Historically, there have been two ways for the public to learn about athletes. Prior to the rise of social media, the public relied on TV, newspapers, magazines, and radio. Editors and reporters at these outlets would act as “gatekeepers” in regard to what information was published – and what information was not.

Social media on the other hand, has allowed athletes to create their own “channels.” Often this has led to insight that would not normally be found via traditional methods, but at times it has also led to backlash from the public or team management (a recent example includes harassing Tweets made by Cleveland pitcher Trevor Bauer). Sometimes not enough control can be just as dangerous as too much.

Amos Barshad writes about The Players Tribune, which provides a space where athletes tell their own stories, but with a ghostwriter. The Players Tribune gives the athlete control of their narrative on a platform that is more stable than social media and less restrictive than traditional gatekeeping. So far, it works – athletes have been willing to share their stories and the public has appreciated the new perspective.

Barshad’s piece raises several questions regarding the power of stories: How important is it for an athlete – or anyone for that matter – to have control over their narrative? Is it more than just brand management? Are there benefits to traditional gatekeeping or the openness of social media? When it’s time to tell your story, which method would you prefer?