A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ROGER STAUBACH AND JOE NAMATH
AS SPORTS HEROES USING OrrIN KLAPP'S
DIALECTICAL PROCESS OF HERO FORMATION

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in
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by
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To the memory of
my father
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ABSTRACT

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Throughout time athletes have been heroes in the human imagination. Thousands of men and women engage in amateur and professional sports every year and their performances are carried to the masses by the media. A few performers emerge as heroes; some become legends. The vast majority, however, fade from the public's consciousness.

The role of the hero has undergone a great transformation. Talent is important but is not the sole criterion in determining who we remember and who we forget; who we idolize and who we criticize. Out of the thousands of talented performers who appear on television screens and in newspaper and magazine sports pages, which of those performers will emerge as heroes?

Using sociologist Orrin E. Klapp's dialectical
process (which is essentially a guide to the complex procedure of hero formation) as a framework for analysis, the hypothesis of this thesis is that physical ability and talent are not the most important criteria in the determination of which performer becomes a sports hero, but rather it is the ability to respond properly to this dialectical process of hero formation.

Two professional football players -- Roger Staubach and Joe Namath -- were selected for analysis and their autobiographical works were compared in a chronological fashion to the coverage of them in the Dallas Morning News (for Staubach), the New York Times (for Namath), and Sports Illustrated magazine (for both men). The years studied were 1962 through 1974.

Results of this study indicate that, except for some minor deficiencies, Klapp's process is a functional one. Additionally, it is shown how Staubach and Namath successfully proceeded from the first step in the process to the last, ultimately emerging as heroes.
Chapter I
Introduction

Throughout time athletes have been heroes in the human imagination. The commercialization of sports concomitant with the growth of in-depth sports coverage by the media have profoundly altered the nature of sports as well as the image of the traditional athlete-hero.

For millions of Americans, participants and spectators alike, sports are no longer a diversion but a passion and an obsession. Political columnist James Reston once explained:

"Sport in America plays a part in our national life that is probably more important than even the social scientists believe... For sports and games, in a funny way, are not only America's diversion and illusion, but its hope."1

But sports would be relatively insignificant if it were not for newspapers, magazines, radio and television -- the means of communication which transport the exploits and images of the athletes from the playing fields into the lives of all Americans.

Thousands of men and women engage in amateur and professional sports every year and these people and their performances are carried to the masses via the media. A few performers emerge as heroes; some become legends. The vast majority, however, fade from the public's consciousness.

It is surprising and curious that no studies exist in
which an attempt is made to determine how and why sports figures become heroes since a great many athletes do, in fact, become vehicles for identification and models for imitation. The daily newspaper's sports pages are of great consequence in shaping opinions and values. In some instances, sports pages serve as the only source of daily news for a large segment of the public. Malcolm Mallette, associate director of the American Press Institute, explained:

"Circulation managers say that about thirty percent of the people who buy their papers do it primarily for the sports news."²

Even as distinguished a sportswriter as Red Smith vastly underestimated the reach of the sports page and its influence in the creation of heroic personalities. He told fellow sportswriter Jerry Holtzman:

"I won't deny that the heavy majority of sportwriters, myself included, have been and still are guilty of puffing up people they write about. I remember one time when Stanley Woodward, my beloved leader, was on the point of sending me a wire during spring training saying, 'Will you stop Godding up those ball players?' I didn't realize what I had been doing. I thought I had been writing pleasant little spring training columns about ball players."³

The role of the hero has undergone a great transformation and with it the type of person who becomes a hero. Talent is important but not the sole criterion in determining who we remember and who we forget; who we idolize and who we criticize. Hundreds of books and articles have been written about particular athletes who were adjudged to be sports heroes, but the basic questions of how and why
these specific people got to be heroes has not been answered or even asked, for that matter. Out of the thousands of talented performers who appear on television screens and in newspaper and magazine sports pages, which of those performers will emerge as heroes? Can we, in fact, understand how symbolic leaders and heroes are made and the role that the media and audience have in making them?

Orrin E. Klapp, retired professor of sociology at San Diego State University, thinks we can. In Symbolic Leaders: Public Dramas and Public Men, he has set forth a dialectical process which is essentially a guide to the complex procedure of hero-making.

The process he describes is a series of two-way interactions between the performer and the media and the audience in which none of the three know what the outcome will be. The performer emits cues or initiates certain actions and the media, using perceptual and functional selection, respond to those actions and issue feedback which gives the performer a view of his image. Perceptual and functional selection mean, in effect, that the media and audience see only what they want to see, i.e., what interests them, and respond only to images that do something for them. Thus, by responding to this selection process, the performer is searching out latent functions that need to be fulfilled.

The performer responds to the feedback by either
accepting or rejecting it but he cannot project a totally new image. If the performer responds properly to the feedback in each successive step, he will go on to the next step, but if he does not strike the right symbolic function, nothing will happen. If he is successful, he will eventually become either a hero, villain or fool, the three end-products of the process. The symbol or image that emerges is always a product of the dialectical process.6

Using Klapp's process as a framework for analysis, the hypothesis of this study is that physical ability and talent are not the most important criteria in the determination of which performer becomes a sports hero, but rather it is the ability to respond properly to this dialectical process of hero formation.

Once Klapp's framework has been established, the actual testing of the process will be carried out. For purposes of this study, two professional football players, Roger Staubach and Joe Namath, have been selected and their careers will be traced from the initial step in the process until they reach the final step or stop at one of the intermediate steps along the way. The assumption will be made at the outset, however, that both players, although they have remarkably dissimilar public images, are heroes.

Football players were selected because football has achieved enormous popularity in the past two decades and has supplanted baseball as the "great American sport."

Football also maintains a unique relationship with the
media. National Football League (N.F.L.) Commissioner Pete Rozelle once remarked that, "Whatever success the NFL has had is due, in no small measure, to the wholehearted support it has received through the years from newspapermen, radio announcers and commentators...." In 1973, the N.F.L. derived $46 million in revenue from television or $1.8 million for each club. CBS paid $3.5 million just for the rights to broadcast Super Bowl X and sponsors paid $230,000 per minute for commercial time -- the most ever paid for a television program. In addition, it was estimated that 1,600 newsmen, photographers and broadcasters were on the scene and turned out three to four million words.

With football having reach an apparent saturation point in terms of teams in major urban areas and in television time, spectator interest has not significantly dropped off. Attendance at professional football games has doubled in the last 10 years and stood at 10.5 million in 1972 for the 26 teams. About 70 million viewers watched the telecast of Super Bowl VIII and an estimated 75 million persons tuned in to Super Bowl X -- the largest television audience in history.

Roger Staubach and Joe Namath were chosen for this study because they are comparable in the following respects: both had outstanding collegiate careers from 1962 to 1964; both are quarterbacks; both have played professional football for an extended period of time and for only one team;
both have written autobiographies; and most importantly, both have received vast amounts of media coverage.

Roger Staubach, representing the All-American athlete in the traditional sense, was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, 33 years ago. He was a unanimous All-American quarterback at the United States Naval Academy from 1962 through 1964 and won the Heisman Trophy (awarded annually to the outstanding collegiate player in the nation) in his junior year, one of a handful of players ever to do so.

Staubach fulfilled his military commitment by serving in the navy for four years including one year in Vietnam. Following his discharge, he was signed by the Dallas Cowboys of the N.F.L. where he has played since. He led the team to a 24-3 victory over the Miami Dolphins in Super Bowl VI in 1972 and was the National Football Conference (N.F.C.) player of the year.

Staubach is active in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and in 1974 he wrote his autobiography, First Down, Lifetime to Go, describing his personal values, lifestyle and playing career.

Joseph Willie Namath is an outstanding quarterback whose lifestyle often receives more attention than his football exploits. Namath, 32 years old, was born in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania and played under coach Paul "Bear" Bryant at the University of Alabama from 1962 through 1964. He led the Crimson Tide to a three-year record of 27 wins and 3 losses and starred in the Orange
Bowl in 1963 and 1965.

Namath signed a professional contract in 1965 with the New York Jets of the American Football League (A.F.L.) for an unprecedented $427,000 and was the A.F.L.'s rookie of the year. In 1969, after brashly predicting victory, Namath led the Jets to an upset 16-7 win over the Baltimore Colts in Super Bowl III. That year Namath won the Hickok Belt (awarded to the outstanding sportsman of the year by Sports Illustrated magazine), the A.F.L. most valuable player award and the Super Bowl most valuable player award. 15

In the spring of 1969, following a dispute with Commissioner Pete Rozelle over his restaurant, Bachelors III, Namath retired from football for six weeks but then sold his interest in the restaurant and was allowed to play. He has acted in three movies and co-authored two autobiographical works. Namath's iconoclastic lifestyle continues to receive enormous coverage from the media despite his diminishing success on the football field in recent years.

The autobiographies of these two football players will be analyzed and compared in a chronological fashion to the coverage in the New York Times (for Namath), the Dallas Morning News (for Staubach) and Sports Illustrated (for both players) from September 1962 through December 1974.

September 1962 was chosen as a starting point because in that month both quarterbacks commenced their collegiate football careers. A terminal date of December 31, 1974
was selected because by that time both players had been in the N.F.L. for at least five years and had played both in the Super Bowl and in All-Pro games. In addition, December 1974 marked the end of a football season in which neither player was involved in post-season competition.

For the analysis of Roger Staubach, the Dallas Morning News will be examined. According to recently published figures, the Morning News has the largest daily circulation in the Dallas metropolitan area (264,750 copies daily and 312,346 on Sunday) and is noted for its extensive sports coverage. The New York Times, one of the country's foremost newspapers, has a circulation of well over 840,000 daily and more than 1,400,000 copies on Sunday. Both newspapers were available on microfilm. The weekly magazine, Sports Illustrated, was chosen because it is considered to be the best overall, non-specialized sports magazine in the nation.

The autobiographical works were used to determine how Namath and Staubach perceived themselves and their careers, how they emitted their cues and how they responded to the feedback from the media and audience. The newspapers and magazine were analyzed in terms of how they in turn perceived the actions, careers and lifestyles of the two football players and how they helped create public images vis-a-vis perceptual and functional selection.

An enormous volume of material was written about Staubach and Namath between 1962 and 1974 which necessitated
selecting specific events in each of their lives which were significant in their personal development and careers. The articles and columns printed in the two newspapers and magazine regarding those particular events were emphasized. However, this did not preclude using material written at other times throughout those years.
Chapter I
Footnotes

5Ibid., p. 32.
6For a more complete description of the process, see Orrin E. Klapp, Symbolic Leaders: Public Dramas and Public Men, pp. 32-35.
10Ibid., p. 10.
12Ibid., p. 1.
13Grimsley, p. 10.
15Ibid., p. 498.
17Ibid., p. 646.
Chapter II
Review of the Literature

Many academic pieces have been written on the complex and often esoteric subject of heroism. Most of the studies, however, tend to concentrate on the hero in ancient civilizations, the hero in literature, the hero in film or the hero in art. More contemporary writers have focused their attention on the definitional problems of heroism, its evolution in the United States or heroism in the context of 20th century American society.

Virtually nothing has been written on the relationship of heroism and sports. Why that is so is a matter for conjecture. One reason may be that sports has never been deemed important enough for study by academicians. Intellectuals tend to view sports as a plebian pastime and not the stuff that scholarly treatises are made of.

Nevertheless, although no studies specifically address themselves to heroism and sports, materials exist which contribute, in one way or another, to an understanding and clarification of the concept of heroism, especially in establishing the identity of the traditional American hero. Recently, there has been a growing trend among authors to analyze the relationship of heroes and the media.

Two authors, Marshall Fishwick and Dixon Wecter, have dealt with the hero in America. The main concerns of Fishwick have been the mythological and literary dimensions
of American folk heroes. Wecter's book is more pertinent to this study insofar as he acknowledges that the media do indeed have a hand in the creation of heroes. According to Wecter, the hero is a servant of the media which act as interpreters, translators and selectors. In fact, he came very close to Klapp's view of the role of the media in the creation of heroes when he wrote:

"In this age above all others, newspapers and newsreels and radio and the mechanisms of ovation have such power, in making or breaking the idol of the moment, that fresh irony has been given the old saying, 'Heroes are not born but made.'"^2

However, that one passage is his solitary statement on the media. The remainder of his work is primarily concerned with an investigation of the American hero and the particular character traits that Americans have historically admired.

In two separate articles on the plight of contemporary heroes, the relationship of heroism and the media is mentioned, albeit somewhat perfunctorily. A Time magazine commentary concluded that modern day heroes are a scarce commodity because "with modern communications, myth-making, which is essential to heromaking is far more difficult."^3 The article further concluded that since ours is no longer a heroic society, heroes will become an extinct breed. That commentary was written ten years ago.

Edward Hoagland, writing in 1974, went one step further in his explanation as to why heroes are vanishing from the scene. Although he admits that the media have a
role in making or breaking persons of heroic stature, he attributes the decline of the hero to a transformation in American values and a change in the character of admiration. Hoagland explained:

"...though it is a question whether the appeal of Ted Williams' idiosyncrasies would have survived television, a bigger obstacle to him or any other hero would not be so much television as the people who are watching. We lack patience nowadays -- one slip and we will damn somebody..."4

Daniel Boorstin, noted American historian, provided in 1962 the most perspicacious analysis of the effect of the media on heroes and its recent spin-off, the celebrity.

For Boorstin, the celebrity is not an intermediary step along the way to becoming a hero, as it is to Klapp, but rather a phenomenon primarily owing its life to the electronic media. "The celebrity is a person who is known for his well-knownness"5 or in other words, is a person who knows how to get into the news and stay there regardless of personal talent, ability, intellect, etc.

The distinction between a hero and celebrity is, according to Boorstin:

"The hero was distinguished by his achievement; the celebrity by his image or trademark. The hero created himself; the celebrity is created by the media. The hero was a big man; the celebrity is a big name."6

Rather than concurring with Klapp's use of the celebrity as a stepping stone to becoming a hero, Boorstin contends that the opposite is true -- heroes often become celebrities. When someone performs a heroic deed, the
machinery of public information transforms him into a celebrity, but as soon as the public relations stops, the life of the celebrity ends also.

Boorstin believes that the true heroes are persons, often anonymous, who are men and women of solid virtues and who can be admired for qualities more substantial than mere "well-knownness." Often heroes are people in "under-paid, unglamorous and unpublicized jobs."7

The rebel heroes or alienated heroes of the 1950s gave rise to a group of writers and film critics who claimed that a new phenomenon was emerging -- that of the anti-hero. At one point, James Reston in the New York Times described Joe Namath as the new anti-hero.8 The popularity of the anti-hero seemed to reach its apex several years ago and it is apparently no longer in vogue to use the term. Perhaps one reason for its disappearance is the ambiguous definition assigned to it by critics and authors.

One recently completed study focused on sports journalism in the 1920s and the interdependence of the daily newspaper and the sports hero.9 In his M.A. paper, Robert Kilborn analyzed the newspaper coverage of three famous athletes (Babe Ruth, Red Grange and Jack Dempsey) in three separate years (1923, 1925 and 1927) and found that "journalists of the 1920s took the concept of heroism in sports seriously and generally manifested an unwillingness to tamper with heroic images once they were established."10
One of the major flaws in Kilborn's study is that he did not define heroism nor did he determine how and why the three athletes deserved to be labeled heroes. His was a study after the fact. In contrast, this study will attempt to define heroism, in addition to ascertaining just how athletes become heroes and the role of the media in that process.

Although Klapp's dialectical process is laid out in *Symbolic Leaders: Public Dramas and Public Men*, the other two books in his trilogy are of great value. In *Collective Search for Identity*, the concept of heroism is defined, while in *Heroes, Villains and Fools* the hero is described. Therefore, all three books are relevant to this study and will be discussed in the next chapter.
Chapter II

Footnotes


2 Ibid., p. 488.


6 Ibid., p. 61.

7 Boorstin, p. 76.


10 Ibid., abstract, p. ii.
Chapter III

Klapp's dialectical process and definitions

Since this study will proceed on the assumption that Roger Staubach and Joe Namath are heroes, the first priority must be to define hero as well as to explain his function and his value in the scheme of contemporary American society. All of the definitions and explanations used in this chapter have been extracted from Klapp's works.

In Collective Search for Identity, Klapp defined the hero:

"...not as someone who is especially good, but who realizes dreams for people that they cannot do for themselves. Essentially, he is a vehicle for psychic mobility -- whether in mass media, fiction or everyday life -- and identification is the psychic mechanism on which one 'rides.'"¹

Thus heroes provide a service since people use them as models for identification and imitation. Obviously they would not exist if it were not for the admiration and even worship of many people. Hero worship implies masses of people enthusiastically "going someplace" (Klapp calls this a "vicarious voyage") with communications facilities projecting images to large numbers of people.² In other words, the media carry performances and heroic images from the playing field into people's collective consciousness so that they can identify with or imitate heroic actions which will afford them some kind of vicarious pleasure or thrill.

The classical interpretation of the hero's function
is one who reinforces social roles and encourages his followers to maintain and support the social order. Contemporary sociologists, however, contend that that is not the exclusive function of the hero today. Klapp's interpretation of the function of the modern hero is one who offers a vicarious voyage to others through what he does himself. People outside the mainstream of society can therefore become heroes just as easily as those within it because such persons provide alternatives to the impersonality and repression which typify modern bureaucracies. Such institutions often work to defeat and stifle the heroic spirit. That is why celebrities such as playboys, great lovers, love queens, sports stars and rock and roll musicians who ordinarily would remain on the periphery of society are more likely to become modern-day heroes.

The function of the hero in modern society has changed considerably from his role in traditional societies. Whereas a traditional society's heroes were communicated orally through folklore and legend, in a modern society heroes are communicated through the mass media. Also, while the former's heroes represented approved models, the latter's heroes are "numerous, diverse, novel, fictitious or real persons...not necessarily approved or what society wants but representing what individuals in a mass want." Thirdly, modern heroes are more likely to provide vicarious voyages than were traditional heroes. And
finally, today's heroes are not necessarily the most
talented, deserved or meritorious persons around as they
were in traditional societies, but instead are those who
have a talent for capturing the attention of audiences and
the media and eventually fulfilling the function or
vicarious voyage that is expected of them.

The three end-products of Klapp's dialectical process
are heroes, villains and fools — all symbolic leaders and
all to a large degree forms of social control. Heroes are
admired and therefore serve as positive models. But
society is also served by villains and fools who are
important because they are set up as negative models to be
condemned, feared and ridiculed.7

Villains do not act as models for identification but
rather as objects of hatred. Psychologist Eric Hoffer
once said, "the organizing power of hatred is at least as
great as that of love."8 In that respect villains help to
maintain the social order because hatred is a unifying
force. Fools are also symbolic leaders because they often
"give audiences comic relief, vacations from serious
aspects of life." Furthermore, audiences acquire a sense
of superiority to the fool who serves comic justice, a part
of social justice, by acting as a scapegoat of comic
aggression.9

Since it has been presupposed that Staubach and Namath
are heroes, it is that end-product which hereafter will be
referred to. However, it is important to note that heroes,
villains and fools can be created of substantially similar personal materials and comparable studies could be carried out based on the assumption that particular individuals are villains or fools.

Klapp has broken heroism down into five categories, each representing different themes of achievement. They are: winners, splendid performers, heroes of social acceptability, independent spirits and group servants. According to Klapp's assessment, athletes would fall into the second grouping.

"Splendid performers also include those... who play so hard at a sport or recreation that they find their way into the limelight consistently and become drawing cards, even headliners... This includes athletes, amateur or professional... and outstanding sportsmen..." Klapp labels splendid performers "showmen" who are often admired merely because they have done something remarkable before a large crowd.

Mass communication increases the likelihood that splendid performers will flourish because of the numerous opportunities for dramatic encounters that are presented day in and day out. Klapp contends that, "it is inevitable that as more publicity is given to people playing and performing, the public will get wrapped up in watching -- or trying to become -- splendid performers."
proliferation of sports coverage by the media it is evident that athletes will continue to have an almost unlimited number of opportunities from which to emerge as splendid performers.

Athletes often seem heroic in inverse proportion to other professions because of the great emphasis and high esteem that Americans place on muscular development and on physical attributes and abilities. Historically, scholars, inventors and humanitarians have not been accorded their rightful position in the hearts of millions of Americans, especially when compared to the vast numbers of athletes who are idolized, imitated and adored. Klapp's explanation for this is based on what he terms a secularization of values.

"Loss of value consensus in modern times has been so great that people can agree on little but what is obvious and on the surface....Surface qualities have an advantage in mass appeal over those which are inner, spiritual, or require complicated motivations...."14

Thus, athletes are well-suited to be heroes since their reputations are based on physical prowess and feats.

The first step in Klapp's dialectical process involves a person, who is not yet in the public eye, taking the initiative by doing something that will make a hit or capture the attention of the media and audience. Once he does this, the media and audience return cues to him which give him a view of his image.15

According to Klapp, contemporary American society is audience-directed because mass communication has all but
eliminated the possibility of a performer having a private life. Although audience-direction often works in the subconscious, it often manifests itself in the performances of people and especially in the performances of athletes. The audience-directed person fits well into Klapp's framework because he "aims to 'wow' the crowd, and so may make a point of being as conspicuous as possible, perhaps by being a colorful character...."\textsuperscript{16}

The third step in the process involves perceptual and functional selection. This means that the media and audience see only what interests them and respond only to images that "do something for them."\textsuperscript{17} After a person has taken the initiative and has correspondingly been acknowledged by the media and audience, he will become a public man or celebrity. This is a relatively easy position to attain. However, it is at this point that the public image is formulated and starts building a life of its own.

A public man or celebrity can either accept or reject the feedback from the media and audience, but he cannot project a new or different image.\textsuperscript{18} He is expected to fulfill the functions of that image. If the celebrity is uncomfortable with his image he may become uncooperative and thus will not proceed any further along in the process. If he does work within the general framework and capitalizes on the existing situation, he will become a symbolic leader. Klapp defines symbolic leaders as "certain persons (who) have (an) enormous effect, not because of achievement
or vocation but because they stand for certain things; they play dramatic roles highly satisfying to their audiences; they are used psychologically and stir up followings. 19

There are three levels of symbolic leadership. Practical leaders get things done, but their success is not dependent on a public image and more often than not, they work through groups. Klapp assigns vocations such as football coaches, corporate presidents and church ministers to this group. 20 Another level is that of durable symbols who are persons whose images have become separate entities with lives of their own. The images are converted into pure symbols and later institutionalized. The myth usually survives long after the durable symbol's death. Klapp includes people such as Babe Ruth, Clark Gable and Will Rogers in this category. 21

The third level of symbolic leadership and the one that this study is primarily concerned with is that of the dramatic actor. It is the dramatic actor whose importance is measured by the impact on an audience rather than on real outcomes or on meaningful accomplishments. Likewise it is the dramatic actor who must make a hit and create a demand for a function which may lead to the dialectical perfection of a style of performance. 22 And finally, it is the dramatic actor who must play the game correctly in order to reach the highest level in the process. If he has played correctly, he will emerge as a hero, villain
or fool.

In order to advance through the dialectical process the dramatic actor must participate in many dramatic encounters from which his image emerges. The only requirement for dramatic encounters to occur is that there be conflict, suspense, or other features of human interest. It is not necessary for the encounter to be significant in a moral, intellectual or material sense.23

There are several methods for dramatizing a performer so that he will capture the attention of the media and audience so that the resultant image will be a heroic one.

One way is to create "color" or be a nonconformist. Prudence must be exercised, though, because there is a fine line between being classified as a "character" or being classified as a "lunatic." Klapp's definition of a colorful actor is one who "seeks high action, plunges, challenges others (in his own game, of course), solves crises, and performs feats."24 Klapp admonishes those who reject color for they are the ones who fail to capture the public's imagination.

Another method is that of "doing things alone." Even in a group it is the dramatic hero who strives to stand out or endeavors to bear the burden of important decisions or actions. In addition, he often "credits others generously while taking the best scenes...."25

A third method is the use of aggressive tactics. Klapp outlined some of the principles involved:
"(1) the most active person captures the most interest; (2) the one who starts something is more likely to be a hero than the one who follows; (3) the one who gives the crowd a thrill is likely to be a hero; and (4) the winner (or good loser) of a fight is likely to be a hero."\(^{26}\)

The hero's lot should, as often as possible, be a dangerous one and he should not seek to avoid confrontation or do battle, especially if he is the underdog.

"Beaux gestes" are another method. They are dramatic gestures or announcements which normally require little effort yet have great dramatic impact. Beaux gestes ignite the imagination of the audience.\(^{27}\)

There are alternative methods which also help to establish heroic images but they are not relevant to athletes for they rely on encounters that are outside the arena of the sports figure.

Although Klapp does not specifically include the media in his dialectical process, he nevertheless strongly implies that they serve a very important function because they deliver the communication to the audience. Because of the media, the size and extent of the audience is boundless. Klapp emphasized the importance of a free and unrestrained system of communication when he cautioned:

"Control over mass communication might reduce this torrent (of dramatic encounters) to a smooth-flowing system, with a consequent stabilizing effect on statuses and the internal order. But we cannot close the door to disruptive dramas without sacrificing our cherished freedom of communication."\(^{28}\)

Therefore I have taken the liberty of including the media in the dialectical process.
Chapter III

Footnotes


2 Ibid., p. 239.

3 Klapp, Collective Search for Identity, p. 213.

4 Ibid., p. 255.

5 Klapp, Collective Search for Identity, p. 238.

6 Ibid., p. 238.


9 Ibid., p. 49.

10 Klapp, Heroes, Villains and Fools, p. 27.

11 Ibid., p. 27.

12 Klapp, Heroes, Villains and Fools, p. 35.

13 Ibid., p. 37.


15 Klapp, Symbolic Leaders..., p. 34.

16 Klapp, Collective Search for Identity, p. 105.

17 Klapp, Symbolic Leaders..., p. 32.

18 Ibid., p. 35.

19 Klapp, Symbolic Leaders..., p. 32.

20 Ibid., p. 52.

21 Klapp, Symbolic Leaders..., pp. 57-59.

22 Ibid., pp. 54-55.

23 Klapp, Symbolic Leaders..., p. 70.
24 Ibid., p. 218.
26 Ibid., p. 227.
27 Klapp, Symbolic Leaders..., p. 239.
28 Ibid., p. 257.
Chapter IV
Roger Staubach

Robert and Rose Staubach, second-generation Midwest-erners, were devout Christians and raised their son Roger to follow in that tradition. Staubach's earliest recollections are of his parents as deeply loving, righteous and disciplined people who placed family and religion before material success.

Although both his parents passed away several years ago, their teachings have inspired him and have had a lasting influence on his life. Staubach's values, priorities and actions, on and off the field, are rooted in his upbringing and have remained steadfast through his career, earning him the reputation among some as a "square."

Staubach first participated in football as a student at St. John the Evangelist grade school. He later recalled that "in the 8th grade I realized a guy could be somewhat of a hero playing football. That idea appealed to me." But even at such an elementary level of competition, his parents cautioned him to keep his values in a proper perspective.

"Being a hero seemed like a big deal. But my parents kept telling me that if I thought I was so great on this plateau, I wasn't going to achieve another level. It was the old adage about not letting something go to your head, but it sank in."2

Staubach enrolled at Purcell High School, an all-boys Catholic high school in Cincinnati. According to Vince
Eysoldt, one of Staubach's childhood friends, "Staubach was everything in high school. He was prom king, president of the student body, and starred in football, basketball and baseball."³

Forty colleges tried to recruit Staubach, including several Big Ten schools, but he was not impressed by the "swinging social scenes" at most of them. The atmosphere at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland won Staubach over because of the importance the Academy placed on studies and education.⁴ However, Staubach could not meet its admissions standards because he had scored very low on the College Board exams.

Staubach responded favorably to a suggestion made by Rick Forzano, assistant football coach at the Naval Academy, that he attend the New Mexico Military Institute (NMMI) -- a junior college with a fine academic program -- for one year. While there, Staubach excelled in three sports and made one All-American junior college team in football and the All-Conference teams in basketball and baseball. Staubach later said of his experience at NMMI:

"It was a big decision for me to go that far to school but it was the real beginning of my future. I learned something about the world, about discipline, and about playing quarterback."⁵

Staubach entered the Naval Academy in 1961 as a fourth classman (plebe), the equivalent of a freshman at a civilian school. He played quarterback for the plebe football team which ended its season with an impressive 8-1 record. Dick Duden, the head plebe coach, had praise
for Staubach:

"Roger's value had another dimension. There's usually so much anxiety among kids coming to the Naval Academy that you expect some good athletes to get discouraged and leave. But Roger was such an inspirational leader that probably 98 percent of the good ones stayed that year. He instilled confidence in everyone." 6

The following year, Staubach went to training camp as the Academy's number three quarterback. In an early season game against Cornell University, Wayne Hardin, Navy's head coach, inserted Staubach into the starting lineup. Staubach responded by directing Navy on six touchdown drives and Navy won 41-0. Staubach never relinquished the quarterback job after that game. Admiral Charles Kirkpatrick, the Academy's superintendent, said of his performance:

"Roger caught the imagination of that football squad. He was a winner and a leader. I don't think he necessarily set out to be a leader. The ability was just there." 7

By the end of the season, even though Navy's record was a mediocre 5-5, Lawrence Robinson of the New York World-Telegram called Staubach "an authentic ace, probably the most talented quarterback in Navy history." 8

Most of Navy's team returned for the 1963 football season and it was predicted by many knowledgeable sports prognosticators that the Staubach-guided Navy team would have an outstanding season. That was indeed the case.

In October, Time magazine ran a story entitled "The Year of the Quarterback." Despite the abundance of out-
standing collegiate passers in the nation such as future pros George Mira, Don Trull, Jack Concannon, Dick Shiner, Pete Beathard and Joe Namath, Staubach was featured on the cover and in the story.9

By November, Staubach was a prime candidate for college football's most prestigious award -- the Heisman Trophy -- and was receiving national media coverage. Budd Thalman, the athletic department's public relations director, spearheaded the publicity drive, while simultaneously shielding Staubach from the media. Staubach acknowledged that he was the target of a "great deal of publicity" but added, "I wasn't crazy about it at all.10

According to an article in Sports Illustrated, the Naval Academy had willfully instituted a policy prohibiting interviews with Staubach. The story alleged:

"For weeks the academy has had a ban on Staubach interviews, hiding behind the excuse that a midshipman's routine does not permit them. Says L.B. (Budd) Thalman, the Navy publicity man... 'We decided before the season that this kid was going to be in the spotlight and that if we allowed writers and photographers in here all of the time he would have none of the small amount of free time that a midshipman has to himself.'

'More people would like to see Roger Staubach right now than any celebrity,' Hardin says, seriously. 'If we opened the doors, do you have any idea how many writers and photographers would show up at our practice? A dozen? It would be closer to 5,000.'11

The article further pointed out that on the rare occasions when the media were able to get to Staubach, Thalman and Hardin were always at his side instructing him how to answer questions and telling him what to say. One such
interview went:

"Staubach appeared in his Navy blues with his white cap under his arm and blinked pleasantly while flashbulbs popped. Thalman stood next to Roger, poised to fend off intimate questions. Hardin lit a cigar next to Thalman. The interview lasted eight minutes. It went: Fine game, Roger. Thanks. Tired? Sure am. Were you worried out there? Sure was. You like to run or pass best? I like to pass. You seem to enjoy getting trapped and then running. It's fun when I make a gain. Guess you're looking forward to Army? ('Beat Army' said Thalman.) Sure am. What do you think of all your notoriety, Roger? I like to read the papers after we win. How about during the week? I don't read 'em before we play. Take a lot of razzing from the team? Sure do. It's all in good fun, though. These are great guys. Why are both of your knees taped? ('New-style uniform,' said Hardin hastily. 'If it goes over, we'll put it on the market. Heh. Heh. Well, Rog, you're keeping 43 other boys waiting on the bus.')"

The week prior to the Army-Navy game, Navy sported an 8-1 record and a number two national ranking. The results of the balloting for the Heisman Trophy were to be announced on November 26, four days before the traditional rivalry.

On November 22, 1963, President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. His death affected the lives of 200 million Americans, none more deeply than Roger Staubach who had had the honor of meeting the President one year before.

The Army-Navy game was in doubt, but five days after the assassination the Dallas Morning News reported that the game would be postponed one week "in deference to the memory of Pres. Kennedy" and that "the game will be dedicated to his memory."13

On that same day, the Morning News also reported in a
wire service story the following:

"Jolly Roger Staubach, the quarterback who pilots second ranked Navy with reckless abandon and amazing success, was named 1963 winner of the Heisman Trophy as college football's Player of the Year Tuesday.

The junior whiz-kid from Cincinnati, who has already rewritten the Naval Academy's record book with another season to play, was named the 29th recipient of the coveted award by a landslide margin."14

With respect to his feelings for the late President, Staubach announced upon learning of his award, "I am proud of the Heisman Trophy, but I feel no joy."15

As is the case with all Heisman Trophy winners, media attention was lavished on the newest recipient. There was an outpouring of material, especially in the period starting just before the Army-Navy game and ending with the Cotton Bowl on January 1, 1964.

In a preview story which appeared three days before the interservice rivalry, the Morning News proclaimed Staubach "as THE quarterback in a season which has been billed as The Year of the Quarterback." It was also reported that the Dallas Cowboys had selected him as a "redshirt choice in the 10th round" of the annual football draft despite the fact that Staubach was required to serve four years in the Navy upon graduation.16

Sports Illustrated featured Navy's young quarterback in its preview article. The description went:

"Off the field, Roger Staubach is a soft-eyed, high-cheekboned, brown-haired, handsome, devout midshipman who attends Mass almost every morning. His smile is honest and he is unmilitarily gracious. He looks something like a young movie
star whose name you cannot quite remember. His father is a salesman and his mother keeps a scrapbook. Back home there is the usual childhood sweetheart, Marinna Hobbler, who is a nurse. A product of Cincinnati's highly developed Catholic Youth Organization, Staubach grew up in organized sport."\(^{17}\)

Navy defeated Army, 21-15, and was selected to meet number one ranked Texas in the Cotton Bowl on New Year's Day. Naturally, the build-up and promotion for the clash between the two best college teams in the country involved, to no small degree, the promotion of Roger Staubach.

The midshipman was besieged with requests for interviews and television appearances. He was named to Time magazine's All-American team and spent a hectic week in New York as the guest of honor at dinners and news conferences. Jim Murray of the Los Angeles Times wrote, "Staubach has gotten every award but the Good Housekeeping seal this season."\(^{18}\)

Staubach officially accepted the Heisman Trophy at the Downtown Athletic Club dinner. After the dinner, Staubach and a teammate decided to celebrate at New York's Playboy Club. He later recalled, much to his amusement:

"A girl in a low-cut dress was a big thing then and those Playboy bunnies were like something you couldn't believe. We were pretty excited when we got there but never got in. It's a private club and we didn't have a key.

We asked one couple if we could go in with them. They looked at us like we were crazy. We got so embarrassed that we grabbed a cab and went back to our hotel. We had a cheeseburger and a milk shake in the coffee shop, then went upstairs."\(^{19}\)

Thalman redoubled his efforts to protect Staubach from the media, but the Navy public relations director and
his "gag order" became the subjects of media attention themselves. Baylor University quarterback Don Trull told a story about how he spotted Staubach and Thalman at a luncheon in a midtown Manhattan restaurant. He walked over to the table of Navy brass and introduced himself. Trull later said, "You know, when I said hello at their table I was surprised they didn't frisk me." 20

In his Morning News column of December 23, sportswriter Sam Blair featured the 28-year-old Thalman as the man entrusted with the fate of "a young athlete who has endeared himself to everyone from streetcleaners to admirals...." 21 It was Thalman's job to enforce the "tight-lip" policy regarding publicity and to escort Staubach to the various functions he was obliged to attend.

The article portrayed him as the mastermind in the public relations campaign to get Staubach the Heisman Trophy. Blair expressed the opinion that, "Staubach probably is the only athlete who became the subject of cover stories in both Time and Sports Illustrated without submitting to a prolonged interview." In addition, Thalman and his staff replied to more than 1,000 fan letters, mailed out 1,200 glossy pictures of the quarterback and, in general, promoted the image that "Roger is a sincere, natural person (who) everyone seems to like." 22

A succession of stories and columns appeared in the Morning News leading up to the New Year's Day Cotton Bowl clash which would determine the number one collegiate.
football team in the country. There were two reasons which contributed to the prolific coverage. First, the Cotton Bowl is located in Dallas and the readership of the newspaper tended to view it as a "home game." Secondly, the University of Texas, a perennial football power, plays its regular season games in Austin, a city in close proximity to Dallas.

The Longhorns were heavily favored going into the contest, and, probably to increase interest in the game, the Morning News sportswriters gave Staubach an intense pre-game build-up.

In his December 29 column, Blair wrote, "There is no way to evaluate how much his (Staubach's) presence on the field is worth to the Navy team in inspiration." On January 1, the morning of the game, Blair dabbled in sports hyperbole:

"...Staubach has established himself beside Tecumseh among the memorable sights at Annapolis.... Staubach scrambles beautifully and nearly always winds up converting frantic retreats into thrilling dramas. His talent is a rare one...."

Unfortunately, the University of Texas was too much for Staubach and his fellow midshipmen as the Longhorns trounced Navy, 28-6. Texas was awarded the national championship and navy returned to Annapolis with a "wait until next year" attitude.

The 1964 season was an injury-plagued one for Staubach and the Navy eleven did not fare well without him at quarterback. Staubach incurred a badly sprained ankle
and strained his achilles tendon which forced him out of the lineup early in the season and severely hampered his mobility in later games.

Navy had a 3-5-1 record going into the December interservice rivalry. Army defeated the Staubach-led squad, 11-8, halting a Navy six-year winning streak. Roger Staubach's collegiate football career was over. The Naval Academy awarded him the Thompson Trophy, given to the "overall athlete of the year." Staubach was the only athlete to receive it three consecutive years.25

At the presentation ceremonies, Admiral Charles Minter, Jr., newly-appointed superintendent of the Academy, said of Staubach:

"Such a young man comes along only once in a great while in the life of an institution. A superb athlete and a complete gentleman, his performance, both on and off the field, reflects great credit on the institution he represents and on college athletics in general."26

Upon graduation Staubach served a six-month term as an assistant physical education instructor and assistant plebe football coach at Annapolis. While there, he signed a lucrative contract with the Dallas Cowboys who had drafted him a year earlier.

The Cowboys agreed to pay Staubach $10,000 to sign and $500 per month while he was in the Navy.27 A clause in the contract stipulated that if Staubach decided to play football after his discharge, he would receive a bonus plus $25,000 for three years.28

After his stay at Annapolis was completed, Staubach
enrolled in supply school in Athens, Georgia, since Navy rules prohibited him from flying because of his colorblindness. He volunteered for duty in Vietnam where he served in the Supply Corps and spent what he later termed "the longest year of my life." Staubach left Vietnam in August 1967 and reported for duty to Pensacola, Florida.

He was stationed at Pensacola for the remaining two years of his four-year military commitment. There he played on the base football team in order to keep in shape. Before the start of his second year in Florida, Staubach reported for two weeks to the Dallas Cowboys training camp in Thousand Oaks, California.

At the summer camp some of the Cowboy veterans got their first close-up look at the rookie quarterback. After a cursory examination, Don Meredith, Dallas' number one quarterback, announced:

"He's gonna have to learn what an NFC quarterback is like. He needs to grow his hair long, start smoking, drinking and things like that to keep up the image."

The fact that Staubach did not fit the mold of the typical N.F.L. player was apparent to more than just Meredith. After he had received his formal discharge and had reported to the summer rookie camp, Curt Mosher, Cowboy publicity director, told him:

"Something has to be done, Roger. You can't go around with that crewcut. At least, grow long sideburns or muttonchops. Well, then again, I guess that would look funny with a crewcut."

As luck would have it, Staubach was released from the
Navy on July 5, 1969. Coincidentally that was the day that Meredith announced his retirement, leaving the Cowboys with only one experienced quarterback — fifth-year man Craig Morton. Although Staubach was faced with the difficult, if not impossible, task of returning to football after a four-year hiatus, he later admitted that, in spite of Morton's presence, he thought he would be the number one quarterback in camp.32

Staubach's desire and optimism did not go undetected. In its first story following Staubach's arrival, Morning News sportswriter Randy Galloway reported that head coach Tom Landry had seldom seen such dedication in an athlete. Landry added, "When he came to camp last summer, I couldn't believe it was the same man and he did it just working by himself in every spare minute."33

The quarterback's optimism was evident. He was quoted as saying, "The frightening thoughts for me concern getting the team to accept me and put their future confidence in me." And his dedication was evident in his statement to the Dallas press that, "I gave up the service life which I really enjoyed for a chance to play football and this is my real love and I want to be a part of it more than anything in the world."34

The 1969 summer training camp commenced a fierce and intense competition between Staubach and Morton for the number one quarterback position. Their rivalry continued until mid-season 1974 when Morton was traded to the New
York Giants, and often resulted in dissension and polarization among the Cowboy fans, players and sportswriters who followed the team. The competition played a major part in the coverage of the team and of Staubach and Morton, in particular.

From July 12 to July 19, 1969, Staubach was forced to take a back seat in coverage in the Morning News. During that eight-day period Staubach was mentioned only twice — one in regard to a 12-minute endurance run which he had completed and once mentioning that he would be the starting quarterback in an exhibition game.

The reason for the lack of attention was because on June 7, 1969, Joe Namath had announced his retirement from pro football following a threatened suspension by Rozelle over the ownership of Namath's restaurant. Namath's aborted retirement lasted for six weeks and although the dispute occurred in New York — 1,600 miles away — from July 12 to July 20 no less than nine stories appeared, totalling approximately 161 inches of copy. All of the stories were wire service (AP and UPI) reports except for one reprint of a New York Times column by Arthur Daley.

When Staubach's name did reappear at last on the pages of the Morning News, it was in reference to his play in an intrasquad game. Staubach's running ability, a factor which would play a significant role in future coverage of the quarterback, was highlighted in an article by columnist Bob St. John. He wrote:
"To run or not to run is not the question. Roger Staubach put on an amazing display here Friday afternoon in his preliminary test of fire....

Evaluating Staubach's performance, Landry grinned and said, 'Well, he certainly showed us he's a runner... and that he has a very strong arm.' 'I know I'm not going to make this team running,' said Staubach, very dejected over his performance... head down, eyes moving along the floor."36

Staubach injured his back in a practice session and did not play again for a month. His next opportunity came, ironically, in the Cowboys' fifth exhibition game against the New York Jets who were without Namath.

The Cowboys defeated the Jets 25-9, and Staubach connected on 10 of 16 passes for 160 yards and one touchdown.37 On September 8, Blair described the ex-midshipman as having "a rare quality for producing in the clutch."

He added:

"The man has a knack for getting results, one way or another. We don't know if he can do as well against the Colts. Let's just wait and see. Right now all we know is John Paul Jones lives."38

On September 9, it was St. John's turn to profile Staubach in his daily column.

"If there is such a thing, Roger Staubach is a Humble-Confident Person. He no doubt gets chill bumps when they play the National Anthem and believes in all the good things in life. When he says things, he says them in confidence, not in a braggart way.... 'I don't want this to sound funny but I have a lot of confidence in myself,' said Staubach. 'Mentally, things are more difficult than I thought they would be. But physically, I think I can run and throw as well as anybody.'"39

In a preview story before the Cowboys' final preseason
game against the Colts, St. John called Staubach a "daring young man," "a rookie, though a mature one at 27," and "a great athlete who always has seemed to have the knack of turning confusion into success."40

After a 23-7 defeat at the hands of the Baltimore team, Staubach said of his performance, "Everybody was excited about my running. They didn't realize I was missing all those keys and that my passing was just awful."41

Staubach's assessment of the situation was correct because St. John wrote, "Staubach...ran as well as perhaps any pro quarterback has ever run...."42 In a follow-up story, he added, "Landry as well as everybody else, said he had never seen a pro quarterback with the running ability of Staubach."43

Because of an injury to Morton, Staubach was forced into the lineup in the season opener against the St. Louis Cardinals. Dallas won the game but unfortunately for Staubach, Morton returned to action the following week and Staubach did not play a significant amount for the remainder of the season. The Cowboys finished with an 11-2-1 mark but lost to the Cleveland Browns in the division championship game.

The 1970 season was a frustrating as well as anxiety-filled one for the second-year quarterback. Coach Landry made it clear to him from the outset that he thought Staubach was still too inexperienced and that Morton would be Dallas' first string passer. Although Morton was
hampered by a shoulder injury throughout the season, he nevertheless led the Cowboys to the Eastern Division championship and a spot in Super Bowl V.

In a sloppy game marred by interceptions and fumbles, the Baltimore Colts defeated Dallas 16-13. Morton received much of the blame for the loss, especially from the Morning News. In the seven days and 22 stories and columns prior to the January 19 game, Staubach did not merit a single sentence. Yet in the newspaper's post-mortem to the game, Blair wrote:

"What Landry must pay mind to is the Cowboys' plight at quarterback, where Craig Morton again fizzled repeatedly. In the wake of the loss that so many think never should have been, it's obvious that Landry must give serious attention to Roger Staubach's bid for Morton's job."

Indeed, Landry must have concurred because he told Staubach that the job would be up for grabs during the 1971 season. Before training camp opened, Landry informed the press, "If Roger's going to do it, he'll make a go of it this year. I said three years ago that this is the year he could make his move to take over as the starting quarterback, and let me tell you, he dies hard."

On that note, the stage was set for a rugged battle between Staubach and Morton to ultimately determine who was going to be number one. By the end of the season, the press, the fans and the players themselves were divided in their loyalties.

In its initial article on the Cowboys' training camp,
Staubach was featured as "a man in a hurry," who was determined to be the number one quarterback. Of his relationship with Morton, St. John wrote:

"Staubach and Morton get along well and don't talk about their competition. 'Craig,' said Roger, 'is an extremely nice guy. We get along fine but we don't move in the same groups. I'm married, a family man and he's a bachelor.'"47

Adjacent to the story was a picture of Staubach at Love Field (Dallas' airport) waving goodbye to his wife and three daughters before flying to California for training camp.

Throughout the preseason, the rivalry continued with each quarterback getting an opportunity to play and neither managing to get the upper hand. On July 25, the Morning News reported that "Roger Staubach got the edge on Craig Morton here Saturday afternoon in a controlled scrimmage session as he hit 14 of 20 passes..."48 Staubach, striving to maintain an image as a drop-back passer, warned the Dallas press, "Don't call me Scrambling Roger Staubach anymore. Call me Pocket Passer Staubach."49

The Morning News responded immediately to his request. On the very same day, a story appeared without a by-line which stated:

"Staubach continues to throw the ball extremely well and seems to have a much better grasp of things this season. He stayed in the pocket."50

By the end of August, it was apparent that several Morning News sportswriters favored Staubach. On August 22, Blair wrote:
"This remember, supposedly, is the summer for settling The Quarterback Question....Yet in the weird win over the Browns, Morton quarterbacked the entire game and Staubach stewed on the sidelines. Naturally, he was disappointed that he received no opportunity to compare his effectiveness with Morton's. Plenty of fans will tell you he wasn't alone."51

And five days later, St. John let his opinion be known when he reported:

"If fairness is to be gauged by what Landry did last week, then he was unfair to Staubach in the first half. Landry pulled Staubach in the second period after Roger threw an interception....This could mean nothing or it could mean that Landry finally tipped his hand on his quarterback thinking."52

In his next column, St. John reiterated his judgment that, "Landry was unfair replacing Staubach in the Houston game."53

As a rule, the Morning News does not run letters to the editor on its sports pages, but several letters from irate sports fans appeared in the August 30 edition. Under the banner of "Mail Call" were four letters -- all were about the Cowboys' quarterback situation and all were clearly supportive of Staubach.

The opinion of the first letter writer was that Landry was showing "favoritism to Morton." A second fan wrote:

"Staubach has never been given a fair chance to prove himself and probably never will be. He possesses all the qualities that Morton sadly lacks. Staubach is that elusive leader the Cowboys have always been seeking. Tom Landry better wake up."

The third fan asked what "Roger Staubach has done to deserve such a rotten deal?" And the fourth writer chastized Landry for being "prevaricate to Staubach."54
Two weeks later, Landry announced that Staubach would open the season at quarterback against the Buffalo Bills. However, he was forced to reverse his decision when Staubach's leg injury did not respond quickly enough to treatment. The day before the game Staubach was pulled from the starting lineup. Blair explained the quarterback's disappointment:

"No matter how much understanding Staubach felt he had developed, he probably steamed inwardly when the coach gave him this little bulletin. Being a competitor, one who has had enough benchwarming to last him a lifetime, he must have wanted the starting job against the Bills dearly. Is there an NFL rule against playing on a crutch?"55

Morton started the next two games and was leading the N.F.L. in passing until a disastrous performance against the Cowboys' strongest competitors, the Washington Redskins. Staubach relieved Morton in the last quarter and almost pulled the game out in the waning minutes, although Dallas lost, 20-16.

Landry named Staubach to start the following week against the New York Giants in a nationally televised Monday night game. For Staubach, it turned out to be "the lowest point of the season, and the most humiliating (game) for me...."56 He was replaced by Morton after a poor first half. Staubach explained:

"Coach Landry pulled me at the half. We were leading and he pulled me! Reporters asked me about it after the game and I just said 'No comment.' Finally coach Landry came over in the dressing room. 'Coach, don't say anything,' I told him. 'Whatever you say, you'll never understand me. What you just did to me out there wasn't called for. You'll never understand me.'"57
A few days later, the *Morning News* came to Staubach's defense. St. John called him "the most popular quarterback the Cowboys have had with the fans who come to the Cotton Bowl" and claimed that he will be "if or until he becomes a starter." He added, "From the mail and calls received here...it is Hoyle to criticize Morton but anytime you say a word against Roger, better close your eyes and get earmuffs."58

Morton again started the following week but did not pass well and was relieved by Staubach in the second half. The Cowboys lost to the New Orleans Saints, 24-14, but St. John said of Staubach's last quarter heroics, "Roger Staubach, definitely the guy in the white hat this day, almost saved the Cowboys."59

After a rout of the New England Patriots, Landry decided on a new system -- he would alternate quarterbacks on each play and call the plays from the bench. Staubach called the decision "the shocker of all shockers."60

This action prompted Blair to write an especially sarcastic piece regarding Landry's decision.

"Staubach, who completed over 60 per cent of his passes, hit two for touchdowns and had none intercepted, surged to the top of the National Football Conference's passing list. This so impressed Landry that he announced he would not bench Roger, the normal procedure in the 2-Quarterback System. He wouldn't start him, of course, but he wouldn't bench him either.

Instead, Staubach will play every other down...."61

Landry's new system was a flop, to say the least, as the Cowboys lost to a poor Chicago team, 23-19.
After the unexpected loss, Landry again changed his mind about the quarterback dilemma. The head coach decided to make Staubach the starting quarterback for the remainder of the season. Staubach later recalled his reaction to the announcement:

"...it seems a little odd that it only took Tom Landry ten seconds to say the words that changed my career and launched me on that comet which was that 1971 season. It was, perhaps, the biggest decision of his coaching career. It certainly changed my life."  

Landry's choice was hailed as a landmark decision in the history of the Dallas franchise by the Morning News. St. John wrote:

"After 13 games, almost four months, one million bundles of criticism and a number of revolutions by fans, Tom Landry came off a restless night and named Roger Staubach as his quarterback."

In a sidebar, St. John added the following comments:

"Everybody knew what Landry was going to do, that he would announce his quarterback decision, but not two per cent felt it would be Roger Staubach. Landry has a strong mind. Very strong. He is aware of public feelings and media criticism, which has reached an all-time high this season, but he shuts out these things better than anybody I've ever met.

His quarterback system has been under constant criticism, which he knew it would be from the start."

In yet one more tribute to Staubach, St. John attributed Landry's decision to Staubach's unwavering dedication.

"On Sunday, Roger Staubach officially begins to set a precedent. Nobody has spent four years in the Navy, returned to football and carved out a niche for himself as a starting NFL quarterback. Staubach did it because he's unbelievably dedicated, talented, persistent and a fine athlete."
Just can't remember seeing anybody more dedicated. Roger's idea of breaking training camp is putting whipped cream on his pie. When Roger goes to bed at night, he barks out, 'Four-three set!'

He probably would still be wearing his Navy crewcut except Cowboy PR man Curt Mosher shamed him out of it. He even has sideburns now, though they are very clean-cut.

His one concession to the 'now' age is letting his eyebrows grow, as nearly as can be determined by the naked eye.

Dallas drafted Staubach as a future in 1963, using a 10th-round pick. Nobody was particularly interested in him because of his Navy obligation, which he had no idea of skipping. It turned out to be a great move by Dallas, which Roger apparently knew before anybody else.65

At the halfway point in the season, the Cowboys sported a 4-3 record and faced an uphill battle for the division title. Dallas responded by winning its next three games, setting up a crucial rematch with the Redskins. In a tough, defensive struggle, the Cowboys won, 13-0. Blair wrote after the game:

"Roger, doing what comes naturally, ran the Redskins right out of the NFC Eastern Division lead and ushered Dallas into the lead. The traditionalists will continue to argue that a scrambling quarterback is on a suicide course, that you can't win with one and all that stuff. But the pure truth in Sunday's biggie here was that Staubach's ability to tuck away the football was the real difference...."66

After that critical victory over Washington, Sports Illustrated ran an article recapping the Cowboys' season, particularly highlighting the mercurial quarterback situation. Sports Illustrated reported that with the "unorthodox scrambler" at the helm of the club, the Cowboys had won four straight and were favorites to capture first place in their division. The story described public
reaction to the quarterback dilemma:

"In Dallas the fans generally favored Staubach -- Star Spangled Staubach, they call him. 'The boy went to Navy, and he's the only player on the field who ever stands at attention when they play the national anthem,' said one season-ticket holder."67

The Cowboys defeated the Los Angeles Rams, the New York Jets and the New York Giants on consecutive weeks and won the division championship. At the end of the regular season Staubach was the leading passer in the N.F.C. and was named the recipient of the Bert Bell Award from the Maxwell Club as the N.F.L.'s outstanding player. Of his selection, Staubach said:

"I'm very proud of getting the award, but I'm also quite aware that I got it because of circumstances. It should be a team trophy. I don't feel I've really established myself yet as a quarterback."68

In addition, Staubach was named to several all-pro teams and was chosen to play in the Pro Bowl.

St. John interviewed Staubach after his selection and asked him about the sudden recognition that he was receiving. Staubach replied with modesty.

"Q: How do you feel about the awards you're getting?
A: Uneasy. Very uneasy. I just don't think I'm a complete quarterback right now. I think we'll win and I'll be a part of that winning but the awards...they're just circumstances. I'm with a good team.
Q: Oh, you've done a fair job.
A: Listen, don't make me sound cocky. I don't, do I?
Q: Yeah, I think you do. Everybody's always talking about how cocky you sound so I wouldn't worry about it.
A: Aw, come on. You're kidding."69
Dallas defeated the Minnesota Vikings, 20-12, in its first playoff game. In the N.F.C. title game against the San Francisco 49ers, the Cowboys won 14-3, and earned the right to face the Miami Dolphins in Super Bowl VI.

Since Staubach had been named as the starting quarterback by Landry, the Cowboys had responded with nine straight victories. When asked if Staubach had played a major role in the win streak, the coach replied, "Of course," to which Blair added, "That's nice. He might also believe Barbra Streisand did all right in 'Funny Girl' and that chili is a little better if you put pepper in it."70

In its coverage of the N.F.C. title game, Tex Maule, Sports Illustrated pro football reporter, attributed Dallas' victory to Staubach's scrambling capability. Maule wrote:

"In the final analysis, though, the difference between these teams, and something no computer can be programmed for, was the ability of Roger Staubach, the Dallas quarterback, to ad lib and scramble, especially in the second half."71

All Super Bowls, regardless of which two teams are competing, attract enormous amounts of media attention, and since Staubach was one of the outstanding performers on the Dallas team, it was only logical that a lot of coverage would be aimed at him.

In Blair's first report from New Orleans, the site of Super Bowl VI, he described Staubach's pre-game preparations:
"Aside from a quick plate of shrimp the first night there, the Cowboys' prize-winning quarterback has stayed away from the fancy restaurants and the fun of the French quarter and concentrated on his homework for next Sunday's fest.... Last year's bench-warmer, of course, is this year's hero. Everyone wants to talk to him.... It must get tedious, and at times Staubach must yearn to scramble out of the pocket of interviews. But, quietly, patiently, he perseveres."72

Staubach remembered feeling such a great sense of excitement during those two weeks that "sometimes I thought I would explode."73

In its annual Super Bowl preview story, Sports Illustrated writer John Underwood picked the Dolphins over Dallas. The basis for his selection was, to a great extent, Staubach's inexperience and inability to read intricate defenses. In a companion piece, Tex Maule took the opposite point of view and picked Dallas to defeat Miami by two touchdowns. He rated the two quarterbacks (Staubach and the Dolphins' Bob Griese) fairly evenly.74

Maule proved to be the more astute forecaster since the Cowboys won 24-3, as Staubach completed 12 of 16 passes for 119 yards and two touchdowns. When told that he had been named the most valuable player in the dressing room immediately after the game, Staubach yelped, "holy cow!"75

The next day, St. John reflected on the changes of fortune of Staubach.

"Roger Staubach was pretty much the conversation piece at New Orleans.... I can remember the team party a year ago how depressed and disgusted he was that... he didn't get to play, though he felt he could have been a factor. I kept thinking
that night he was going to jump off the balcony or scream 'Darn!' or, oh, eat a gallon of ice cream."76

In a syndicated story by Dave Anderson of the New York Times which appeared in the Morning News, Staubach's image as a "square" was promoted. Anderson wrote:

"'I have values I believe in,' the Dallas Cowboys' quarterback said before being awarded a Dodge Charger by Sport Magazine as the Super Bowl's outstanding player. 'I'm married with three children, with one on the way. I believe in Christian principles, being faithful to my wife, caring about people. I don't try to be anything. But if that's square, that's my life....' I enjoy my Christian ideals. I believe there's something greater than what we're here for.'

'Do you think,' a newsmen at the pre-luncheon conference asked, 'there are zone defenses up there?'

'From what I understand,' Staubach said, smiling, 'every pass is a touchdown up there.'

'If you're a defensive back,' another newsmen said, 'every pass wouldn't be a touchdown.'

'They don't have any defensive backs up there,' the 29-year-old former naval officer said.77

Staubach was not altogether pleased with Anderson's article or other stories which appeared in print which emphasized his "square" personality. He later said:

"A lot of people were also getting the impression I was some kind of religious fanatic. I had thanked God for the victory over national television, which created the wrong impression for some people....Some of the writers did a good job, telling about my religious feelings, but others didn't make it sound as though I meant it. God is the center of my life, through thick and thin, whether we win the Super Bowl or lose it. I just told everybody I had promised whatever I achieved in sports would be for His honor and glory. I wasn't ashamed about my faith and spoke out....

All the headlines were coming out, saying things such as, 'Staubach, the Square Quarterback.' The things I was saying just weren't in vogue then. Neither was I, especially. I wore my hair short and didn't dress flashily. Apple pie, God, and patriotism weren't things people were speaking about."78
As befitting the star of a Super Bowl game, Staubach was beleaguered with requests to speak at banquets and fund-raising events. Often, the functions turned out to be ill-disguised promotions for products or political figures. After a particularly strenuous round of speaking engagements, Staubach made a personal commitment to spend at least half of his time at events sponsored by groups such as the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, the Boy Scouts, the Salvation Army, etc.79

Numerous corporations requested that Staubach endorse their products. He did a Vitalis commercial and received $5,000, but later regretted doing it. However, he did happily endorse products for Aurora, a toy company with family-oriented games; Haggar Slacks; and Coca-Cola.80

The 1972 season was not a memorable one for Staubach. While trying to scramble for a first down in the first exhibition game of the year against the Los Angeles Rams, Staubach suffered a severe shoulder separation. The injury disabled him for ten weeks and by the time he was prepared to resume throwing, Morton was again established at the quarterback slot. The Cowboys lost to the Redskins, 26-3, in the N.F.C. championship game and for Staubach it was truly a lost season.

The 1973 preseason was an instant replay of two years earlier when Staubach and Morton were forced to battle it out for the starting quarterback job. The Morning News did not choose to play up the competition as heavily as it
had in 1971. But a few days before the opening game of the regular season, St. John wrote:

"Roger's career was shortened four years with naval service and he feels time is running out on him. So he wants out if he isn't the No. 1 quarterback.... Some fans have ventured the argument that Landry will go with Roger because their lifestyles are the same off the field. This is stupid. If Landry based his decisions on players having the same lifestyle he has, the Cowboys wouldn't be able to field a team and there wouldn't be any sportswriter to cover the team anyway.... I personally think Landry will go with Staubach...."81

Staubach also reacted negatively to the implications being made that the coach favored him because of their similar religious affiliations. He said:

"Cowboy fans were split over us, though the only feedback I got on the situation was what I knew through the media. Once again, some people were saying coach Landry favored me because we were both active in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Coach Landry had nothing to do with my joining the FCA. There's no way coach Landry would let his feelings for anybody influence his football decisions. He's a Christian who not only speaks the word but lives by it."82

Landry decided once and for all who was going to be his starting quarterback on the team and informed both passers before the season opener against Chicago. Staubach was his choice and Morton immediately asked to be traded. His request was granted, but not for a full year.

Staubach was, of course, elated at Landry's decision. When questioned by St. John as to how he felt about the press coverage of the quarterback situation, Staubach replied, "Well, you (the sportswriters) kind of swing back
and forth. But the position was his and Staubach set out to vindicate Landry.

The Cowboys had an 8–4 record going into a showdown game with the Redskins for the division crown. Before the game, Sports Illustrated profiled the Dallas quarterback. Tex Schramm, the Cowboy general manager, offered this opinion of Staubach:

"I've never seen a player as uniquely popular as Staubach," Schramm said. 'The only one who came close in my time was Elroy Hirsch. But Roger bridges a bigger span of people than Hirsch did. Staubach came along when the public was getting tired of hearing about guys like Joe Namath. Roger is the All-American hero type."

Sports Illustrated reporter Edwin Shrake characterized Staubach as a determined, disciplined sort who could not understand why anyone would smoke a cigarette or drink too much. Staubach was quoted as saying, "...in pro football winning is all there is. If you don't win, you haven't done what the game is about."

On the other hand, Staubach was also pictured as a friendly, "fun-loving guy." A story was told about his first training camp. Several veterans took Staubach to a bar and as an initiation rite made him drink several beers. Staubach missed the rookie curfew and was fined $100 by Landry. A delegation of players explained what had happened to the coach but the rookie had to pay the fine anyway. The older players appreciated the fact that Staubach took it with humor. Linebacker Lee Roy Jordan explained, "We found out he could be a pretty loose guy."
The stage was set for a dramatic encounter with the Redskins but the week before the game, Staubach's mother was hospitalized. She was suffering from a terminal case of cancer. Staubach asked that the media not mention his mother's illness until after the game.

The Cowboys defeated Washington, 27-7, and were victorious over the St. Louis Cardinals the following week, assuring themselves a first-place finish. After the important win, St. John wrote, "Individually, Staubach had one of his best games....His work was especially impressive considering the traumatic week he went through, a week in which his mother died."87

The one person who had exercised the most profound influence on Staubach's life died just four days after the Washington game. In Blair's column, Staubach expressed how he felt:

"Everything I did on the football field this year I did for her. Of course, some days didn't work out right. I would just get depressed and I couldn't do everything the way I wanted. But I always was aware of how strong and positive she was. I know I haven't experienced anything that a lot of people don't go through every day. Death strikes close to all of us at some time. People want to talk to me about my experience because I'm an athlete but I'm sure I have learned what others do at a time like this. You must have a positive attitude about life and what you have to do."88

Dallas lost to the Minnesota Vikings 27-10, in the N.F.C. title game, thus failing in its bid for another Super Bowl berth. After the loss, Landry said of his quarterback, "When you look back he's led the league in
passing his only two seasons as a starter and quarterbacked us to our only Super Bowl victory. He ranks with the best quarterbacks in the game now..."
Chapter IV

Footnotes

2Ibid., p. 31.
3Staubach, p. 32.
4Ibid., p. 41.
5Staubach, p. 55.
6Ibid., p. 63.
7Staubach, p. 72.
8Ibid., p. 73.
9Staubach, p. 85.
10Ibid., p. 88.
12Ibid., p. 37.
15Staubach, p. 92.
17Jenkins, "A Setting For Greatness At Philadelphia," p. 34.
18Staubach, p. 94.
19Ibid., p. 95.


25 Staubach, p. 114.

26 Ibid., p. 115.

27 Staubach, p. 124.

28 Ibid., p. 124.

29 Staubach, p. 127.

30 Ibid., p. 146.

31 Staubach, p. 150.

32 Ibid., p. 153.


34 Ibid., sec. 2, p. 2.


41 Staubach, p. 159.


46 Staubach, p. 208.


56 Staubach, p. 211.

57 Ibid., p. 211.


60 Staubach, p. 213.


73. Staubach, p. 229.


75. Staubach, p. 236.


78. Staubach, pp. 237-238.

79. Ibid., p. 242.
80 Staubach, p. 243.
82 Staubach, p. 270.
85 Ibid., p. 56.
86 Shrake, p. 56.
89 Staubach, p. 288.
Chapter V
Joe Namath

A country boy gone to be king in the big city, is how Bob Oates, Jr., one of many biographers, described him.\textsuperscript{1} The characterization is not inappropriate.

Nobody could have predicted that the dimunitive, mischievous youth from Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania would become arguably one of the most talented and celebrated quarterbacks ever to play pro football.

Joe Willie Namath's achievements and lifestyle have been the foci of countless stories and have commanded more attention than any other football player in recent history. Yet despite the fact that he has not played on a winning team in six years and despite his wobbly knees and other disabling injuries, "the game of pro football swirls around him, as do telecasters and sportswriters and gossip columnists and businessmen and advertisers and hangers-on and total strangers."\textsuperscript{2}

By his own admission, much of the publicity is undeserved and a lot of it is simply not true, including the myths surrounding his social life and his reputation as a swinger. He once remarked, "I'd guess that, of all the stories written about me, maybe ten percent, at best, have been really accurate."\textsuperscript{3}

Because of the sloppy coverage he believes he has received, Namath remains wary of the media. According to
his personal friend, sports broadcaster Howard Cosell, there are few sportswriters that Namath likes and respects. One notable exception is Dave Anderson of the New York Times.

In the introduction to his autobiography, Namath cautions his readers not to believe all of the stories written about him.

"There are enough true stories about me without people going around making things up. To hear some of these people (the press), I'm always falling down drunk, and I've had more stewardesses than all the pilots and co-pilots in the country put together.

All I ask is that...you try to forget almost everything you've read about me before. Not that there's anything wrong with what's been written about me. It's fine, if you like fiction."5

Namath was born in the steel mill town of Beaver Falls, 50 miles northwest of Pittsburgh. He was the youngest of five children. His mother and father were divorced when Namath was 12 and he grew up in a two-frame house which, according to his mother Rose, looked like a place Archie Bunker might have lived in.6

Namath played football on the local neighborhood team and, as legend has it, the team won 112 straight games one year. He was the number one quarterback on his junior high team, the Beaver Falls Tiger Cubs. Although he also played baseball and basketball and ran track, his coaches thought he was too small to be a good high school quarterback. His mother claimed he could hardly see over "his center's rear end."7
Nevertheless, he persevered and made the high school varsity football team. He was the fifth-string quarterback during his sophomore year but was elevated to second-string during his junior year by the new head coach, Larry Bruno. Namath once said, "Of all the coaches I've had, I suppose the only one I never really hated was Larry Bruno....Mr. Bruno was the first football coach to show a lot of confidence in me."8

Namath was the starting quarterback in his senior year and his team was the first from Beaver Falls in 35 years to win the Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League title. The team won nine straight games and a Pittsburgh sportswriter, Brute Kramer of the Post-Gazette, wrote after one game:

"To go one step further, Bill Bache, outstanding district football referee...calls Namath the best T-formation quarterback he has ever seen in his 25 years of officiating. Bache claims there is absolutely nothing this amazing youngster can't do with a football and that his tricky maneuvering in the backfield is one of the prime reasons why this Beaver Falls outfit is so highly rated this year."9

Namath was a fine quarterback, but he also was "an occasional hell-raiser." His mother said, reflecting on his childhood, "For every touchdown pass he threw, he seemed to get intercepted by various authorities ranging from his mother to his teachers to the Beaver Falls police."10 Yet that did not deter several major universities from trying to recruit Namath.

The University of Maryland was his first choice but
Namath did not score the minimum requirement on the college entrance exams and his application was rejected. Tom Nugent, head coach at Maryland, called Paul "Bear" Bryant, head coach at the University of Alabama, and told him of Namath's talent.11

Alabama offered Namath full tuition, fees, room and board and $15 per month laundry money.12 Considering that the usual escape route for a boy from Beaver Falls was either to enlist in the army or receive an athletic scholarship, the Alabama offer was tantamount to a king's ransom. He decided to enter the Tuscaloosa school and, according to Namath, "It was one of the best things that ever happened to me."13

Although Namath went to Alabama with high expectations, his freshman year was a time of adjustment for him. His best friend in Beaver Falls had been Linny Alford, a black, and Namath was nicknamed by his teammates "the Yankee Traitor," "Nigger Lover," and "Redneck."14 Homesickness enveloped him and at one point he threatened to drop out. Namath later said:

"I wasn't a crusader or anything. Those people down there were just raised one way and I was raised another. I didn't care if a guy was black, white or purple. It made no difference to me."15

Namath's brother Franklin persuaded him to remain at Tuscaloosa and Namath returned for his sophomore year where he made his debut as the Alabama varsity quarterback on September 22, 1962.
In Namath's first varsity game against the University of Georgia, he completed 10 of 14 passes for 170 yards, threw three touchdown passes and ran for more yards than the entire Georgia team. Eight games into the season the Crimson Tide had a perfect 8-0 record before being upset by Georgia Tech, 7-6. Prior to the loss, Namath had completed 60 per cent of his passes and thrown only three interceptions. The defeat cost Alabama a second consecutive national championship but the team was nevertheless selected to meet the University of Oklahoma in the Orange Bowl on New Year's Eve. The Namath-led Crimson Tide easily beat the Sooners, 17-0.

Alabama began the 1963 season with three straight wins before suffering a loss to the University of Florida. That was followed by a four-game winning streak and another upset loss to traditional rival Auburn. That week, coach Bryant suspended Namath from the team for the rest of the season.

Bryant had enforced a strict no drinking policy during the football season and an informer told him that Namath had broken the rule. Bryant confronted Namath and the quarterback admitted to having gone to a party and having a drink. With reluctance the coach told Namath:

"All the coaches except one think we ought to punish you, but not suspend you. But I've made up my mind to suspend you 'cause you've broken the rules....I know we got two big games coming up and I know we need you, but if I let you play, I'd have to retire."17
Namath missed the last game of the regular season as well as the Sugar Bowl game against the University of Mississippi which the Crimson Tide won, 12-7.

Bryant did not specify to the press why Namath had been dropped from the team except to say it was "for an infraction of training rules...." In its pre-Sugar Bowl story, the New York Times reported that Steve Sloan, a little-tried sophomore would be starting in place of the "brilliant Joe Namath, who was dropped from the team for disciplinary reasons late in the regular season."19

Despite his suspension, Namath has been quoted as saying that there is nobody, outside his family and close friends, that he respects more than coach Bryant. After his senior year, Namath said to Bryant, "I want to tell you, you were right. You did the right thing, suspending me. And I want to thank you."20

In the fourth game of the 1964 season against North Carolina State, Namath suffered a severe injury. As he rolled out to pass and cut to his right, his right leg slipped out from under him, resulting in torn cartilage and ligaments in his knee. It was decided that an operation to repair the cartilage would be performed after the season but Namath did not play again for any sustained period of time until the Georgia Tech game in late November.

Before that game, Bryant told Sports Illustrated that his 1964 team was the finest offensive team he ever had at Alabama, and that Namath was a significant part of that
team. The coach related a tale about the time a tackler in the Vanderbilt game jeered at Namath, "Hey No. 12, what's your name?" Namath replied, "You'll see it in the headlines tomorrow." On the next play Namath threw a touchdown pass.\(^{21}\)

Namath did not start the Georgia Tech game, but with two minutes remaining in the first half and the score 0-0, Bryant sent him into the game. In the last two minutes, Namath connected on two long passes and Alabama drove for two quick scores. The Crimson Tide went on to win, 24-7, and John Underwood of *Sports Illustrated* wrote of the game:

"There was no great inequality of players, despite the protestations of both coaches, except for the 1\(\frac{1}{2}\) minutes when Alabama had Namath on the field."\(^{22}\)

Alabama finished the regular season undefeated and would play the University of Texas in Miami's Orange Bowl. Several weeks prior to the New Year's Day game, Namath was selected as the New York Jets' first round draft choice in the A.F.L.'s annual draft. The *New York Times* called Namath, "the top choice of every pro scout and coach in the country to succeed as a pro player."\(^{23}\) The highly-touted quarterback was also selected first by the St. Louis Cardinals of the N.F.L. and it became apparent that Namath would become a pawn in the bidding war being waged by the two leagues.

Three days before the Orange Bowl classic, Namath reinjured his knee and when it appeared that the quarterback of the team ranked first in the AP and UPI polls would
not play, Allison Danzig of the *Times* summed up Namath's collegiate career:

"Despite his limited action, Namath has been so big a factor in Alabama's success in defeating every opponent that Bryant has called him 'the greatest athlete I have ever coached.' He set a Southeast Conference percentage passing record in completing 64 of 100 passes."24

On December 30 — the same day it was reported Namath would play in the bowl game — it was also reported that the Jets were prepared to pay Namath a record sum of $389,000 to sign a three-year contract.25 And on December 31, Danzig wrote in the *Times* that, "The renowned quarterback is expected to be signed by the New York Jets after the game Friday evening, possibly by the Jets' president, Sonny Werblin, under the goal posts."26

In his column on the morning of the game, Arthur Daley remarked that he thought the $389,000 amount was "inflated publicity talk," and that the actual contract was probably for half that amount. He also denounced the Jets for offering so much money to "a novice, particularly one with a knee that becomes unhinged even in signal practice."27

In an exciting game against Texas, Namath was stopped on a quarterback sneak as time ran out and the Longhorns prevailed, 21-17. For the day, Namath completed 18 passes for 255 yards and was named the game's most valuable player.28

The normally restrained *New York Times* ran a story in which Danzig wrote of Namath's feats:
"Alabama...was beaten in the Orange Bowl tonight by Texas 21-17, despite a phenomenal passing performance by Joe Namath that fell a foot short of victory.

Transcending the downfall of the previously invincible Crimson Tide...was the unbelievable accuracy and fidelity with which the injured Namath hit his receivers.

The 72,647 who filled the Orange Bowl Stadium, were privileged to witness an exhibition that has hardly been surpassed in artistry, unruffled poise and deadly targetry."29

On January 3, 1965 it was announced, "in a Hollywood setting of grinding cameras and high-powered lights," by Sonny Werblin that Namath had signed with the Jets. The figure quoted in the Times was $400,000.30 Actually, Namath agreed to a package worth $427,000 including a guaranteed $307,000, a $7,000 Lincoln Continental, a $225,000 bonus and a salary of $25,000 a year for his first three years. He also had a no-cut and no-trade clause in the contract.31 In addition, it was rumored that Namath had received a fancy pink automobile as part of the deal but Namath told reporters, "That's wrong. It's green; jet green."32

The Jets' coach, Weeb Ewbank, was quoted as describing "the 21-year-old son of a steelworker who once shined shoes to help keep the family cupboard stocked...as the best prospect since Sammy Baugh."33

In all, the New York Times ran four stories on January 3 regarding Namath's signing -- three of which appeared on the first page of the Sunday sports section and one on page three. There were also two pictures and a
statistical analysis of Namath's career at Alabama. Columnist Daley, however, did not share the rest of the staff's enthusiasm and he wrote on January 4:

"Magnificent was the performance of Joe Namath of Alabama in the Orange Bowl on New Year's Day. So glittering was his display of forward passing skill that the sparkle lighted the Miami skies.... But is Namath worth the reported payment of $389,000 for a three-year contract? The answer has to be an emphatic no. In fact, the figure is utterly ridiculous. No untried collegian is worth half that much."35

The Jets' public relations campaign continued in the six months after his signing and before the opening of summer camp and as Daley wrote, "the impression has been allowed to grow that instant stardom awaits Joe Namath, the $400,000 package...."36

No one story did more to promote Namath's image than a Sports Illustrated article by Robert Boyle which coincided with the first days of the Jets' rookie camp. On the cover of the magazine was a picture of Namath, garbed in his Jet green uniform, standing on the Manhattan thoroughfare with Broadway's glittering lights behind him. The photo resulted in the often-used and now familiar sobriquet, "Broadway Joe." After the season, Dave Herman, Jet guard, told of the Jets' initial reaction toward their new team-mate after reading that story. He said, "Well, you know Joe's image when he first got here. Ever since Joe walked down Broadway and they put that picture in Sports Illustrated, the image was created."37

The inside story contributed almost as much to Namath's
image as did the cover photo. It was reported by Sports Illustrated that the Jets had already sold 35,000 season tickets as compared to only 11,000 in 1964, and that the person responsible for the Jets' box office success was Sonny Werblin, "one of the most clever, fascinating and energetic operators to emerge in sports."38

Werblin had worked for 30 years for the Music Corporation of America (MCA), a large and successful talent agency and upon his retirement, Variety magazine noted that "Werblin had helped shape broadcasting perhaps more than anyone else in America and if he was not broadcasting's greatest showman, he certainly qualified as its greatest promoter and salesman."39

Werblin admitted that he wanted a "star" for his team and told Sports Illustrated that he felt a star is the only thing that sells tickets. Namath's "star quality" impressed Werblin right away. When Werblin signed Namath he said to him, "I don't know whether you'll play on our team or make a picture for Universal" and he later told the press, "When Joe Namath walks into a room you know he's there."40

Sportswriter Boyle characterized Namath as "a real ring-ding-a-ding finger-snapper, a girl ogler, a swingin' cat with dark good looks who sleeps till noon. His major interests are 'girls and golf, girls and golf.'"41

The impact of the story was immediate. The following week the Times reported:
"The young man from Beaver Falls, Pa., with an Alabama accent also has patience and he is going to need it because the news media and an already-adoring public are making extraordinary demands of his daily time. Namath is on the cover of one national magazine, Sports Illustrated, but that is only a beginning. There will be many more covers and a writer from Life, W.C. Heinz, is rooming down the hall from Joe at Peekskill."42

Also, the National Broadcasting Company agreed to pay $6 million for the television rights to A.F.L. games for the 1965 season and planned a special show featuring Namath.43

Resentment greeted Namath at his first training camp; his teammates resented his huge and as yet undeserved salary since most veterans were making less than $15,000 a year. Just before the season opener, the Jets held a team meeting and Namath addressed the group. "All I'm asking is that you don't judge me for the money or the publicity, that you let me get out on the field and play football."44 Jets' tackle Winston Hill later said, "Joe said that if anyone felt like it, he'd go out and fight them. It was a tense, dramatic scene. The only thing that took a little of the bite out of it was the fact Joe happened to be on crutches at the time."45

The New York team lost six straight games at the season's outset and Namath did not make a substantial contribution until a game against Kansas City when he completed 7 of 16 passes, leading the Jets to a 13-10 victory. From that day on, except for one game when he was injured, Namath started every Jet game through the Super Bowl.46 The Jets finished the season with a mediocre 5-8-1
record but the season was successful in another way. The Jets led the A.F.L. in attendance with 384,144 — a 23 percent increase over the previous year. In 1964, the year before Namath arrived, the Jets sold 22,000 season tickets and averaged 42,710 in paid attendance for each of their seven home games; in 1965, the respective figures were 39,000 and 54,877.

Namath’s season also proved to be personally rewarding. He was recognized as both AP’s and UPI’s rookie of the year, assumed leadership of the team during a four-game winning streak, threw four touchdown passes in one game against the Houston Oilers to tie a club record, and achieved recognition as one of the league's best passers.

One happenstance almost overshadowed Namath’s successes on the gridiron. Because of his knee injury, he had been classified by his draft board 4-F and was therefore released from any military obligations. His deferment attracted a great deal of attention and polarized public opinion. Namath later acknowledged having received "stupid, vicious letters" and said that some people "even sent letters to my mother, telling her that her son was a draft dodger."

Divergent opinions were expressed in the New York Times. Daley agreed with the decision and he wrote:

"Like a fighter who anticipates that his opponent will throw an instant haymaker in his direction, the Army emerged from the corner with its guard high and its defenses alerted. Careful were the preparations for the bout with public opinion in
the case of Joe Namath of the New York Jets, classified 4-F in the draft and thereby deferred from military service....

He was properly classified 4-F, although it took the confirmatory opinion of the chief orthopedic consultant to the Surgeon General to make it official."51

But in a Times editorial entitled "A Uniform Draft Policy," a different point of view was expressed.

"Recently, Joe Namath, the professional football player, was disqualified for the limited "B" category and rejected by the Army altogether even though he plans to continue as the New York Jets' No. 1 quarterback. The Army took pains to explain that a previous knee operation left the gridiron star unable to function without constant medical supervision....

The point is not to single out Joe Namath, whose case has attracted so much publicity that it has been reviewed and upheld by the Surgeon General, but to suggest that uniform standards must be adhered to....Nothing is more demoralizing to the men in uniform overseas than to see a contemporary celebrity back home in civilian clothes."52

The Jets started well in 1966 as they won five straight games, including a 52-13 victory over the Houston Oilers before the largest crowd in A.F.L. history.53 After the game, the New York Times reported an interview with Werblin:

"'You can't do things cheaply,' said Sonny Werblin, the president of the New York Jets. 'That's something I learned from my theatrical experiences. A million dollar set is worthless if you put a $2,000 actor in the main role.'

A crowd of 58,135 that turned out at Shea Stadium yesterday to see the Jets attested to the success of that dictum. That was 22,000 more than the total home attendance for the 1962 season...."54

The rest of the season was disappointing for the Jets. They lost three consecutive games at one point and finished with a dismal 6-6-2 record. However, Namath led the league
in passes attempted, passes completed, yards gained passing and passes intercepted. In mid-season, Sports Illustrated profiled Namath in an article written by Dan Jenkins in which Namath was characterized as being both "a big celebrity in a celebrity-conscious town," and "a happening."

Jenkins recounted Namath's high school days, his career at Alabama, and the way that Werblin had made Namath a "celebrity" so that by 1965 "...the hip line in New York became, 'Sorry I can't make your party, Sybil, but I'm going to the taping of Joe Namath's knee.'"

Jenkins offered this portrait of the quarterback:

"Stoop-shouldered and sinisterly handsome, he slouches against the wall of the saloon, a filter cigarette in his teeth, collar open, perfectly happy and self-assured, gazing through the uneven darkness to sort out the winners from the losers....

He is youth, success, the clothes, the car, the penthouse, the big town, the girls, the autographs, and the games on Sundays....

He lives in a penthouse on New York's upper East Side, one that features a huge white llama-skin rug, an Italian marble bar, an elaborate stereo hookup, an oval bed that seems to increase in size with each glance, a terrace, and a couple of roommates....

He whirls around the city in his gray Lincoln Continental convertible, the radio blaring, parking by fireplugs whenever possible, wearing tailor-made suits with tight pants and loud print linings, grabbing checks, laughing, enjoying life, spending maybe $25,000 a year and wondering why anyone should be offended....

If he stays healthy, Joe Willie may achieve his deepest ambition, which is 'to become known as a good quarterback, not a rich one.' He may even become what Boston Owner Billy Sullivan says he is now: 'The biggest thing in New York since Babe Ruth.' Slowly...you get the impression that Joe is quite serious about it, and despite his hip ways, is working hard to make it. Beneath the gaudy surface there somehow beams through a
genuine, considerate, sincere, wonderfully friendly and likeable young man. But he's going to be himself. He's going to do it his way, and nobody else's."58

Coming off a .500 season, the Jets anticipated a winning year in 1967 but Namath had his troubles before the season started. He left training camp one night without permission and created a brouhaha in a New York bar. The sports editor of Time magazine filed a lawsuit accusing Namath of beating him up, which Namath denied.59 Ewbank fined him $500 but the incident created dissension on the team, with some players supporting Namath and some supporting the coach. Werblin added fuel to the fire when he came to his young quarterback's defense. Ewbank told of Werblin's interference in an interview:

"In '67 when I fined Joe for skipping out of camp in Peekskill, Sonny (Werblin) came out to camp and said, 'Weeb can fine him...he's the coach...but I don't think he should be fined.... He's the star.'"50

The problem was resolved before the Jets broke camp and they proceeded to win five of their first seven games. During that span the Jets defeated the Oakland Raiders -- a team that was to lose only that one game all year. After that game, Sports Illustrated reporter Edwin Shrake wrote that Namath had matured as a quarterback and was "concentrating more this season." He continued:

"That does not mean that his attitude toward the way he makes his living was frivolous in his first two years with the Jets, and neither does it mean that Namath has given up Manhattan's Upper East Side bars and discotheques. It merely means that he is somewhat older and a bit wiser.
'I guess it's true that I'm maturing,' Namath said. 'If learning is maturity, then I'm maturing...Mainly I'm learning to be careful what I say regardless of what my feelings are. A lot of things I say look distorted and sound bad when they're printed in the newspapers. So I think I really haven't changed so much as I've learned about people and I've learned to be careful who I talk to.'

Again, as in the previous year, the second half of the season proved unfruitful. The team lost four of its last seven games. The Jets finished with an 8-5-1 mark, the first winning season in the club's history. Along the way, Namath established a league record by passing for 4,007 yards in a single season -- the first N.F.L. quarterback ever to surpass 4,000 yards.

During the off-season Namath signed a new contract, his first since his original three-year pact for $427,000. According to a Times story, terms were not announced but it was believed to be a three- to five-year contract for more than $500,000.

Namath's fourth year as a professional coincided with the Jets coming of age as a team. The team had balance -- the defense limited the opposition to fewer than 300 total points for the first time -- and the team had "four talented receivers and four talented running backs." Eleven victories earned the Jets a berth in the A.F.L. championship game against the Oakland Raiders. The week before the game Namath was the "overwhelming choice" for most valuable player in the A.F.L.'s poll of sportswriters and broadcasters, and in a poll of A.F.L. coaches.
Prior to the title game, in his preview story, Times sportswriter Dave Anderson called Namath "the league's most symbolic performer" and added that "the attraction of Namath and New York has prompted a league record of nearly 250 newsmedia requests." On the strength of Namath's three touchdown passes, the Jets defeated the Raiders before 62,627 fans and a national television audience.

Almost immediately, the A.F.L. champion Jets were made 17-point underdogs for their Super Bowl meeting with the N.F.L. champion Baltimore Colts. Undaunted, Namath predicted the Jets would win. Anderson refused to under-rate the Jets' chances.

"And when Joe Namath is confronted with a challenge, beware. As a $400,000 rookie he challenged the salary structure of pro football, but he proved to be a bargain. With his Fu Manchu mustache, he challenged the tonsorial traditions of American athletes, but he shaved it off for a $10,000 fee.

As the symbol of the American Football League, he is confronted with the challenge of penetrating the Colt defense." As the symbol of the American Football League, he is confronted with the challenge of penetrating the Colt defense.

Most writers and fans did not believe Namath when he addressed the Miami Springs Touchdown Club and assured them, "We're going to win Sunday. I'll guarantee you." In a pre-Super Bowl story, Tex Maule, Sports Illustrated sportswriter, minimized the likelihood that the Jets would triumph. He wrote:

"What small chance the Jets do have of defeating the Colts rests upon the talented arm of Joe Namath. Namath is an excellent quarterback, with a quick release, a strong, accurate arm and the ability to locate second and third receivers when his primary target is covered. In the AFL, when
he is given time, he is phenomenal...

With the common draft of the last two years, the AFL...will soon achieve parity with the NFL. But that parity has not yet been reached, and the Colts should demonstrate this with an authority that may shock Jets' fans."70

But Namath and the Jets demonstrated to the sports world that they were a first-rate football team and instead, it was Tex Maule who was shocked by the outcome. The New York Times thought the game important enough to put its story on page one. "...the Jets convinced 75,377 stunned spectators in the Orange Bowl and a television audience of perhaps 60 million that they deserved parity with the best teams in the N.F.L. and that Namath had developed into pro football's best quarterback."71 The Jets had defeated the mighty Baltimore Colts, 16-7.

Nearly the entire sports section of the Times on January 13 was devoted to the Jets' triumph. Under a picture of Namath captioned, "A legendary figure on and off the field," was a story chronicling Namath's life, reiterating his high school and college careers, describing how Werblin had made him a "star" and depicting his glamorous lifestyle.72

Sportswriter Gerald Eskenazi interviewed a leading New York psychiatrist and asked him why Joe Namath was as popular as he was.

"'The common man always identifies with David,' said Dr. Arthur Wachtel of Scarsdale. 'But we also make our heroes a superman. It's comforting to root for someone special. But he has to retain all those good and virtuous qualities....' Wachtel said, 'We like our heroes to be
underdogs, to come from humble beginnings. So with the Jets, it's poor boy makes good or Abe Lincoln goes to the White House, except it's in sports."

The Times praised Namath in a January 14 editorial:

"The script was worthy of Burt L. Standish. But that was not Frank Merriwell...out there; it was shaggy-haired, sleepy-eyed Joe Namath, round-shouldered son of a Pennsylvania steel worker who would shave off his Fu Manchu mustache for money, wear $5,000 mink coats and carpet his Playboy apartment in white llama.

No, Broadway Joe is no Merriwell, but what a football player."

The adulation of Namath did not end there. Columnist Tom Wicker wrote a commentary analyzing America's obsession with underdogs.

"The Jets have beaten the Colts, and underdog-lovers everywhere have found their tattered faith preserved once more from imminent extinction. How sweet it was, then...to watch the unfettered individualist, Namath, artfully confound the great Colt machine -- that grinding collection of huge gears and powerful cogs so impressively coordinated into an irresistible force that when its quarterback came down with a sore arm an interchangeable part could be substituted without noticeable effect. What could be more satisfying then the spectacle of a whiskey-drinking, poker-playing, girl-watching, big-mouthed human being triumphing over so flawless and omnipotent a machine?"

Namath accepted the victory with equanimity. He was confident that the Jets would win, and win they did. Namath admitted that the only thing that had upset him on Super Bowl Sunday was that after the game there was no champagne in the locker room because A.F.L. President Milt Woodard said that it would not look right on television for the Jets to be drinking and "...that it'd be bad for our image,
bad for the sport, a bad influence on children." Namath concluded that "it was pure hypocrisy, and hypocrisy hurts our image a lot more than a couple of glasses of champagne." 76

As is customary in New York City for "conquering heroes" the Jets were duly accorded a ticker tape parade. Times sportswriter Joseph Durso wrote of the ordeal:

"Broadway Joe came back to Broadway yesterday and touched off waves of hero worship from City Hall to Times Square....

Most of the public passion was lavished on Namath, the 25-year-old quarterback with the Rhett Butler sideburns and the most celebrated passing arm in the land....

He upstaged Mayor Lindsay, he turned on thousands of teenagers, he calmed the multitudes with a wave of his hand, he led a police caravan through the midtown streets, he made two graceful speeches, he accepted a sports car as the outstanding performer in the Super Bowl — and then he required a wedge of 12 policemen to cross a sidewalk thronged with female admirers....

Then the mayor stepped to the microphone to pay tribute to 'our conquering team, the greatest football team in the world.' This time he was drowned out by a rising chant of 'Namath for Mayor, Namath for Mayor.'

When Namath went outside to inspect his sports car... the police were fighting a losing battle against the young crowd. It was like a combined appearance by Frank Sinatra, the Beatles and Tiny Tim." 77

Later that spring, Namath received another ticker tape parade, only this time it was in his hometown of Beaver Falls. Twenty-five thousand spectators mobbed his motorcade as it traveled through the steel mill city with a population of 16,595. 78 One resident told a Times reporter:
"'People used to ask me where I live,' Ernie Phillips, a tavern owner, had said at the Greater Pittsburgh Airport, about 30 miles away, 'and I used to tell 'em Pittsburgh because it was easier. But now I tell 'em Beaver Falls, and they know that's where Joe's from.'"79

On June 7, only six months after his Super Bowl triumph, Namath suffered a severe setback. On that day he announced his retirement from football because of a threatened suspension by Pete Rozelle, N.F.L. commissioner, for alleged gambling activities by the customers of his East Side restaurant, Bachelors III.80 The story in the New York Times ran on page one.

Namath's response to the allegations was simple and straightforward -- he denied having done anything wrong. Rozelle had informed him that under the terms of the standard pro football contract, players must not associate with gamblers, or other notorious characters. Furthermore, the commissioner had the power to discipline anyone who violated the rule, and informed Namath that although he had not done anything illegal, he had to divest himself of interest in the restaurant or he would be suspended. Namath voluntarily retired.81

By retiring, Namath jeopardized his new contract worth $500,000 and his endorsement contracts valued at $125,000. Jimmy Walsh, one of Namath's lawyers, estimated Namath's financial loss at about $5 million.82 This disclosure led Anderson to write:

"It takes courage to surrender that kind of money for a 'principle,' as Joe calls it. But
nobody ever questioned his courage. Ironically, on Tuesday night at the Waldorf-Astoria, where he was first warned by Commissioner Pete Rozelle to sell his one-half interest in Bachelors III, he was honored by the Pro Football Writers Association as the game’s 'most courageous' player in 1968. This was in recognition of how he played despite painful knees....

But Namath has the courage of his conviction, too, and those convictions produced resentment over the 'guilt by association' with some of the customers who patronized Bachelors III."83

Anderson generally supported Namath’s decision and in one story called him "honest, defiant and loyal." But he qualified his remarks adding, "His willingness to admit his mistakes is as much a part of his honesty as his directness and eventually, he might be persuaded to believe he is wrong in defying Rozelle."84

On June 14, New York City Councilman Robert Low asked three labor experts who had intervened in various city crises to help resolve the dispute. When asked why he was proposing such a solution, Low said, "Because Namath has given a spiritual lift to this town."85

Several days after the conflict became public, the New York Times conducted a man-on-the-street poll and found that, "...the people...are backing Joe Namath, 5-1, in his dispute with Pete Rozelle....". The reason they gave was that "he was being maligned with guilty by association, and others said they couldn't care less that reputed criminals and Mafia members were said to frequent his Bachelors III restaurant."86

Sports Illustrated was not quite as sympathetic in its
view and criticized sportswriters who "extolled Namath's humanity, honesty and courage in the kind of rolling and symphonic prose usually reserved for the obituaries of lovable old prime ministers." 87

In a highly damaging and widely-publicized article, Sports Illustrated writer Nicholas Pileggi alleged that Namath's penthouse apartment had been used on occasion by Mafia figures for crap games. The story said:

"Months of observation by various law-enforcement agents not only have revealed that top Mafiosi often enjoyed the hospitality of Joe Namath's bar, but that some of them joined sportsmen, high rollers, business executives, athletes, bookmakers and loan sharks in crap games in Namath's apartment. Whether Namath knew it or not, the games in B-2005 were under the protective muscle of Thomas (Tea Balls) Mancuso, a 'capo' in the Carlo Gambino Mafia family of Brooklyn....

Information concerning athletes -- from unreported injuries to hangovers -- has always been of more than casual interest to a multi-million-dollar betting operation....

The dice games at Namath's were made to appear like spontaneous little get-togethers....

Rozelle is said to have shown Namath much of the information he, Rozelle, has been given by the police, including photographs of known gamblers and Mafia hoods who were frequenting the place." 88

Namath's response to the article was, "It's a lie." 89 He then issued a statement drafted by his attorney, James Walsh, in which he said the article was based "on viciousness and malice designed to degrade and defame me personally and professionally." 90 Namath's plan was to sue Sports Illustrated, Life and Newsweek, all of which had published portions of recordings allegedly made at his restaurant.
Anderson again came to Namath's rescue on the pages of the Times.

"Joe Namath's image has been established from here to eternity. He's the sweatsuit Sinatra. You don't have to like him, although almost all of those who know him do. You don't have to agree with him and almost all of those who know him don't. But you discuss him constantly because he's one of sports special people. He does his thing, for better or for worse as he did again yesterday when his meeting with Pete Rozelle...failed to produce his surrender.

The special people don't surrender easily."

Namath was not pleased with the media coverage he had been receiving and the story in Sports Illustrated served to aggravate his feelings. He claimed that he was not even in New York during the period that the magazine stated the crap games took place and he termed the story "ridiculous.

Namath wrote, "...now the people from Sports Illustrated can't understand why I don't want to talk to their reporters and why I don't want to pose for their pictures."92

His words for the newspaper reporters who covered the dispute were not much kinder. He said:

"The press was beautiful. The press was really beautiful. 'Be a man, Joe,' they said. 'Sell out.' I hadn't done anything wrong, but the newspapermen said I should sell out. They said that for the good of the game I had to be above suspicion. You give some of those guys a free cocktail party -- hell, just a free cocktail -- and they'll print any side of any story you want to give them, and they were telling me I had to be above suspicion."93

During the first two weeks of July, rumors were rife that Namath would unretire. According to a UPI story on July 12, Namath was going to report to the Jets' training
camp at Hofstra University the following day. In response to the rumors, Daley wrote:

"To be or not to be: That is the question. The renowned football Hamlet, Joe Namath, is the only one who can answer it: He can play it as a tragedy and thereby suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. Or he can accept the same highly dramatic role he filled last year, the one with the smash finish of a Jet victory in the Super Bowl."

And he concluded:

"The longer Namath remains away from training camp, the deeper wound he inflicts on Jet fortunes. They cannot win without him. It has to seem that the debt he owes his teammates transcends all others. If Namath's thinking on the field is as disordered and as illogical as it appears off it, he'd never get the Jets out of the shadow of their goal-posts."

On July 18, Namath agreed to sell his one-half interest in Bachelors III and to resume his football career. The Times offered this explanation, "In capitulating after six weeks of turmoil, Namath explained that he was 'tired' of the situation...and that he wanted to play football, but he stressed that he had done 'nothing wrong.'"

In fact, Namath had reached a compromise solution with Rozelle which called for Namath to sell his share in the New York restaurant but retain his right to invest in Bachelors III restaurants in other parts of the country. Namath said in response to the Times story:

"...the newspapers were all saying that I had capitulated to Rozelle. That was bullshit. I'd given more than I'd wanted to, but I hadn't sold out my principles."

It was reported in the Times several days later, that
Rozelle had indeed agreed to allow Namath to invest in Bachelors III restaurants elsewhere.99

Although it was expected that the Jets would be contenders for several years, they never again achieved the success that had been theirs in 1968-69. The New York Times reported in October 1969 that it was "more than likely" that Namath would retire at the end of the season because of persistent pain in both knees.100 The Jets did not capture their division title but Namath was named the A.F.L.'s most valuable player for the second straight year by the league's coaches.101

During the off-season, Namath accepted a small role in the movie "Norwood," the first of three films he has made. While it was being completed, for the first time in history, professional football players went on strike. However, when the labor impasse had been settled, Namath failed to show up at summer camp. He issued a statement which said:

"I've got a lot of problems. Football used to be No. 1 with me, but at this stage it's not my main concern.

I honestly don't know what I'm going to do.... I'm working to get my problems solved."102

Anderson was obviously convinced of his abated enthusiasm for the game because he wrote:

"Turmoil follows Joe Namath everywhere, as if it were an invisible member of his entourage.... Because of it, Joe Namath never has a quiet crisis. The headlines are always big.

That desire (to play football) apparently no longer is there. Namath acknowledged that, 'I don't want to play football.' Once that would have been like him saying that he didn't want to live. But football was his life then. Apparently it isn't anymore."103
One week later and six days before an exhibition game against the New York Giants, Namath returned to the Jets' camp to ready himself for the upcoming season. When he arrived at the Hofstra University training site, he was met by "a large corps of press, radio and television representatives" as well as "a few thousand curious observers." Namath refused to talk to the press because, as he said, "...everything that's been written about me is a lie." He did, however, cooperate with radio and television interviewers.

On August 21, James Reston dedicated his column to "Joe Namath, the New Anti-Hero." In response to Namath's recent antics, Reston wrote:

"One of the most interesting symbols of America today is Joe Namath, the quarterback of the New York football Jets. Joe is not only in tune with the rebellious attitude of the young, but he doubles it. He defies both the people who hate play-boys and the people who hate bully-boys. He is something special: a long-haired hard-hat, the anti-hero of the sports world.

In part, he is a familiar American type -- the poor boy out of the Pennsylvania hills via the University of Alabama who conquered the big city and was corrupted by it....

At the start Joe was a character, almost a caricature out of O'Henry's stories about the country yokel who wowed sophisticated Manhattan, but he is now repeating the Thomas Wolfe theme of the Southern boy who takes over the big town and is defeated by success....

To the kids, he is still a hero. He defied all the old-fashioned rules. He didn't work with the 'team.' He reported late for practice. He was not like the old moral sports heroes -- the Reverend Bob Richards arguing on television that sports, religion and the breakfast food for champions were all the same thing....He ran his bars and his football on the same track and at the same time, defying all the old assumptions and
moralities, and now all he has to prove is that it will work.

The guess here is that it won't....

The anti-hero has to be even better than the hero. The owners don't have to prove themselves to the fans, but the quarterback does....He has to produce results in the open, and this is Joe Namath's problem.

He is now trying to work within the old hero system, and also within the commercial system. He is challenging the greed of the owners but being greedy himself, maybe he can do it. But he will have to be as good as he was at his best, or even better. For he is insisting that he can do what he likes and is better than his teammates and his opposition, and no anti-hero so far has been able to break all the old rules and prove his point. 106

Namath fractured his wrist in the fourth regular season game against the Baltimore Colts and did not play again. The Jets floundered without him and finished below .500.

In May 1971, all 22 N.F.L. coaches were asked whom they would prefer as their quarterback out of all those currently active. The Times published the results of the poll. Nine American Conference coaches named Namath and according to the survey, "Joe Namath...emerged as the most coveted quarterback in pro football." One rival American Conference coach replied, "That's a stupid question, which quarterback I'd like to have. Joe Namath's got more talent than anybody in life." 107

A "refreshed and cooperative" Namath reported early to summer camp and was eager to help the Jets put together a winning season. Ironically, in his first preseason game and a meaningless one, Namath damaged his left knee while attempting to tackle Detroit linebacker Mike Lucci. Times
sportswriter Robert Lipsyte wrote, "Namath was injured last Saturday night in a game he should have read about in a Florida newspaper or heard about in a bar or on a movie set." He was, of course, referring to the fact Namath was not overly fond of playing in exhibition games.

Surgery was performed the next day resulting in a fourth knee operation and second on his left knee. Despite the disabling injury, Namath told the press that it would not end his career.

On November 28, in a game against the San Francisco 49ers, Jet quarterback Bob Davis was injured midway in the second quarter. The 49ers were ahead 7-0 when Namath entered the game. Sports columnist Red Smith reported that when "the spiritual leader who had shaped their (the Jets') image over the years" ran onto the field it was a signal to the 63,936 fans in Shea Stadium to rejoice. Reporter Murray Chass added, that "...when Namath replaced the injured Davis...they greeted him as if he were a Messiah come to lead them to the Promised Land. They reacted to his every move, wildly cheering his completions and collectively groaning at his errant tosses."

Sports Illustrated writer Robert Boyle also commented on Namath's dramatic return as quarterback. Of his entrance, Boyle wrote:

"As the Jets' pro quarterback, Bob Davis, lay writhing with a sprained ankle midway in the second quarter, the packed stands exploded because the fans knew Namath would now have to play. 'There was this great feeling of the whole
stadium just swelling with emotion,' said John Dockery, Jet cornerback. 'The aura and the frenzy that accompany him still make me marvel.' Another Jet was said to be so overwhelmed that he started to stand at attention in the huddle.\textsuperscript{112}

Namath led the Jets to a near-miraculous comeback. He completed 11 of 27 passes for 258 yards and three touchdowns. The Jets were down 24-21 when Namath threw what he called "the best pass I'd thrown all day." Unfortunately, it was caught by San Francisco's Johnny Fuller and time ran out with the Jets down by three.

Despite the fact that Namath had missed more than 20 games since October 18, 1970, he desired a new contract before the 1972 season. It was reported in the Times that Namath wanted a two-year pact calling for $250,000 per year, which would make him the highest salaried player in N.F.L. history. Namath told Anderson, "I deserve more than any other player in the game."\textsuperscript{113}

The bargaining continued for almost two months during which time Ewbank expressed optimism that Namath and the Jets would reach a satisfactory agreement. He said, "One thing that's been so twisted by people is Joe's attitude.... He's always had a good attitude."\textsuperscript{114} On August 2, the announcement was made by Jets president Phil Iselin that Namath would become the highest paid player in pro football. Iselin refused to reveal the exact figure, but "a source close to him confirmed that it would be worth $250,000 a year."\textsuperscript{115}

Injuries dogged the Jets throughout the 1972 season
and although Namath stayed healthy, the Jets could not maintain the pace set by the division winning Miami Dolphins.

In mid-season 1972, Sports Illustrated took a closer look at the Jets and found that Namath's image had been transformed over the years. Tex Maule wrote:

"At first glance, Namath appears more subdued these days. It has been some time now since he was involved in any sort of first-rate controversy, and he often disappears altogether from the public view. Even when he speaks out now, the brashness of old appears to have given way to humility and homily. But for the players, it's still the same old messiah.

'I never had any trouble with Joe,' says Coach Weeb Ewbank. 'I don't care anything about his social life, but he has always been a dedicated football player, willing to do anything to help the club.'

Guard Dave Herman suggests a slight twist on that whole situation. 'It isn't Joe who has changed,' he says. 'It is the world that has changed toward Joe -- or caught up with him. He used to be one of the only players with long hair, for instance. By now, he's one of the few players without a mustache.'

In one of the more interesting pieces written about the Jets' quarterback, Anderson told of Namath's inclusion on former president Richard Nixon's "enemies list."

"After all the plays the President has suggested, after all the coaches he has phoned, after all the references to 'game plan' and 'team players' in the Watergate hearings, the White House list of political enemies includes 'Joe Namath, New York Giants; businessman, actor.'

Apparently not everyone in the White House has been paying attention. Identifying the Jets' quarterback as a member of the Giants is like identifying Nelson Rockefeller as the Governor of New Jersey....

Only once has he uttered, at least publicly, what the White House might have construed to be anti-Nixon sentiment."
On his return from a tour of military hospitals in Japan, Okinawa and Hawaii, the quarterback commented:

'More than anything else, this trip really makes you that much more annoyed at the Vietnam War and makes you wonder what the hell we're doing there.

It took a few years, but the President finally agreed with him. But if Joe Namath is a political enemy, Francis Scott Key was a subversive songwriter, at least judging from the quarterback's reaction to the controversy last winter over the playing of the national anthem at sports events.

'I like it played,' he said. 'Every time I hear it, it reminds me of where we are in the world, in life. I kind of thank God that we're in this country. When I hear it I get a chill. It's a thrill for me."

The 1973 season was the finale to a long career for the Jets coach and New York sportswriter Paul Zimmerman, who spent six months with the team in order to write a biography of Ewbank. As a sidelight to his travels, Zimmerman kept a count of how many newspapers in cities outside of New York advanced their home games with stories about Namath.

In the Jets' first exhibition game against Houston, Zimmerman found that the Houston Chronicle ran three stories in two days preceding the game. The following week, while in Tampa, Florida, Zimmerman counted three stories about Namath in just two days; all in the Tampa Tribune and all by the same sportswriter. Zimmerman spotted just one story in New Orleans and one in the Milwaukee Journal in which it was mentioned that Green Bay coach Dan Devine rated Namath as "one of the best" quarterbacks in pro football. Unfortunately, Zimmerman's count ended there because
one week later and for the third time in four years, Namath suffered a season-shattering injury. His right shoulder was separated in a game against the Colts. It was decided to postpone an operation until January but Namath missed six games and the Jets suffered through yet another poor season. Namath told Anderson that he would not consider retiring and added, "I'm going to keep playing football as long as I can do it." 

The World Football League (W.F.L.) was founded in 1973 and it was theorized by many that Namath would become the target in a new bidding war between rival leagues. Speculation had it that if Namath did not retire because of his injuries, it was conceivable that Gary Davidson, president of the W.F.L., would pay as much as $2.5 million to lure Namath away from the Jets.

The speculation continued in the spring of 1974. Anderson joined in.

"Joe Namath might not play football anymore. If he retires as a quarterback, he probably would accept a multi-million dollar offer from the American Broadcasting Company to replace Don Meredith in its Monday Night Football booth. He also would focus on being an actor in films and TV shows. 'I just don't honestly know yet what I'm going to do,' he said."

By August 15, Namath had decided. Times reporter Chass wrote:

"The black Cadillac limousine...pulled up in front of Tower C on the Hofstra University campus, and pro football's highest paid player emerged from the rear seat.... In an amiable and candid discussion as he's had with the press in a long time, Namath told his
thoughts...following the end of the 1973 season. 'I wasn't happy about how things developed last season. But I couldn't get rid of the thought that I wanted to play, so I decided to play again and see what happened.'

The 1974 season was no more rewarding for the Jets than the five previous ones had been. A strong Miami team again won the Jets' division. And Namath still was not revealing his future plans. In late December 1974, Chass wrote:

"By his refusal to disclose any decision about his future, Namath has stirred as much breathless anticipation in the sports world as Senator Edward M. Kennedy did in the political arena with his ruminations over the Presidency."

Namath ultimately decided to return to the Jets for the 1975 football season.
Chapter V

Footnotes


2 Ibid., p. 35.


5 Namath and Schaap, pp. 10-11.


7 Ibid., p. 32.

8 Namath and Schaap, p. 132.

9 Szolnoki, p. 36.

10 Ibid., p. 40.

11 Szolnoki, p. 43.

12 Namath and Schaap, p. 110.

13 Ibid., p. 110.

14 Szolnoki, p. 48.

15 Namath and Schaap, p. 111.

16 Ibid., p. 159.

17 Namath and Schaap, p. 137.


20 Namath and Schaap, p. 137.

22 Ibid., p. 27.


31 Namath and Schaap, p. 151.


39 Ibid., p. 66.

41. Ibid., p. 69.


43. Ibid., p. 36.

44. Namath and Schaap, p. 120.


48. Szolnoki, p. 73.


50. Namath and Schaap, p. 146.


55. Namath and Schaap, p. 162.


57. Ibid., p. 43.


60. Zimmerman, p. 265.

62 Namath and Schaap, p. 163.


64 Namath and Schaap, p. 164.


69 Namath and Schaap, p. 50.


76 Namath and Schaap, p. 58.


79 Ibid., p. 59.

81Namath and Schaap, pp. 21-22.


83Ibid., p. 40.


92Namath and Schaap, p. 30.

93Ibid., p. 20.


98Namath and Schaap, p. 41.


105 Ibid., p. 46.


118 Zimmerman, p. 108.

119 Ibid., p. 128.

120 Zimmerman, pp. 165, 187.


Chapter VI
Comparison

Pointing out the essentially symbiotic relationship between sports figures and the media, Namath once said, "Without writers, athletes wouldn't get any publicity; without athletes, sportswriters wouldn't have a job."\(^1\)

Staubach and Namath both have shown they possess a keen awareness of the power that the media wields in establishing their images and in perpetuating their playing careers. Not surprisingly, Namath was the first to understand the capriciousness of the media. Not, however, because of his incisiveness, but because he was relatively unprepared for his sudden fame and fortune and was forced to deal with them sooner than Staubach had to. Because he had been sheltered from the media as the result of a deliberate tight-lip policy enforced by the Naval Academy, Staubach did not have to deal with the media on a one-to-one basis until he was past the age of 26.

Also, because of his strict upbringing and religious training, Staubach ultimately proved less susceptible to outside pressures and influences than Namath did. Whereas Staubach's life reflected a high degree of discipline by the time he had achieved some success, Namath lacked that attribute and was therefore more vulnerable to the whims and desires of people like Sonny Werblin.

Staubach was fortunate to have attended the Naval
Academy and play professionally in Dallas since his personal philosophy and lifestyle generally were compatible with the prevalent ones in those two places. On the other hand, Namath was lucky to have played in New York, for that metropolis has a history of tolerating people and personalities outside the mainstream of traditional Americana. Namath was just another curiosity in a city teeming with them.

So it was no coincidence that the newspapers and their staffs were generally supportive of the two very different quarterbacks. From 1962 through 1974 there was not a single story in the Morning News which could be vaguely interpreted as unfavorable toward Staubach. While the New York Times sportswriters expressed more of a divergence of opinions regarding their hometown quarterback, they too, were usually favorable toward him. On rare occasions, Arthur Daley criticized some of Namath's more outrageous actions, but not enough to offset the influence of other writers, particularly Dave Anderson.

With the exception of the one story in Sports Illustrated alleging that members of the Mafia had used Namath's apartment for gambling activities, that magazine's coverage was basically uncritical. However, after that story which appeared on June 23, 1969, there was a notable decline in stories about him. Before that article, Namath had been featured in eight stories, but only two since then. One curious footnote to Sports Illustrated's coverage of Namath
is that in the four libraries checked, every picture of the Jets' quarterback ever run in the magazine had been torn out, presumably by patrons. (The libraries were CSUN, UCLA, Los Angeles Public Library and Beverly Hills Public Library.) Nary a picture of Namath was to be found. Such was not the case with Staubach. In fact, nearly all of the photos run of Staubach were family-oriented pictures; usually he was shown with his wife and daughters.

Both football players were able to proceed through Klapp's dialectical process, but it was a much more subtle progression for Staubach. Particularly in regard to his professional career, the dramatic encounters which were used to catapult him from one stage to another had less impact, less shock value than Namath's did. He was nudged along via a somewhat artificially created and media perpetuated rivalry with Craig Morton.

Staubach often admitted that the image of him as presented by the media was not wholly accurate and resented being labeled a "square." After the Super Bowl victory he said:

"...several interviewers asked me about my personal life and I answered them with my own spiritual values. As a result I felt I was classified as a guy living in a world that just wasn't with it, a spiritual world that was sterile and boring."2

Yet Staubach was also a pragmatist and realized the benefits implicit in his being a professional football player on a winning team.
"I am fortunate to have been blessed with certain talents and skills and they are the reason I have become a popular figure, in a position to attract attention and be heard."  

Namath, on the other hand, was amenable to fulfilling Werblin's need for a "star" and allowing his image to, in a sense, become larger than life.

In fact, two biographers were surprised to find that Namath did not necessarily conform to the popularly accepted image of him as an extrovert and a swinger. Dick Schaap had misgivings before interviewing the quarterback.

"I feared that Joe, like other men who have been transformed in their own lifetimes to myths, might no longer recognize the truth; I feared he might believe his own mythology. And I feared, too, that even if Joe knew the truth, he might, again like other supercelebrities, have no desire to tell it."

Biographer Bob Oates, Jr. was shocked to find that his subject was not as he had surmised he would be. He wrote:

"He is Broadway Joe, after all, Joe Willie White Shoes, and I suppose I expected to find him bright-light flamboyant, racing full speed with the jet set....

But somehow in person he doesn't come off as a hard-edged swinger, and being with him doesn't feel frenetic and fast-paced. He may move around a lot, but he managed to do it while moving slowly, easing from place to place in a smooth and comfortable way. He doesn't make a big splash coming into a scene and he doesn't make a lot of waves leaving. In fact, he sometimes seems shy in a crowd of people, sitting quietly and smiling while those around him carry the entertainment load....

He seemed so calm and low-key that I began to wonder if his charismatic image was an accident of his photogenic face and the power of the New York press."
However, Namath admitted he was not averse to being manipulated by Werblin and the media nor was he opposed to his image, as outlandish as it had become. Oates wrote:

"It was an amazing phenomenon to me, his ability to become what the time required of him, and I began to see a number of sides to his personality. He can function well in a wide variety of circumstances...."

When Oates asked him whether he would like to change the image of him that the press had, in part, created, Namath replied:

"No....Most of the things that you have read about me, I've done things like that at one time or another....And even if the various incidents people have heard about me are usually wrong, if I think about the image I have in public, I really wouldn't change anything."

Staubach and Namath both entered Klapp's dialectical process at approximately the same time. Namath captured the attention of the media and the nation during his sophomore year at the University of Alabama (1962) when he led the Crimson Tide to a 10-1 record and a victory in the Orange Bowl. The media took notice and by the time he was suspended the following season for breaking Bryant's no drinking policy, he was already established as a public man or celebrity.

Although the drinking incident had taken place in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, the New York Times thought it important enough to mention in three separate stories. By his senior year Namath had attracted attention nationwide and merited a story in Sports Illustrated. But it was in the Orange
Bowl classic against Texas that Namath started to emerge as a symbolic leader and a dramatic actor. For it was in that thrilling last-minute defeat that Namath's importance could be measured by his impact on the audience rather than on the outcome of the game or on meaningful accomplishments.

It was Sonny Werblin who cemented Namath's status as a symbolic leader and dramatic actor and there was probably no one in New York more capable of doing it than the ex-theatrical agent. Howard Cosell once called Werblin "a master of show business, the smartest promoter I've ever seen." Werblin knew how to maximize dramatic encounters; he made Namath a "colorful" figure, he created suspense and human interest, he made use of beaux gestes and he made sure that Namath at least gave the appearance of "doing things alone."

First Werblin planted a story about how Namath was going to be signed under the goal posts in the Orange Bowl. Then a story was leaked alleging Namath would receive $400,000, the largest sum ever paid to an N.F.L. player. And finally, Namath was signed, as reported in the Times, "in a Hollywood setting." In the meantime, Werblin was plotting out Namath's future and the future of his football team along with it.

Staubach first achieved notoriety during his sophomore year at the Naval Academy when, on the basis of a 5-5 season, he was called "the most talented quarterback in
Navy history" by a World-Telegram sportswriter. By the time Staubach was featured on the cover of Time magazine, he was established as a public man or celebrity which was reinforced when he won the Heisman Trophy. In a story in Sports Illustrated, Navy's coach Hardin was quoted as calling Staubach a "genuine celebrity."

One contributing factor which helped delay Staubach's emergence as a symbolic leader was the ban on interviews and the protective aegis the Naval Academy assumed so as to shield Staubach from the media. Throughout his career at Navy, there was always a buffer between him and the public.

Yet in some respects Staubach's image as a symbolic leader and dramatic actor did begin to surface, despite Navy's "closed door" policy. His image had an interesting duality to it -- one which was emphasized even more when he arrived in Dallas. On the one hand, he was categorized as a clean-cut All-American type, "honest and gracious," and "a complete gentleman." But he was also portrayed as a reckless and daring scrambler who could convert "frantic retreats into thrilling dramas."

Staubach faded from the public spotlight for four years while he served in the Navy and he later attested, "I found that fame is a fleeting thing and past accomplishments just yellow and die on some old sports page." That is why his comeback in 1969 with the Cowboys was so remarkable.
According to Klapp, for dramatic encounters to occur there must be conflict, suspense or human interest. By virtue of the nature and rules of the sport, there is always conflict in football — conflict being defined as "to come into collision; to contend; or to do battle; or be in opposition or at variance." Often the conflict is at such a heightened pitch that, as former Look magazine sports editor Leonard Shecter said, "We play our (football) games or watch them with the same tenacious ferocity with which we fight a war in Vietnam...." Suspense, defined as "a state of mental uncertainty, as in awaiting a decision or outcome, usually with more or less apprehension or anxiety" is also inherent in football since the outcomes of most games are in the balance until the waning minutes.

But Werblin left nothing to chance. He systematically began a public relations campaign to create human interest in his $427,000 quarterback. Before his rookie season had begun, Namath had already been nicknamed "Broadway Joe" thanks to a cover story in Sports Illustrated and his swinger image was helped by sportswriter Boyle's opinion that Namath was "a girl ogler" and "a swingin' cat." The Times reported that same summer, before Namath had thrown his first pass, that he had "an already-adoring public." As a result of Namath's bout with his draft board and his 4-F classification, the Times, on its editorial page, called Namath a "contemporary celebrity."
During that first season, Sports Illustrated also saluted Namath as "a big celebrity in a celebrity-conscious town." In addition, his image was reinforced by the portrait painted of him with his tailor-made suits, Lincoln Continental, beautiful girls, and penthouse with white llama-skin rug and oval bed "that seems to increase in size with each glance..." Namath's first off the field dramatic encounter occurred during the 1967 training camp when he allegedly slugged Time magazine's sports editor in a New York bar. Namath was fined $500 by Ewbank but it was widely reported that Werblin had defended him because, after all, Namath was the team's "star." Before the 1968 A.F.L. title game, the Times' Dave Anderson referred to Namath as "the league's most symbolic performer," and in another story as "the symbol of the American Football League." The Jets were 17-point underdogs prior to the Super Bowl but Namath unabashedly announced to the sports world that, "We're going to win Sunday. I'll guarantee you." That was a perfect example of a beau geste. It also supports Klapp's contention that a hero's lot should be a dangerous one and he should not seek to avoid confrontation, especially if he is the underdog. After the Jets' triumph, Namath was termed "a legendary figure," "a hero," "an unfettered individualist" and "a superman" on the pages of the Times. One week later
Joseph Durso described how Namath's presence in a parade had "touched off waves of hero worship" so that it seemed "like a combined appearance by Frank Sinatra, the Beatles, and Tiny Tim." Thus it is almost indisputable that Namath was a hero to a large segment of New York's population.

Namath conformed to another of Klapp's methods for dramatizing a performance by crediting others generously while taking the best scenes when, upon receipt of a car for being the Super Bowl's most valuable player, Namath said, "If it wasn't for the blockers where would I be? It's a team, not just one guy, that wins a football game."31

Oates believes that Namath's popular image as a non-conformist was intensified after the Super Bowl game.

"Joe Namath surfaced as a pop hero during the Super Season of 1968-69. He was the brash young master, the classy iconoclast, doing things the way he wanted and making it stick by doing them well. He threw the ball with daring grace and told his truth with a disarming smile and even if you didn't like what he did you had to admire the way he did it.

In an accident of timing, perhaps, the national exposure to Namath's fresh, and to some, infuriating approach concerning his appearance, his words, and his life style coincided with an upsurge in individual self-expression all across the country. He helped win the third Super Bowl just after the great wave of the 'cultural revolution' had rolled across the country from San Francisco to the East Village, leaving in its wake a legacy of long hair, free speech and free love. A typical father, enervated by his high-decibel attempts to restore his own son to the decent path of visible collars and diligent work, was suddenly confronted with the same challenge from his Sunday television screen. Joe Namath had his hair down his neck, his social life in the newspapers and his football team in the record books."32
Following the Super Bowl, which is probably the most overt dramatic encounter in any football player's career, Namath challenged the authority of the entire N.F.L. as personified by Pete Rozelle. Only six months after his triumph, Namath retired because of a threatened suspension by the commissioner of football. During the period of Namath's retirement, Anderson stood behind him. He said Namath was "honest, defiant and loyal," "courageous," "one of the special people," and "the sweatsuit Sinatra."33 "The renowned football Hamlet," wrote Arthur Daley of Namath -- he was fulfilling yet another "highly dramatic role."34

In this particular dramatic encounter, the Times polled New York's citizenry and found they supported Namath 5-1 because "they couldn't care less that reputed criminals and Mafia members were said to frequent his Bachelors III restaurant."35

Namath finally capitulated, but not before dragging the episode out over two months and polarizing public opinion in his favor. It was a well-played game.

When the Jets' quarterback again threatened to retire in 1970, Anderson wrote, "Turmoil follows Joe Namath everywhere. Because of it...the headlines are always big."36 It was not that turmoil followed him, but rather by that time Namath had learned how to create his own drama and even his own headlines.

For a second time, Namath unretired, and James Reston
hailed the return of "one of the most interesting symbols of America today." Reston labeled Namath an anti-hero because of his rebellious attitude, the fact that he didn't work with the "team," and that he was defying all the old assumptions and moralities of the old sports heroes.37

But to Klapp, all the aforementioned attributes are those of a symbolic leader and a dramatic actor. Namath was a nonconformist, he did things alone, and he utilized aggressive tactics and beaux gestes. It would seem that Reston's definition of anti-hero and Klapp's definition of symbolic leader are remarkably similar.

When Namath entered the game against the 49ers in 1972 after a succession of disabling injuries, columnist Red Smith called Namath "the spiritual leader who had shaped their (the Jets) image over the years," and Murray Chass said Namath was "a Messiah come to lead them to the Promised Land."38

In August 1972, Namath had received a new contract making him the highest paid player in pro football. Looking back over the quarterback's career, Gerald Eskenazi recounted some of Namath's more obvious dramatic encounters and told how he had been able to attract media attention.

"In a sense, Namath was one of the flamboyant Sonny Werblin's most successful creatures.... Namath then made his own headlines, which included a fine for breaking training in 1967, his prediction that the Jets would win the Super Bowl in 1969 (they did), his 'retirement' that year because Commissioner Pete Rozelle wanted Namath to sell his bar, Bachelors III, his theatrical retirement in 1970 over 'personal problems.'"39
In a stroke of luck (what else could it have been) Namath was included on former president Richard Nixon's "enemies list," thus propelling his name into the headlines again.

And in 1974, Namath was offered a multi-million dollar contract by ABC-TV to be a commentator on its widely-heralded Monday Night Football, despite the fact that Namath had not been on a team with a winning record since 1968 and despite the fact that in the games from 1969 through 1973, Namath's record was a dismal 11-13.40

ABC was willing to give Namath all that money because he had become a "media super hero,"41 Namath had reached the highest level in the dialectical process — he had become a vehicle for psychic mobility and had afforded fans vicarious thrills through his exploits on the football field and through his much envied lifestyle.

Also in 1974 the fledgling W.F.L. offered Namath a lucrative contract because the owners knew he was a great attraction. Namath was a hero to millions of football fans. He was a splendid performer — a drawing card, a headliner.

The summer following Namath's Super Bowl triumph, Staubach reported to the Cowboys' training camp as a 26-year-old rookie. However, one year earlier a hint of Staubach's image had crept into the pages of the Morning News. Don Meredith had warned the ex-midshipman that he would have to "grow his hair long and start smoking and drinking" if he wanted to make it in the N.F.L. The
Cowboys' publicity director agreed and told Staubach to get rid of his crewcut or "at least grow long sideburns." 42

From his first summer camp, dedicated, hard-working, confident and persistent were adjectives often used by sportswriters to describe Staubach.

In addition to his image as a clean-cut All-American type, much was made of Staubach's ability to run with reckless abandon in spite of his professed dislike for the title "scrambler." But in one way it actually helped Staubach's image because he could be called a nonconformist (important in Klapp's scheme of things) since most pro quarterbacks do not like to run with the football. His scrambling was an aggressive tactic because Staubach was able to provide the crowd with thrills and seemingly sought out head-to-head confrontations. This scrambling aspect is important because Staubach rarely used beaux gestes and was not a particularly colorful person; so the latter two dramatizing methods were disregarded.

Staubach did not play much during his first season but when he did, Bob St. John said he was "daring," "a great athlete," and a "Humble-Confident Person, who no doubt gets chill bumps when they play the National Anthem...." 43 St. John frequently emphasized the patriotic side of Staubach's personality.

Immediately after the 1970 season and the Cowboys' Super Bowl loss, the Morning News began playing up the intense rivalry between Staubach and Morton and thus
artificially created many more dramatic encounters. The Morning News often compared the two quarterbacks and a standard procedure was to run interviews every week or so asking each one what he thought of the other. The newspaper's sportswriters liked to emphasize the fact that Staubach "was married, a family man" and Morton was a "bachelor."44

Aware that coach Landry did not like Staubach to scramble, Staubach implored the Dallas press in 1971 not to call attention to his nickname "Scrambling Roger Staubach." The Morning News writers complied with his request -- at least for a few weeks -- because by that time their fondness for Staubach had become apparent. In two successive stories, St. John wrote that "Landry was unfair to Staubach," because the coach had replaced him in a game against Houston.45

A few days later, in a rather contrived move, the Morning News ran four letters to the editor on its sports page -- the only time it featured letters to the editor in all the editions of the newspaper that were checked from 1962 through 1974. All four letters were favorable to Staubach and critical of Landry.46

Once the regular season began, St. John commenced a personal campaign to have Staubach named the starting quarterback. St. John claimed Staubach was "the most popular quarterback the Cowboys have had," and then reported that "anytime you say a word against Roger, better
close your eyes and get earmuffs." After one game that Staubach did start, St. John wrote of his performance, "Roger Staubach, (was) definitely the guy in the white hat this day." And after it was finally announced by Landry that Staubach would be his number one quarterback, St. John wrote, "After 13 games, almost four months, one million bundles of criticism and a number of revolutions by fans, Landry... named Roger Staubach as his quarterback." St. John attributed Staubach's popularity to the fact that "he's unbelievably dedicated, talented, persistent and a fine athlete."

The moratorium on writing about Staubach's running ability soon ended and Sam Blair credited Dallas' victory against the Redskins in a game for the N.F.C. Eastern Division lead to Staubach's ability to tuck away the football.

Writing about the same game, Sports Illustrated made reference to both popular images of Staubach. First it called Staubach an "unorthodox scrambler," and then the article alluded to the frequently used description of him as "the only player on the field who ever stands at attention when they play the national anthem...."

After Staubach had been awarded the Bert Bell Trophy as the N.F.L.'s outstanding player, Staubach used a ploy similar to the one Namath had used after accepting his Super Bowl most valuable player prize. Staubach followed
Klapp's advice of crediting others while taking the best scenes when he announced, "I'm very proud of getting the award, but I'm also quite aware that I got it because of circumstances. It should be a team trophy."53

Before the Super Bowl, Blair called Staubach "this year's hero,"54 but it was not until after the Cowboys' victory that Staubach received national media attention.

The Times' Anderson, in a syndicated story, played up Staubach's personal life and his "Christian ideals."55 Staubach thought the story was a distortion and he rebelled at being tagged a "square" by the nation's media.56 Despite Staubach's protestations, the stories picked up by the national media were not much different than the stories and descriptions that the Morning News and Sports Illustrated had been running for several years.

The same issue resurfaced in 1973 when Staubach and Morton were once again fighting for the number one slot. It was reported in the Morning News that "some fans have ventured the argument that Landry will go with Roger because their life styles are the same off the field."57 Staubach explained that just because they were both involved in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, that did not mean that "Landry would let his feelings for anybody influence his football decisions."58

However, Landry did, in fact, name Staubach to be his starting quarterback. The decision was applauded by the Dallas press and the fans. Tex Schramm, Cowboy general
manager said, "I've never seen a player as uniquely popular as Staubach....Roger is the All-American hero type."59

Although Staubach was not a colorful figure nor did he create his own dramatic encounters from which to emerge as a symbolic leader, he nonetheless had achieved that distinction. He was able to reach that level because the Morning News and especially Bob St. John and Sam Blair had done it for him. Where no conflict existed, they created one; where no colorful personality traits existed, they pointed up his All-American demeanor and patriotic values; and when Staubach himself failed to use aggressive tactics, they labeled him a "daring scrambler."

Thus was Staubach able to succeed as a hero -- he was the exemplary All-American athlete and served as a model for identification and imitation and provided vicarious voyages for the very large portion of American society which admires such a person.
Chapter VI
Footnotes


3 Ibid., p. 289.

4 Namath and Schaap, p. 190.


6 Ibid., p. 22.

7 Namath and Oates, p. 59.

8 Ibid., pp. 59, 190.


13 Staubach, p. 73.


15 Ibid., p. 34.


17 Staubach, p. 141.


20 The American College Dictionary, p. 1220.


25 Ibid., pp. 42, 44-45.


28 Namath and Schaap, p. 50.


31 Ibid., p. 58.

32 Namath and Oates, p. 56.


40 Zimmerman, p. 300.

41 Namath and Oates, p. 36.


56 Staubach, pp. 237-238.


58 Staubach, p. 270.

Chapter VII
Conclusion

One objective of this thesis was to raise the questions of how and why specific people get to be heroes, and, using Orrin Klapp’s dialectical process of hero formation, to see if satisfactory answers could be found. The other objective was to examine the role of the media in the creation of sports heroes.

It could be argued that the two sports performers selected -- Roger Staubach and Joe Namath -- are not heroes, but that would be defeating the spirit, if not the intent of this study. Whether or not Staubach and Namath are heroes is not as significant, in the long run, as the worthiness of Klapp's process. Because if it can be ascertained that Klapp’s framework is a functional one, an infinite number of sports performers could utilize the process in order to emerge as sports heroes. Thus, the assumption was made that both football players are heroes in order to test Klapp's framework for analysis.

The aforementioned assumption that both men are heroes is not without merit, however. Using Klapp's definition of a hero as someone who realizes dreams for people that they cannot do for themselves and serve as vehicles for psychic mobility, Staubach and Namath are both heroes. But if Klapp's definition is shunned in favor of a more classical interpretation of the hero as a
"man admired for his courage, nobility or exploits" then Staubach and Namath still emerge as heroes. Over and over again did the sportswriters (and news reporters and editors as well) in the *Dallas Morning News*, *New York Times* and *Sports Illustrated* unhesitatingly refer to Staubach and Namath as heroes. Additionally, through devices such as letters to the editor, editorials, and columns and stories describing public displays of adoration and emotional involvement (vicarious voyages) did it become apparent that millions of sports fans were in agreement.

Before it is possible to evaluate whether the hypothesis of this study is valid based on the careers of Staubach and Namath, it is necessary to point out two flaws in Klapp's process which were not in evidence before this analysis began.

Klapp defines his process as a series of two-way interactions between the performer and the media and the audience in which none of the three know what the outcome will be. But he does not allow for the presence of a third force — an intermediary — such as Sonny Werblin in the case of Namath.

Regarding the first years of Namath's professional career with the New York Jets, it is not clear whether the quarterback responded to the feedback from the media and accordingly, sought out latent functions that needed to be fulfilled. Namath did not have to play the game correctly in 1965 because Werblin did it for him. In a series of
calculated moves, Werblin insured that Namath would be the "star" that his football team so desperately needed.

Staubach also had to endure interference from a third party -- that of the Naval Academy's public relations office. That office, like Werblin, was involved in a deliberate game of manipulating the media, and succeeded in shielding Staubach from sportswriters and the public in an attempt to promote an image that was not necessarily an honest one. As a result, Staubach's "real" image did not emerge for several years.

Klapp also contends that in his dialectical process the performer responds to the feedback in either a conscious or subconscious way. While that is hard to disprove, it is almost impossible to prove whether the cues emitted by each football player were conscious efforts.

Namath offered several clues which lends credence to the theory that he responded in a conscious way. He told biographer Oates that he generally enjoys his public image and admitted that he sometimes deliberately plays at being Joe Namath, football hero or TV guy in order to make people happy. Of course, his answers came after his image had long since been established. It is possible that his response could have been an acknowledgement that he could not have changed his image even if he, in fact, had wanted to.

Staubach was not presented with an opportunity to respond to questions regarding the consciousness of his
actions. Most often, Staubach seemed to tolerate his image as presented in the Morning News but at times he rebelled. Once he scolded the Dallas press for constantly labeling him a "scrambler." He also went along with his image as a clean-cut All-American type but did an abrupt about face after the Super Bowl victory when he chastized the national media for emphasizing his "square" values. By that time, however, it did Staubach little good to protest because he had already begun to function primarily through his image; through the kind of man he appeared to be; and through the lifestyle and attitudes he symbolized.

These minor deficiencies in Klapp's dialectical process do not invalidate the hypothesis of this study -- that physical ability and talent are not the most important criteria in the determination of which performer becomes a sports hero, but rather it is the ability to respond properly to this dialectical process.

By using autobiographical materials in conjunction with newspaper coverage in Dallas and New York and sports coverage in a national magazine, it was possible to illustrate how Staubach and Namath were able to proceed through the process despite their very different images. They are heroes not because of their physical abilities or successes on the football field (many quarterbacks in the N.F.L. have better passing percentages as well as higher winning percentages) but because each found sports fans (the
favorably upon the images that they, in fact, helped create.

If either quarterback were to retire without throwing another pass, or if either failed to play in the Super Bowl again, their images would not change substantially because those images have lives of their own. The images belong to the media and the audience that helped create them.

For Klapp the answer to the question of how and why certain people becomes heroes is an obvious one. If a man makes the right impression and does not contradict it publicly, he can become a symbol for almost anything he chooses. And for a symbolic leader to become a hero he merely has to use one or more of the dramatizing methods that Klapp has outlined.

In Symbolic Leaders: Public Dramas and Public Men, Klapp raised the question, "to whom can a drama happen?" and later concluded, "to anybody." Paraphrasing Klapp, if the question is asked, "who can become a hero?" the answer must be, "anyone" providing he uses Klapp's process correctly.

That is precisely why a study such as this is so invaluable. With the advent of television, movies and modern news-reporting, the opportunities for dramatic encounters have become infinite and the range of events that can be dramatic is widening. In a society that is
becoming more and more an audience-directed one because of mass communication, almost any kind of person can become a celebrity, and if he plays the game correctly, a symbolic leader, hero, villain or fool.

By seizing the cues offered by the media and audience, Staubach and Namath had begun to function through their images which had been, in effect, mandated by the public. According to Klapp, for a performer to emerge as a symbolic leader, every leader of a social movement, every big star of entertainment and sports, every really popular statesman or church leader, has to make a similar discovery. Once he has done so, it is relatively easy to proceed through the process as long as he does not contradict the image publicly.

Klapp's process is important because its applicability is limitless. Sports figures were used in this study, but performers in the areas of politics, entertainment, business and education have also shown a talent for using the dialectical process. All it takes is some degree of perception to respond properly to the feedback or a skillful public relations agent.

Klapp's process works. The enigma is that although we know it works -- Staubach and Namath are two excellent examples -- and despite the fact that performers in all walks of life are using the process, we refuse to accept the reality of it. We continue to insist that politicians get elected because they speak to the issues, movie stars
are worshipped because of their acting abilities, religious leaders are respected because of the truths that they preach, and sports figures are admired because of their athletic talents. Actually, they all, either consciously or subconsciously, have proceeded from the initial stage in the process to successive stages merely by responding properly to the cues and feedback.

This study is the first step in establishing the validity of Klapp's dialectical process. The areas for further testing are as boundless as the opportunities for performers to become heroes, villains or fools. By further proving the validity of the process will the media and audience become cognizant of how and why specific people get to be heroes.
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November 27, 1963
December 4, 1963
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