jimmie Killingsworth (2005) pointed out what he calls the position of the author. He points out that "the author's position is not simply a personal

account of himself or herself. The author is a complex individual who selectively reveals (or invents) aspects of character pertinent to the rhetorical work required at the moment.”(p. 252) In other words, the author can pick and choose what he or she wants to reveal about their experience. To tailor it to the question, there is no need for a broadcaster to reveal that they have no Division 1 or professional experience in their sport. Instead, highlight aspects of what makes you credible and likable. No need to shoot yourself in the foot.

Another strategy pointed out by Killingsworth (2005) is the position of value. Killingsworth describes this concept as a triangle with the position of value being the common ground that ties two positions together. This position of value is what the speaker uses to guide the audience, one of the other corners, to his or her ultimate point of view. This position of value is similar to Aristotle’s *logos* according to Killingsworth (2005).

Transparency is yet another way that broadcasters can build credibility with their audience. This logically adds up, if you are forthcoming with your information, where you got it, who gave it to you, when it was acquired, etc., then people will be more willing to believe you. It’s just citing your sources. In recent years, many practitioners and researchers have proposed that a new norm, *transparency*, is changing the way journalism builds credibility. Moreover, it is also suggested that transparency actually improves journalistic credibility and that users will put greater trust in news media as a result of this shift in journalistic practice (Gillmor 2004; Karlsson 2011; Kovach and Rosenstiehl 2001; Lasorsa 2012). This transparency can be achieved in various ways including but not limited to using different sources, verifiable evidence, and keeping personal biases out of your work (Karlson, 2014, p. 1). For sports broadcasters that

could be not giving preferential treatment to the team you root for, getting quotes from both sides in a dispute, and citing where you get your statistics from.

However, when Karlson (2014) carried out the study the findings were surprising. They asked 1,320 people to review different articles. The control group just got the basic article about a water park being added into the local area. The rest were given articles with different details that were more transparent. A couple of these strategies were user comments being under the article, a disclosure of the values of the journalist, and the explanation of why the story was written. At the end of the study the results indicated that there was almost no positive or negative effect in the source credibility or the message credibility (Karlson, 2014, p.7). Source credibility is the credibility of the journalists themselves and message credibility is the trust of the message that the author is conveying. This links nicely with the idea posed earlier that there is no need to put forth information about yourself as a broadcaster that you know would make you lose credibility if it is not directly pertinent to the conversation.

The Build Up of Ethos

We have spent a lot of time looking at how to overcome a lack of ethos that naturally comes with not being considered an expert in your field. This looks different for every field. For broadcasting there are a few good ways to do this. You can pour into preparation, adjust your voice, adjust your overall style, and cite sources with their statistics. These strategies along with others will help supplement a lack of credentials to give a broadcaster more credibility.

That is all well and good, but can you build up your ethos specifically? Certainly, it would be helpful to not just supplement a weak link, but instead build that part of yourself up

too. Aristotle points out in his book “On Rhetoric” that he believes a person’s character (ethos) may be the most important means of persuasion.

Aristotle again will provide some good information concerning this. He referred to ethos as the character that the speaker wanted to put forth. Not only is that the characters credibility from credentials and name value, but it is also charisma (Aristotle, 1991).

The definition of charisma is “a personal magic of leadership arousing special popular loyalty or enthusiasm for a public figure (such as a political leader)” or “a special magnetic charm or appeal” (Merriam-Webster, 2024). Both definitions refer to having people want to listen to your message and follow you as a person. In that time that meant listening to someone speak in the middle of town, or possibly studying under them. Now that has taken on a whole new meaning. With social media you can have millions of followers worldwide. People listen to podcasts across the globe. And games are broadcasted to hundreds of countries as well. People want to listen to content. A broadcaster just needs to be able to be liked. If people enjoy listening to your content for you, your credentials become a lot less of a problem. In fact, people will start often gravitating to you even despite lack of credentials if you are charismatic enough.

As previously discussed in detail, much evidence has been given about audio and how that aspect of broadcasting can be leveraged to add credibility and overcome a lack of high-level playing/coaching experience in a sport. Now let’s look at how the same can be done through the camera angles and shots that a producer will choose. If you have ever been in a film class, or even just watched a film, you can point to ways certain scenes made you feel. And you would

intuitively know that a big part of that is how they portray that scene through the placement of the camera.

These visual principles are not only applicable to films, but also can be carried over into sports broadcasting. R. Glenn Cummins (2009) makes a case for this in his paper, “The Effects of Subjective Camera and Fanship on Viewers’ Experience of Presence and Perception of Play in Sports Telecasts”. He talks about sporting audiences demand to be immersed in the action (Cummins, 2009, p. 2). If they can’t be on the field, they want to be as close as humanly possible. This has led to an increase in the use of subjective cameras in sport. Cummins defines subjective camera shots as, “a shot where the camera participates in, rather than merely observes, an event” (Cummins, 2009, p. 2). The reason for using this technique is to invite the audience into the event like they want. A couple examples given by Cummins is the dash cams on cars in NASCAR and overhead shots from behind the quarter back. Cummins homes in on this second shot and says that it “provides a better sense of the quarterback’s viewpoint, as well as draw in more casual viewers” (Cummins, 2009, p.2). This shot is one of two in what is called “all-twenty-two” film. It is called this because in this version of the film you are able to see all twenty-two players on the field at the same time. This is used by every coaching staff in football because you are able to see the play develop in full, and you can coach every individual position on the field from this view. It differs from what is known as the “TV copy. The TV copy is your standard shot that you see if you turned the game on live. In this view you are only able to see the player with the ball and the few that are around him. This shot does not immerse the viewer in the action as well, and coaches do not use it.

The results of the study line up with this view. Cummins writes,
...participants reported higher mean engagement/involvement scores in response to plays that were shown via subjective camera, than for plays shown using objective camera. Thus, the use of the overhead subjective camera elicited a stronger sense of presence both as spatial presence and as engagement/involvement than the use of third-person sideline camera.” (Cummins, 2009, p.12)

As is shown in this paper, the use of certain shots causes sports fans to be more engrossed in what is being said.

After reviewing the literature, there is an issue with networks shying away from on-air personalities that did not play or coach the sport they talk about at a high level. This is partly because if you did not play, you are missing a part of ethos in your rhetoric. This can be remedied in many ways like camera shots, vocal changes, and not saying that you are inexperienced. Let’s put these strategies into practice.

Methodology

The following section outlines the methodology used in this paper. I began by conducting a literature review including both scholarly and popular literature that was relevant to the topic. Since the topic revolves around sports and broadcasting, it was necessary to review popular literature like blogs, social media posts on X, and television broadcasts themselves.

The purpose of this literature review was to discover what was written and being said about ethos in the broadcasting context. The goal then was to take strategies that I found in the literature and apply them in a concrete way by writing an original television script of an analysis

segment demonstrating more effective ways a broadcaster can create ethos. Finally, this original script was analyzed through the lens of the literature review to showcase how those strategies can be effectively applied to a broadcast.

Creative Section

Here we will take what was learned from the literature review and put it into practice. The NFL draft is coming up in April of this year. A hot topic right now is the top two quarterbacks Caleb Williams from the University of Southern California, and Drake Maye out of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Both quarterbacks are up for the number one pick with the consensus being that Williams should go first. This script will be for a 1:30-2-minute segment of me breaking down why Drake Maye deserves to be the first quarterback drafted this spring. The script will include background on Maye, stats from his season, and film showcasing his skills. The film will be a play from Maye's game against Appalachian State in the 2023 college football season. The play occurred with 13:55 left in the first quarter of said game.

In disclosure, I did not play or coach football for a division 1 college or NFL team, so I lack the ethos that has been the topic of the paper. The segment will be meant to be for television but can also be posted after the fact to social media. This is common practice for most shows on big networks like ESPN and Fox Sports. The script will be three columns with scene, video, and audio identified.

Script

Act 1 of 1

Script Written by: Tyler Hill

Scene	Video	Audio
1	FADE UP	MUSIC- UPBEAT INSTRUMENTAL
2	<p>WS PUSHED TO MS SHOWING TYLER AND TV WITH 2024 NFL DRAFT LOGO GFX: TYLER HILL, NFL DRAFT EXPERT</p> <p>MS OF TYLER AND TV, TV FADES TO PICTURE OF CALEB WILLIAMS AND DRAKE MAYE</p> <p>TV FADES TO JUST THE PICTURE OF DRAKE MAYE</p> <p>GFX: DRAKE MAYE BACKGROUND INFO</p> <p>FADE DRAKE MAYE BACKGROUND INFO INTO GFX: DEEP BALL STATS</p>	<p>MUSIC FADES DOWN</p> <p>(TYLER)</p> <p>The 2024 NFL draft is just around the corner, in 2 months hundreds of young men will have their dreams realized of becoming professionals. There are debates at every position this draft season as always. The most important position on the field is no different.</p> <p>Caleb Williams and Drake Maye are the almost consensus QB 1 and 2 in this draft. But what should the order be?</p> <p>Maye stands out to me as QB 1 in this class.</p> <p>Let's start with his high school days. He was a five-star prospect in the 2021 high school class. He finished as the twenty fourth overall player, fourth ranked quarterback, and the number one player in North Carolina. His brother Luke is a North Carolina basketball legend, he won a title in 2017. His other 2 brothers played Division one sports, and dad played football for UNC in the 80s.</p> <p>His deep ball accuracy is insane, the best that I've seen and the stats back it up. According to PFF he was the highest graded quarterback on throws over 20 yards. He also had the highest completion percentage, despite having the second most drops on these throws for QBs</p>

		with 80 such throws. That means despite his receivers not reliably catching the ball, he still put-up monster stats. So, the stats say he's skilled, so let's take a look at a couple of plays from his time at UNC Chapel Hill to show you what I'm talking about.
3	OTS OF IPAD WITH THE PLAY PULLED UP. FADE TO THE SCREEN OF THE IPAD.	(TYLER) Here we go. Let's start with this throw against Appalachian State. It's first and ten early in the first quarter. Maye shows off his nutty arm and deep ball accuracy in this play. We got the all twenty two copy here so you can see what Maye did on this play. This is the shot coaches use for their personal review, and we're lucky to have it. We're going to look through his eyes as much as possible, and out of the hours of film I've seen this play highlights the deep ball the best.
4	IPAD COMES TO FULL SCREEN, CONTROLLED BY TYLER LINES SIGNIFYING THE ROUTES RUN ARE DRAWN ON BY TYLER LINES ERASED. VTR PLAYS THEN PAUSED	(TYLER) North Carolina is in a three by one formation here to the field, meaning the 3 receivers are on the wide side. UNC is going to max protect meaning blocking 7 people. For the routes they run a curl at the top of the screen and a hitch in the slot. The receiver on the bottom of the screen has a go-route. That go route is going to get man covered just him and the corner. He wins immediately off the line and normally that ball would come out quick. See how he's open right now? Normally the ball is on the way. But what is Maye doing right now? Look at his eyes. He just got done with the play fake and he's still reading the wide side. The play design forces Maye to work all the way across the field.
5		(TYLER)

	<p>SWITCH VIEWS FROM SIDE ALL-22 TO SKYCAM ALL-22</p> <p>VTR PLAYS FOR 1 SECOND THEN PAUSES</p> <p>VTR SWITCHES BACK TO SIDE VIEW</p> <p>VTR PLAYS OUT UNTIL THE BALL HITS THE GROUND</p>	<p>We're going to pick it up here but from the view in front of Maye. I said I wanted to show you through his eyes and here is where I want to do it.</p> <p>Look at his helmet stripe and facemask. It's pointing all the way to the other side. This is where the arm talent comes in.</p> <p>He's going to flip his hips to the other side here, load up and throw.</p> <p>Look at this. He releases this ball with the receiver already 29 yards down field. And you can't hitch up and throw because there is no room. On top of that you can't just chuck it as far as you can, because he's throwing it from the 41. There is a real risk of throwing it out of bounds in that case. You have to put this on a rope.</p> <p>And look at this. Beautiful throw. The trajectory, velocity, and placement are special. The only reason this is not a touchdown is because of the pass interference.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>CU PUSH TO MS</p>	<p>(TYLER)</p> <p>There are plays like this littered all over Maye's tape. He is one of the most talented QB's in years and comes from a historically athletic family.</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>MOVE DOWN TO LOW ANGLE MS</p>	<p>UPBEAT INSTRUMENTAL COMES BACK ON</p> <p>(TYLER)</p> <p>And I get it. Most people have Caleb Williams first. He is an amazing quarterback in his own right. But I'm not going to go with the flow just because. I can't shake the way Maye jumps off</p>

		the screen to me. Chicago would be killing it if they take Maye first in this year's draft.
--	--	---

Script Analysis

There are a couple of different ways that I applied the techniques discussed in the literature review. I chose to focus on the vocal, video, and charisma areas that were mentioned previously.

Vocal

In reviewing the literature there are vocal changes that a broadcaster can make to add to their credibility. The first area is preparation. Preparation is key in any job, but especially one where you have to think and speak on your feet. Live television is certainly one of those areas. There are no editing mistakes in speech or in graphics. Bob Costas is one of the most well-known broadcasters ever, and he points to his preparation as one of the biggest areas that makes him successful (McGuire, 2009, p. 6).

Preparation played a huge role in this segment. The first area that this would shine through is in Drake Maye's background. Going all the way back into his high school career definitely shows a high level of preparation. It is information that is pertinent to Maye's draft stock but is not readily available without research. The same can be said about the athletic careers of his family like his dad and brothers. This background adds to him as a person and athlete. However, you do not get that information without research and preparation.

Preparation also shines through in the statistics that I cited in the script. PFF stands for Pro Football Focus. Pro Football Focus is a company that provides advanced statistics for both

college and professional football. The examples I used were recording throws that are over twenty yards specifically. The completion percentage and proprietary grade that PFF gives were both from their site. To get this information you have to pay for a subscription. This means that if you have a subscription, you are willing to pay money to become more knowledgeable. It also means that time was taken to look on the website to find the statistic. Therefore, my opinion on Maye's proficiency with the deep ball was founded on analysis of the statistics.

Finding the play that I go over is another point of preparation. In the script it is cited that I have watched hours of film on Maye encompassing multiple games. This shows an extreme time commitment to researching before going on the air. Besides just the claim that I watched film, I also backed it up with the in the moment analysis. Through calling out what the play is before it happens, I show that I really did watch it beforehand and know what is going on.

In addition to preparation, I looked to avoid becoming too much of the storytelling archetype. In research I found that people responded negatively to journalists who brand themselves as storytellers (Calfano, 2022). They scored negatively in story bias, sensationalism, trivialization, and reporter bias compared to the control group (Calfano, 2022). Because of that, I tried to keep storytelling to a minimum. The closest thing to storytelling in the script would be the backstory of Maye as a high schooler. However, that was a small part of the script, and was more listing off of facts than anything. I also sought to avoid storytelling in the breakdown of the play. You are describing something that is going on as you are speaking so it's very easy to tell the story of the play in one big chunk. Instead of this, I split different points into different

segments of the play. I did this by utilizing pauses in the film and waiting until something had happened to give the analysis for it.

Another area that I would emphasize in the reading of the script would be pleasantness. Smiling and speaking as if I want to be there is a good approach to take anyway, but especially since it lends itself to being perceived as more credible and composed (Burgoon, 1978, p. 6). In addition to smiling, I would want to be animated in my voice. That would include varying the volume, emphasizing specific words, and keeping the tone upbeat as I am talking about Maye's play. This variety leads to a higher perceived sociability and extroversion (Burgoon, 1978, p.6). This higher perceived sociability links to the increase in charisma. Charisma links strongly to the concept of ethos, and for someone who is lacking the name or credentials to automatically get ethos, this is invaluable.

In the script a point of emphasis was clarity. Burgoon (1978) found that clarity improved broadcasters perceived credibility as well. (p.6). Specific examples of this are when I included jargon known in the football world. I want people to know what I'm talking about, so if something might not be known to everyone then I want to make that as clear as possible. Breaking down what I meant by a three by one formation, drawing out the hitch and curl patterns, and explaining what max protection all examples are of trying to be as clear as possible.

Finally, I gave the audience evidence that the film I was using was credible. I'm not using the standard TV copy that most are used to. So, to answer their questions I gave them a clear explanation of what *all twenty-two film* is. That is yet another way that clarity was utilized to build credibility. However, the big part of that statement was when it is said, "We got all twenty-

two copy here so you can see what Maye did on this play. This is the shot coaches use for their personal review, and we're lucky to have it." This emphasizes the fact that all twenty-two films are necessary for knowledge on what is happening. It also points out that this is what college and professional coaches use for their teams. This helps link what I am doing to the people who do this for a living. Through this the goal is to gain credibility by linking myself in some way to these coaches.

Video

There are more than just vocal aspects of trying to add credibility through the script. The choice of shots can also be huge in changing the viewers' perception. In the literature review it was found that,

...participants reported higher mean engagement/involvement scores in response to plays that were shown via subjective camera, than for plays shown using objective camera.

Thus, the use of the overhead subjective camera elicited a stronger sense of presence both as spatial presence and as engagement/involvement than the use of third-person sideline camera." (Cummins, 2009, p.12)

This means that if you can make the audience feel like they are really a part of the play, whether from the player or coach perspective, they will be more engaged throughout the segment.

There are a couple different places where I tried to leverage that. Pushing in the camera shots multiple times throughout the script was a big one. This move is a staple in professional

broadcasts and can be done both with a crane for sweeping shots, or with the zoom of a normal camera. Regardless, executing this move makes the segment look like an ESPN broadcast.

The second time that shots were leveraged for credibility was the over the shoulder shot in scene three. In this shot a separate camera from the first one would be looking over my right shoulder down to the screen of the iPad. The iPad would have the beginning of the play pulled up before I begin the analysis. This would be one way of using a subjective shot to make the audience feel like they are seeing through my eyes to breakdown the play. The next shot being what the viewers saw on the iPad before it fades to full screen dovetails well. The audience goes from seeing me looking down at the iPad, to then being taken into themselves with back-to-back subjective shots.

Those are a couple of the unspoken ways that shots were used to keep the audience engaged in the content. That is not all though. In giving a description for *all twenty-two* film I said that we would be “seeing through Maye’s eyes”. That is the exact definition of a subjective shot, and completes the audience being present in the moment. Now they are getting both the coach’s perspective and the players’ perspective all through using *all twenty-two* film.

In the script there are graphics used to communicate information. The first graphic contains my name and my position. I left out any more information outside of that. I chose this route because of the study that was done on whether transparency as a journalist led to credibility. The researcher, Karlsson (2014), gave out articles that had different strategies meant to show the readers that the journalist was being transparent about themselves and their reporting. After collecting the data, it was found that transparency was not a good way for your

message to be seen as more credible. It also did not make the source seem more credible either. Because of this I decided to keep the information about me as simple as possible. Normally graphics would have biographies that include information about that person. These usually contain accomplishments that a person has as a player or coach. Since I don't have these same accomplishments, this would not benefit me.

The initial graphic named me as an NFL Draft expert. This too was on purpose. The title given to your role as a broadcaster is arbitrary. It is not like a doctor where you can't call yourself one without going through medical school and residency. There is no degree in NFL Draft analysis. Being labeled an NFL Draft expert comes with some inherent credibility.

The final choice for shots I want to highlight is the use of the drawings to show route concepts. Not only is this good for clarity, but it also is something that football analysts will do all the time. Me utilizing that technology will help me appear more like them, regardless of the difference in NFL or college football experience.

In conclusion, audio and video were used in many different ways to maximize the credibility of myself as a draft analyst. All of them were backed by research, normal practice in broadcasting, or both. These choices will hopefully serve as a model to increase the credibility of broadcasters who lack ethos in their attempt to persuade.

Limitations and Future Work

There are some limitations in conducting this thesis. The biggest one would be the ability to go out and execute the script. Unfortunately, due to time and financial constraints, this is not a

possibility. To see how each choice played out together in real life would be invaluable in evaluating the success of it. Seeing these choices can also help figure out which areas might need tweaking to increase success of overcoming a lack of ethos.

This leads to the possibility of future work. What has already been stated is one option of the work that could be done off of this thesis. Take the script, try it out, and see how it ultimately comes together.

However, I believe that there is a more interesting option. One could take the script that has been written and contrast it with others. For example, instead of trying to be as pleasant in speech as possible, one of the takes could have the broadcaster talk in a monotone voice and not smile the whole time. Another could have a different strategy for lighting. This might feature the broadcaster more prominently in all of the shots. Or there could be the complete opposite, where a script tries to take the focus off of the broadcaster and onto the information being presented.

Whichever the researcher chooses, they can then send out a survey with a five-point Likert scale. This survey could feature a myriad of questions. The topics could be the different perception of the broadcaster, what they liked, didn't like, and any areas that the viewer thought could be changed. This would go a long way in specifically seeing what strategies work in adding to a broadcaster's credibility, taking it from theory into practice.

Conclusion

To conclude, there are sports broadcasters in the world whose credibility takes a hit from not playing sports at a high level. However, I believe that can be overcome through methods like preparation (McGuire, 2009, p. 6), choices in video, and in audio. When you combine those methods, I believe that is when they all will be most effective. Hopefully, future research can determine whether these claims are true.

References

- Aristotle, Turnbull, N., & Kennedy, G. A. (1991). *On rhetoric*. Oxford University Press.
- Bender, B. (2024, January 29). Dan Campbell, analytics and where the real truth about fourth down rests. *Sporting News*. <https://www.sportingnews.com/us/nfl/news/dan-campbell-analytics-real-truth-fourth-down-rests/6913bdcf7a4231d04df801c5>
- Bonnet, V., & Lochard, G. (n.d.). *Routledge Handbook of Sport Communication*. Google Books. Retrieved March 31, 2023, from https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=d_K6uqM8s5QC&oi=fnd&pg=PA38&dq=ethos%2Bpathos%2Blogos%2Bin%2Bbroadcasting&ots=nKPrwUxfK3&sig=ooxRmS1AU8UDU2m2YTgMPX3lZdw#v=onepage&q=ethos%20pathos%20logos%20in%20broadcasting&f=false
- Bradshaw, T. (2021). Benefit or Burden?: Social media and moral complexities confronting sports journalists. In *Insights on Reporting Sports in the Digital Age* (pp. 17-30). Routledge.
- Burgoon. (1978). Attributes of the Newscaster's Voice as Predictors of His Credibility. *The Journalism Quarterly*, 55(2), 276–300. <https://doi.org/10.1177/107769907805500208>
- Calfano, B., Blevins, J. L., & Straka, A. (2022). Bad Impressions: How Journalists as “Storytellers” Diminish Public Confidence in Media. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 66(1), 176–199. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08838151.2022.2036153>

“Charisma.” Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/charisma>. Accessed 3 Feb. 2024.

Data Science Connect. (2023, August 12). The future of sports: A deep dive into sports analytics " Data science connect. Data Science Connect. <https://datasciconnect.com/the-future-of-sports-a-deep-dive-into-sports-analytics/#:~:text=In%20conclusion%2C%20it%20is%20clear%20that%20the%20field,b eing%20employed%20to%20reduce%20the%20risk%20of%20injuries>.

Dlugan, A. (2012). Ethos, Pathos, Logos: 3 Pillars of Public Speaking. Public Speaking Spring, 1–3.

Drake Maye, Myers Park , quarterback. 247Sports. (n.d.). <https://247sports.com/Player/drake-maye-46054754/high-school-216204/>

ESPN Internet Ventures. (2024, January 28). *49ers 34-31 lions (Jan 28, 2024) final score*. ESPN. https://www.espn.com/nfl/game/_/gameId/401547380/lions-49ers

Florio, P. (2024, January 9). A coach told me earlier today that analytics was just a way for people who never would have gotten jobs in football to get jobs in football. To understand that is to understand why they get so defensive whenever anyone questions analytics. X.com. Retrieved April 22, 2024, from <https://twitter.com/ProFootballTalk/status/1752040878728716333>Folk, Moe, and Shawn Apostel. Online Credibility and Digital Ethos : Evaluating Computer-Mediated Communication. Hershey, PA: Information Science Reference, 2013.

Google. (n.d.). Routledge Handbook of Sport Communication. Google Books. Retrieved March 31, 2023, from

https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=d_K6uqM8s5QC&oi=fnd&pg=PA38&dq=ethos%2Bpathos%2Blogos%2Bin%2Bbroadcasting&ots=nKPrwUxfK3&sig=ooxRmS1AU8UDU2m2YTgMPX3lZdw#v=onepage&q=ethos%20pathos%20logos%20in%20broadcasting&f=false

Kelly, J. (2022, January 28). Understand the difference between ethos, pathos, and logos to make your point. Thesaurus.com. Retrieved March 31, 2023, from

<https://www.thesaurus.com/e/writing/ethos-pathos-logos/>

Killingsworth. (2005). Rhetorical Appeals: A Revision. *Rhetoric Review*., 24(3), 249–263.

https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327981rr2403_1

Logos Ethos and Pathos in Political Discourse-Mshvenieradze, T. (2013). Logos Ethos and Pathos in Political Discourse. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 3(11), 1939-

1945. <https://doi.org/10.4304/tpls.3.11.1939-1945>

McGuire, J. (2002). Selective Perception and its Impact on the Evaluation of Radio Sports Play-By-Play Announcers. *Journal of Radio Studies*, 9(1), 51–64.

https://doi.org/10.1207/s15506843jrs0901_6

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). *Charisma definition & meaning*. Merriam-Webster.

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/charisma> Merriam-Webster. (n.d.).

Charisma definition & meaning. Merriam-Webster. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/charisma>

Michael Karlsson, Christer Clerwall & Lars Nord (2014) You Ain't Seen Nothing Yet, *Journalism Studies*, 15:5, 668-678, DOI: 10.1080/1461670X.2014.886837

Premium stats. Premium Stats. (n.d.).

<https://premium.pff.com/ncaa/positions/2023/REGPO/passing-depth?division=fbs&position=QB&split=deep&customMinimum=1&minimum=80>

R. Glenn Cummins (2009) The Effects of Subjective Camera and Fanship on Viewers' Experience of Presence and Perception of Play in Sports Telecasts, *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 37:4, 374-396, DOI: 10.1080/00909880903233192

Ramon-Vegas, X., & Rojas-Torrijos, J. L. (2018). Accountable sports journalism: Building up a platform and a new specialised code in the field. *Ethical Space: The International Journal of Communication Ethics*, 15(1/2), 15-28.

Rosenteil, T. (2012, July 6). YouTube & News. <https://www.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2012/07/YouTube-the-News-A-PEJ-Report-FINAL.pdf>