

ABSTRACT

THESIS PROJECT: Those “Damn” Women: A Content Analysis of Male and Female Play-by-Play Dialogues within the National Football League

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This study presents a quantitative analysis of the dialogues from four primetime national television play-by-play broadcasters within the NFL. In 2017, Beth Mowins became the first woman in the history of the NFL to step into a primetime national television booth. Mowins called the second opening-week ESPN *Monday Night Football* game between the Los Angeles Chargers and the Denver Broncos on September 11, 2017. After the telecast, Mowins was met with an outcry of complaints from fans on social media. Many of the remarks were steeped in sexism. This study examines the root of those complaints, while using Impression Formation Theory as the guiding framework. Through a content analysis, four of the NFL’s primetime television announcers (Jim Nantz, Al Michaels, Joe Buck, and Beth Mowins) are tested through 10 variables. Those variables include the handling of scoring plays, the frequency of corrections, bias, historical knowledge, NFL rules knowledge, terminology, questions to their analyst, airtime, access, and statistical use. Tested through chi-squared (also written χ^2 test) and Fisher’s exact test, this study shows there is little to no difference in the language use between Mowins and the three male broadcasters within these 10 variables. Therefore, this study suggests the social media complaints by fans cannot be based upon Mowins’ ability to provide a television play-by-play call of an NFL game.