Violence In Sports Essay, Research Paper

violence

With the increase in society taking a stance against violence by many people, sports has become an areawhere some feel that the violent acts such as the hitting and fighting that occurs should be eliminated.You can not change something that has been around for so long because it would change

the aspect of thegame to something completely different. The elimination of violence should not be done in sport becausethe violence is a part of the game which would only hurt its popularity. The reasons that the violence is occurring in sport is due to six theories according to JohnSchneider.

“The violence in sport mirrors the violence found in society, violence as the result ofeconomic incentives, the influence of crowd behavior on player violence, genetic causation for playeraggression, learning theory and player aggression, and psychological stress and player violence”(Lapchick

230). The theories of sport mirroring society, violence as a result of economic incentive, and theinfluence of the crowd behavior are the theories that I feel are responsible for the increasing violencein sports. Most people when involved in a highly stressful situation where violence is around

wouldprobably resort to a fight to resolve their differences. In sport, why should we expect any difference.In events such as hockey games, where people are expected to hit and make body contact, sooner or later afight will break out and the fans will yell and scream for their favorite player

involved. Likeanything, if people around us are applauding us for a certain act we have done, we will try to do it overso that we will continue to be praised. In sports, there are some players whose only role on the team isto protect and enforce the unwritten rules of the game such as in hockey

where it is not right to fightor hit a Wayne Gretezy or Mario Lemieux type of star player!. His economic incentive is to protect the team and if he does not, a new line of work might be in thefuture. All three of those theories relate closely to the role of the fighter in sport and why it isthat he

does commit the acts of violence. When leagues such as the National Football League (NFL) or the National Hockey League (NHL) areasked to try and remove the violence from their sport, they are hesitant because it is not what the fanswant. “Bryant and Zillman report that television

viewers enjoy NFL plays more when they are rough andviolent” (McPherson 294). Why should these leagues remove the violence that is occurring if they are making money andkeeping people employed. The fans of the games want to see these situations and eliminating the fightingaspect would hurt the support. When I watch a hockey game or any other sporting event with contact,there is nothing better than seeing a

good fight take place. “One of the best-selling videos in parts ofthe Northeastern United States has been a collection of the best fights in the NHL” (McPherson 294). Even former NHL president Clarence Campbell felt that the violence taking place in his sport wascalled for and was reluctant

to remove the fighting and the body contact because he knew that it is whatthe majority of hockey fans want.Fighting is a well-established safety valve for players. If violence ceases to exist, it will not bethe same game. Insofar as fighting is part of the show, we certainly sell it. We do not

promote it.We tolerate it and we bring it under disciplinary control which we believe satisfies the public (Snyder201). Its better that the violence take place between two willing combatants such as in sports than ina situation involving spousal abuse where the majority of the times the female is

being attacked againsther consent. Allowing people not to be able vent their frustrations through sport in my mind wouldincrease the violence that is happening away from the playing field. It is a known fact that sports doeskeep kids off the street and away from gangs which is why you see so

many athletic and boxing clubs beingrun out of the inner city. It is allowing the youth to take that hostility out on a willing participantwho is ready and consenting rather than against an innocent bystander. Some individuals have gone as far as saying that sport is creating a deviant subculture where these athletes are becoming the opposite of what was intended for them. “The emphasis in formalizedsport on victory may, in fact, promote deviant behavior and poor sportsmanship” (Snyder 101). I would have to totally disagree with the above quote because being an athlete myself, I can never recall a time when I could have related my deviant behavior to my sporting past. Sports does notpromote poor sportsmanship, it creates

a drive to succeed within yourself and to try to do the best atwhatever you do whether it be in sports, school or at a job. The violence that is occurring today is not occurring more than it was ten or twenty years agolike some people might suggest, it is only being shown and talked about more by the mass media. If thereis one group to blame for the increase in violence I feel that it would be the media, not the athletesthemselves. If you turn on the television to watch a sportscast, it will always glorify an act ofviolence like a “hit of the night” or repeats of some type of fight whether it be in hockey, boxing or a bench-clearingbrawl in baseball. I can recall on numerous occasions where the media has hyped up a hockey gameinvolving two “tough guys” and creating a hysteria in sporting world wanting to see the outcome of thefight. Is this wrong for the media to beencouraging and glorifying the violence in sport? I don’tthink so because the fans want to see it and like it or not, it is here to stay. Look at sports

like boxing for example, who relies on the media to increase the sports fansinterest in an upcoming match. When you can only fit approximately “17,000 people” into a Las Vegasboxing arena, the money is not made at the gate (Lunney 39). Millions and millions of dollars aregathered from pay-per- view television where again millions of spectators are waiting to see the outcomeof a match like the one two weeks ago involving Mike Tyson and Frank Bruno where Tyson made an easy “$30 million” Lunney 39). We as society are attracted to this sort of sport violence and there is nothing wecan do about it to change it. Should we take steps to discourage the violence in sports is a question that is being asked todaydue to

the glorification of certain events like University of Moncton-University of Prince Edward Islandhockey game where a referee was assaulted on the ice after disallowing then allowing the same goal. Thiskind of violence occurs very little in the sport of hockey considering the amount of games that

areplayed throughout the year. Sure there are acts like these but they are not the norm. It would be hardto eliminate violence that is in sport because it has been there for so long and is a part of the game.Fans do not want to see it be removed because it is sometimes the only part of the game that is interesting if the game is dull. Players know that a good, solid hit or a bit fight can sometimes putmomentum on their side giving themextra drive to pull ahead in the game. Violence in sport is nothaving a negative effect on society, it is only allowing fans to !enjoy themselves while they are watching a particular sport. Yes there are instances where players andfans do go overboard and get carried away causing fights and sometimes riots, but it is not very often.When it does happen, it is glorified so that people think sports are played by bozos and goons who canonly fight. The violence that is in sport is here to stay and should be left that way so that the realfans who know what is going on can enjoy the sport that they have took an interest in instead of media types and others who do not have a clue in what they are talking about when saying that the violence insports should be eliminated.

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