

# **The Imagined Sporting Nation**

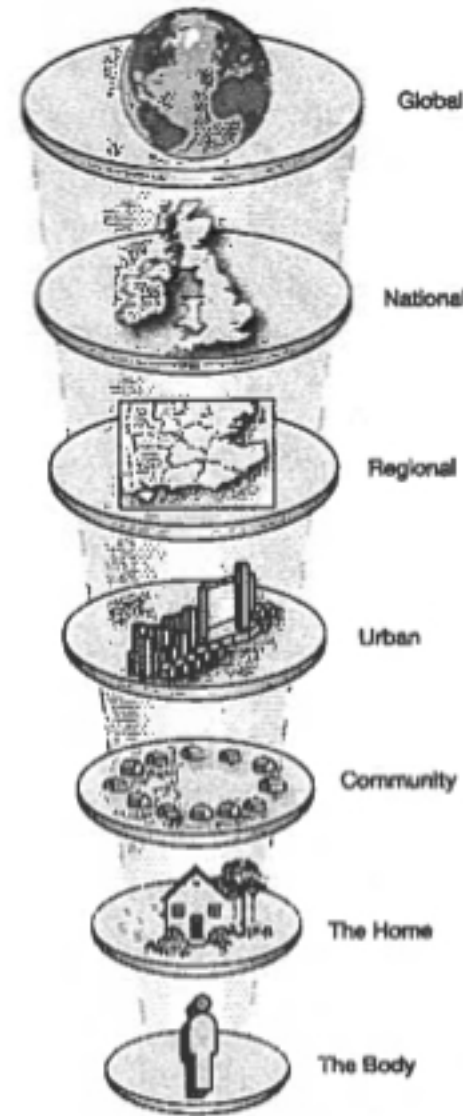
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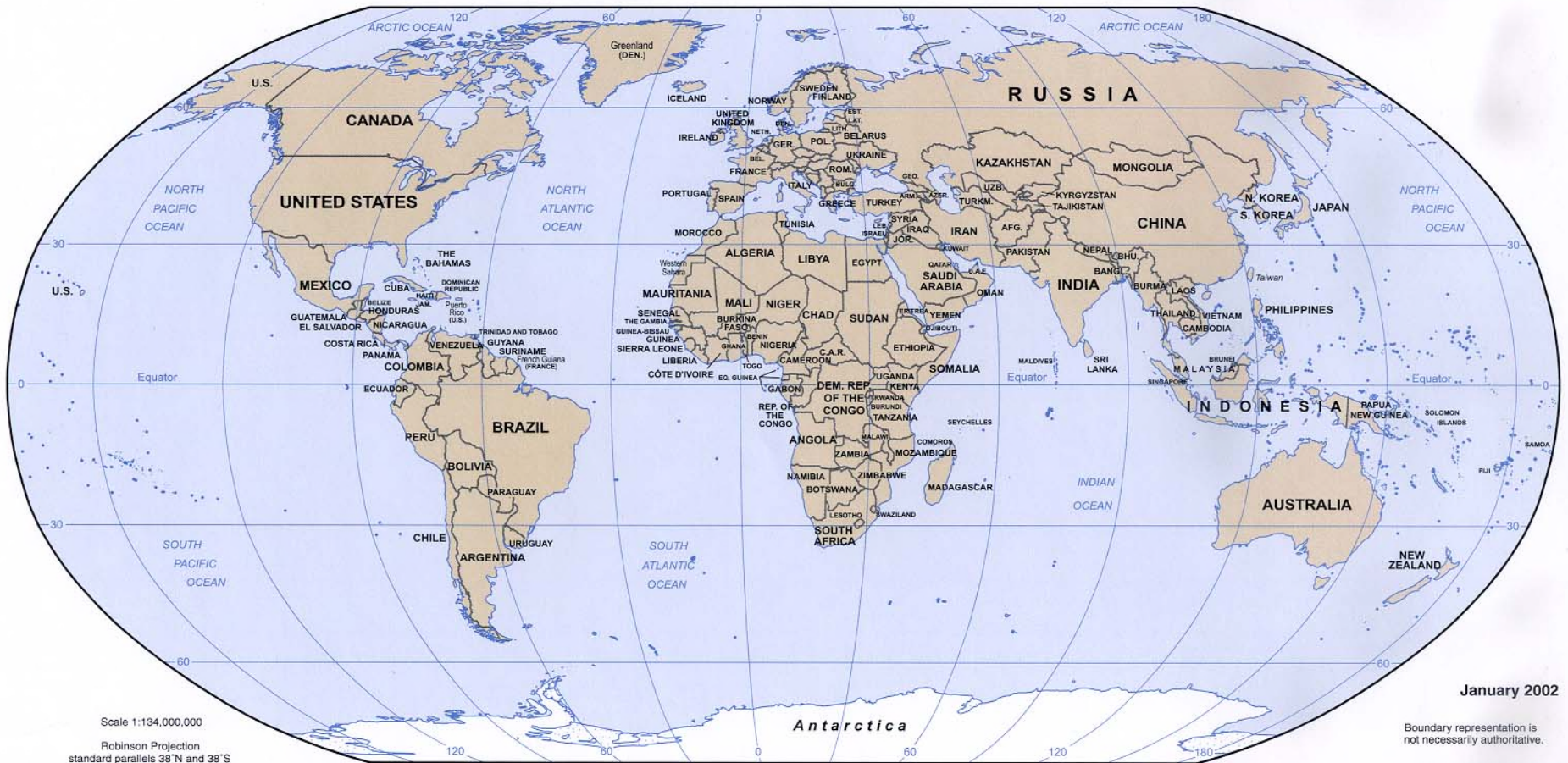


In the previous topics within this module we have focused on **smaller scale sporting collectivities** (subcultures and communities).

This topic takes the analysis to the larger scale **community of the nation**, through an analysis of the relationship between **sport, the nation, national identity, and nationalism.**



# The World of Nations



**The Nation: A key source of modern spatial organization and collective/communal identification.**

Benedict Anderson famously conceptualised the nation as an **imagined community**:



"***imagined*** because members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet **in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.**"

Source: Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (p. 15). London: Verso.



**“in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.”**

**National Identity:**  
**PERCEIVED** Common  
Traditions, Practices,  
Values, Beliefs



**National Communitas:**  
**FEELING** of Collective  
Identification, Unity,  
and Belonging



**Source: Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (p. 15). London: Verso.**

# **Theme 1:**

## **Sport, the Nation, National Identity, and Nationalism**

# The Nation?

The nation is a **multidimensional** concept incorporating a:



- named human population
- a historic territory
- common myths and memories
- a mass, public culture
- a common economy and polity
- common legal rights and duties

Source: Smith, A. D. (1991). National identity (p. 43). London: Penguin.

The industrializing and urbanizing tumult of the nineteenth century, when **national governing elites became instrumental in advancing the nation as the:**

**“political and cultural organizing principle of mass industrial modernity”**

Source: Hedetoft, U. (1999). The nation-state meets the world: National identities in the context of transnationality and cultural globalization. European Journal of Social Theory, 2(1), 71-94.

# The *INVENTION* of Modern Nations



Europe c. 1850

Europe c. 1920



**MASS IMMIGRATION, INDUSTRIALIZATION, URBANIZATION**, all threatened the social, economic, and political **stability** of these **NEW** nations.

Hence, **NATIONAL IDENTITIES** were constructed as a form of collectively bonding (**NATIONAL COMMUNITAS** (collective identification and bonding that **transcends difference and unites/defines** members of the **national community or NATION**)). National identity is a **MANUFACTURED**:

**“cultural formulation, a feeling of belonging, and a shared heritage”**

Source: Hardt, M., & Negri, A. (2000). Empire (p. 336). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.



**NATIONAL TRADITIONS** were “**invented**” during the period 1870-1914, as a means of creating a **UNIFYING** sense of national identity, with which the **NATIONAL POPULACE** could **IDENTIFY**, and through which they could **PERFORM** their **MEMBERSHIP** of the **NATION**.



Source: Hobsbawm, E. (1983). Introduction: Inventing traditions. In E. Hobsbawm & T. Ranger (Eds.), The invention of tradition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

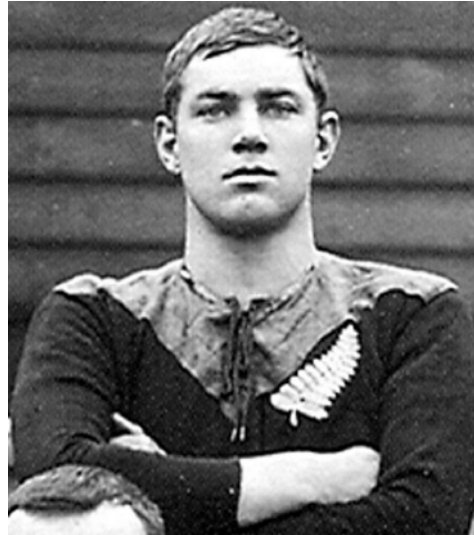


Source: Hobsbawm, E. (1983). Introduction: Inventing traditions. In E. Hobsbawm & T. Ranger (Eds.), The invention of tradition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

# Late 19<sup>th</sup>/Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century **National** Sporting Traditions



France: Cycling



New Zealand: Rugby Union



England: Soccer



Ireland: Gaelic Football

**Source: Hobsbawm, E. (1983). Introduction: Inventing traditions. In E. Hobsbawm & T. Ranger (Eds.), The invention of tradition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.**



**Sport (either spectating or participating)  
is one of the most important “badges of  
membership” of the nation.**



**Source: Hobsbawm, E., & Ranger, T. (Eds.). (1983). *The invention of tradition* (p. 11). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.**



The sporting nation represents a compelling and seductive **agent of cohesive commonality**...



...it is one of the most important sources of the (symbolic) **collective glue** which creates the **imagined community of the nation**.

**According to Hobsbawm, sport is a:**

**“uniquely effective a medium for inculcating national feelings”**



**Source: Hobsbawm, E. J. (1990). Nations and nationalism since 1870: Programme, myth, reality (p. 143). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.**

Indeed, the modern nation has become to be **EMBODIED IN**, and **EXPRESSED THROUGH**, popular sporting practices, events, spectacles, and individuals, with perhaps only the **MILITARY** rivaling its nationalistic significance.



**Athletes, like the military, are the EMBODIED REPRESENTATIVES of the nation, who compete for/fight for their nation in contests/wars for national supremacy.**



## **The “Sport-War Nexus”**



**Source: King, S.J. (2008). Offensive Lines: Sport-State Synergy in an Era of Perpetual War. *Cultural Studies<-->Critical Methodologies*, 8 (4), 527-539.**

**Question:**

**WHY SHOULD SPORT BECOME  
SUCH AN EFFECTIVE AND EMOTIVE  
EXPRESSION OF NATION?**

**Answer:**

**BECAUSE IT BASED AND FOCUSED  
UPON AND THROUGH THE:**

**BODY (it is CORPOREAL)**



**“The individual, even the one who only cheers,  
becomes a symbol of his nation himself”**



**Source: Hobsbawm, E. J. (1990). Nations and nationalism since 1870:  
Programme, myth, reality (p. 143). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.**

# Nationalism?

**[n] love of country and willingness to sacrifice for it**

**[n] the doctrine that your national culture and interests are superior to any other**

**[n] the doctrine that nations should act independently (rather than collectively) to attain their goals**

**[n] the aspiration for national independence felt by people under foreign domination**

# Nationalism as National Pride and Solidarity



**Nationalism is the sense of identification/ belonging expressed toward the nation and other members of the national community.**

Sport is one of the most emotive cultural forms through which we experience and express our **NATIONALISM**:  
**SENSE OF NATION** and **NATIONAL BELONGING**.



Performing/Experiencing the Nation

[See Video Clip 1](#)

**While sporting nationalism is highly emotive, it can POTENTIALLY lead to some negative consequences, particularly in relation to:**

- 1. The positioning of nations and national populations against each other.**
- 2. The creation of ethnic hierarchies and divisions within national populations**



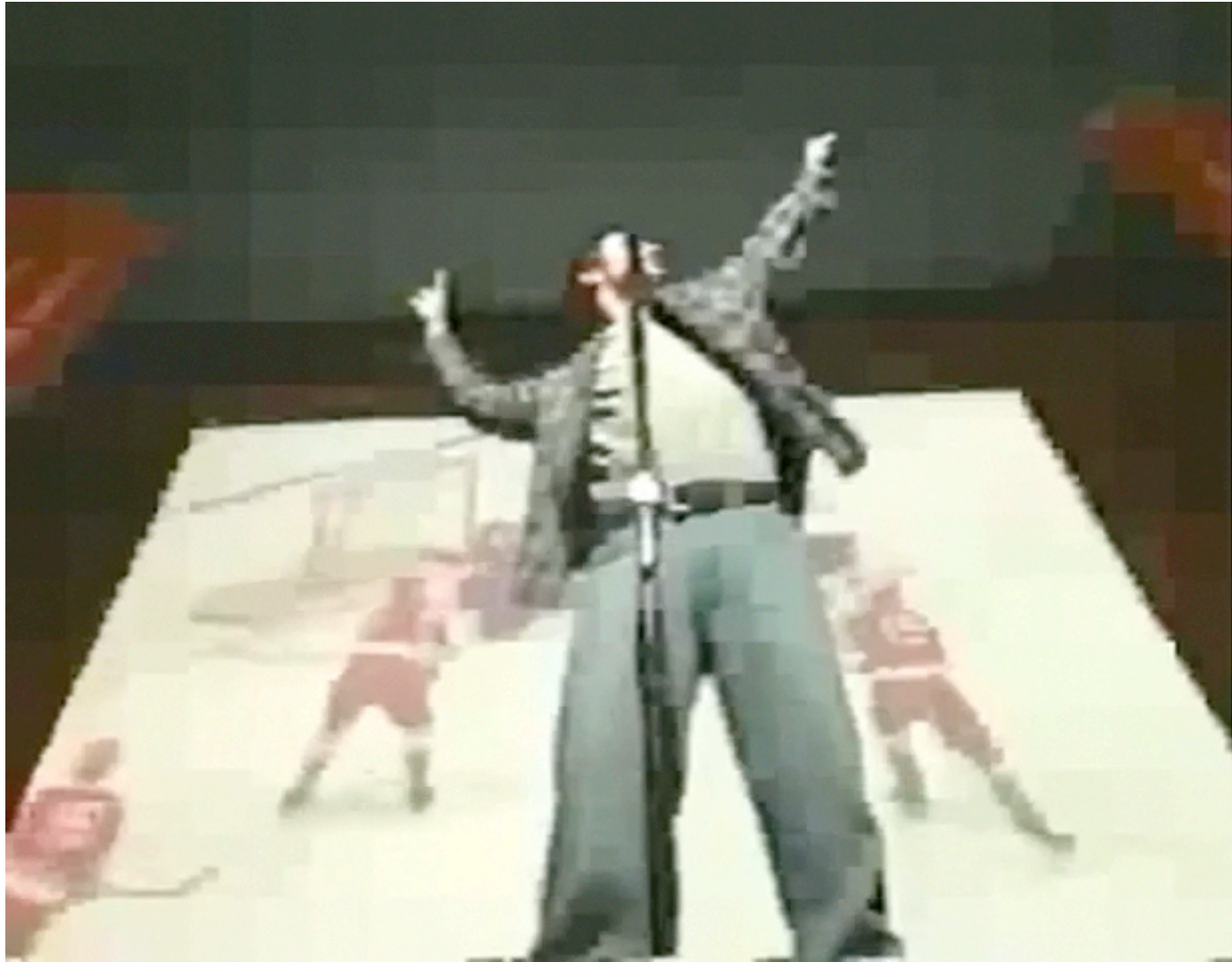
The **PROBLEM** with any form of **NATIONALISM** is that it is rarely **BENIGN**.

Even unintentionally, and even when humorously, it often positions the **HOME NATION** as being **SUPERIOR** to others.



The 49<sup>th</sup> Parallel and  
National Identity  
Formation

# I am Canadian [Not American]



See Video Clip 2

As novelist George Orwell (author of 1984 etc.), noted:

**“At the international level sport is frankly mimic warfare...it is war minus the shooting”**



Source: Orwell, G. (1945, December 14) ‘The Sporting Spirit’, *Tribune*, 10.

Many sporting nationalisms are also based on an **ETHNIC HIERARCHY** that positions a specific ethnic grouping at the **NORMATIVE CENTER** of the national culture/nation.

In other words, a single ethnic grouping is oftentimes identified as the most **AUTHENTIC** and **LEGITIMATE** members of the **NATION**.



**NATIONALISMS** are often based on a form of **ETHNIC ABSOLUTISM** which often **MARGINALISES** large sections of the **NATIONAL POPULACE**.



## **Ethnic Nationalism**

An understanding based on the “natural” origins of the nation being based upon definite characteristics:

-Ethnic/racial

-Language

-Cultural

An ethnically/racially **EXCLUSIVE** form of nationalism and national belonging.



# Sport and Xenophobic/Ethnic Exclusionary Nationalism (Outward and Inward Looking)



[See Video Clip 3](#)

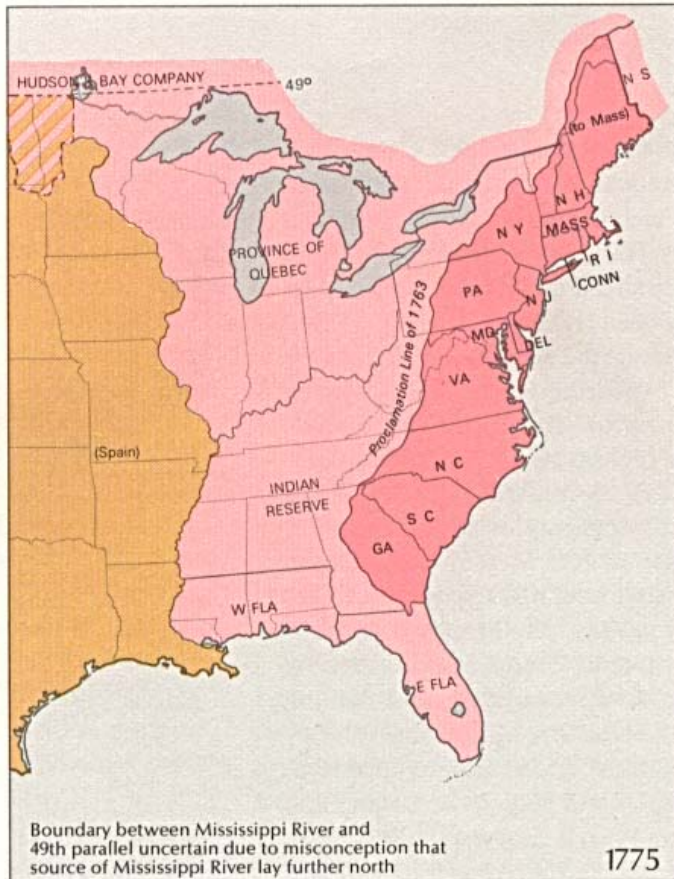
**“the intrusion of ethnic elements and sentiments of collective belonging into the life of the nation inevitably breeds exclusiveness and intolerance, and that ethnic closure is the chief bases of many of the current national conflicts that afflict the world.”**

Smith, A.D. (1995). *Nations and nationalism in the global era* (p. 100). Cambridge: Polity Press.

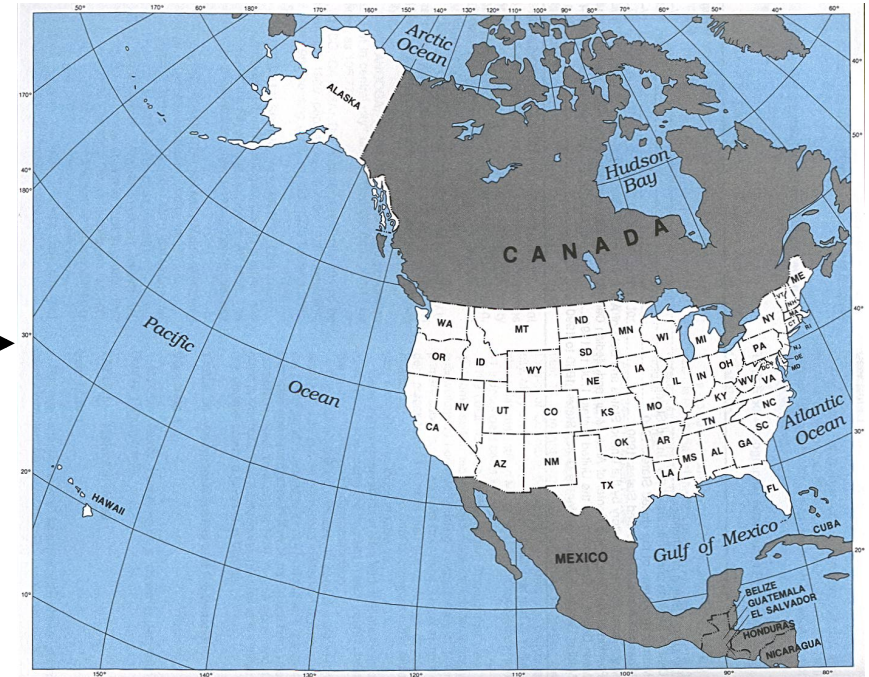
# **Theme 2:**

## **The American Sporting Landscape**

# From Colony to Independent Nation



**Colonial America, 1775**



**United States of America, 2013**

**The Invention/Creation of the American Nation/National Identity**

**MASS IMMIGRATION, INDUSTRIALIZATION, URBANIZATION, all threatened the social, economic, and political **stability** of the **rapidly developing American nation.****

**Hence, **American national identity** was constructed as a collectively bonding:**

**“cultural formulation, a feeling of belonging, and a shared heritage”**

Source: Hardt, M., & Negri, A. (2000). Empire (p. 336). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.





**Source:** Hobsbawm, E. (1983). Introduction: Inventing traditions. In E. Hobsbawm & T. Ranger (Eds.), The invention of tradition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

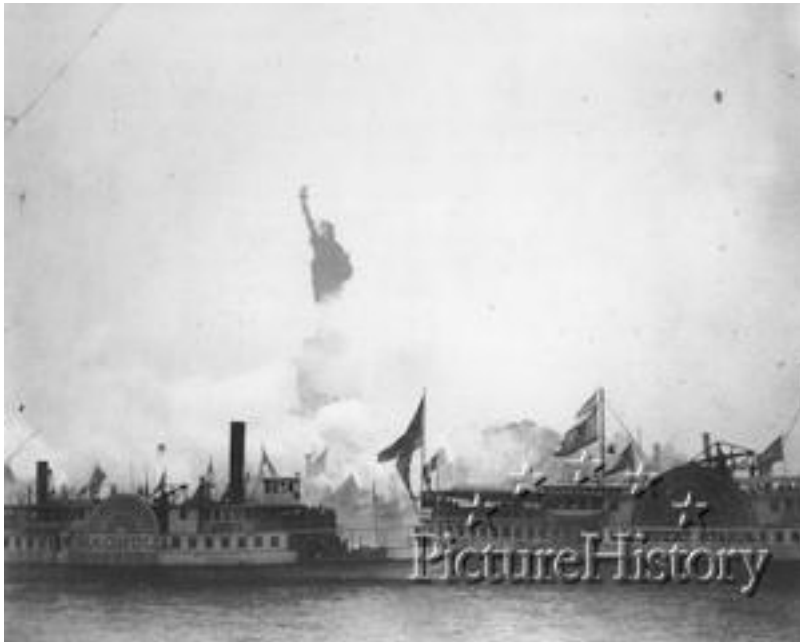
## COMMUNITAS: Collective [NATIONAL] Identification and Belonging

**“*communitas*—a special experience during which individuals are able to rise above those structures that materially and normatively regulate their daily lives and that unite people across the boundaries of structure, rank, and socioeconomic status.”**

(Ingham & McDonald, 2003, p. 26)



Source: Ingham, A. G., & McDonald, M. G. (2003). Sport and community/Communitas. In R. C. Wilcox, D. L. Andrews, R. Pitter & R. L. Irwin (Eds.), *Sporting dystopias: The making and meanings of urban sport cultures* (pp. 17-34). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.



**Inauguration of Statue of Liberty, 1887**



**Children in patriotic costumes, 1900**



**Abner Doubleday  
(1819-1893)**

# Creating the American Sense of Identity and Belonging: **National Communitas**



**Woodrow and Edith Wilson at baseball  
game, 1915**



**Cowboy, 1895**

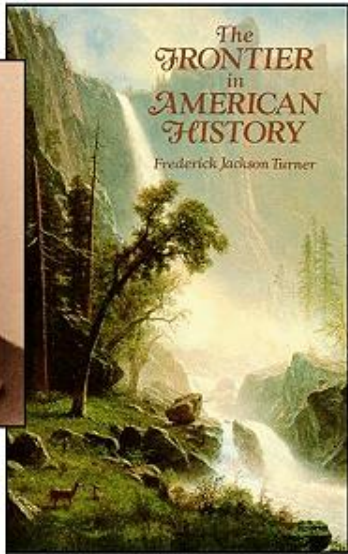
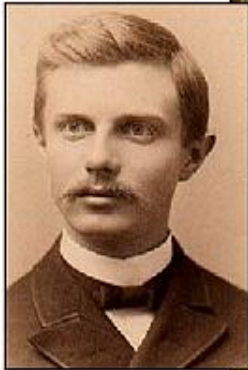
# American **EXCEPTIONALISM**

Historically speaking, American **NATIONAL IDENTITY** has been based on understandings of the nation's **UNIQUENESS** and **DIFFERENCE** from others, particularly those in **EUROPE**.

This philosophy was partly based on a “frontier mentality”, which believed that the untamed American frontier generated **a young, rugged, creative, and dynamic society** that was qualitatively **DIFFERENT** from established European societies, weighed down by monarchies, aristocracies, powerful churches, and professional armies.



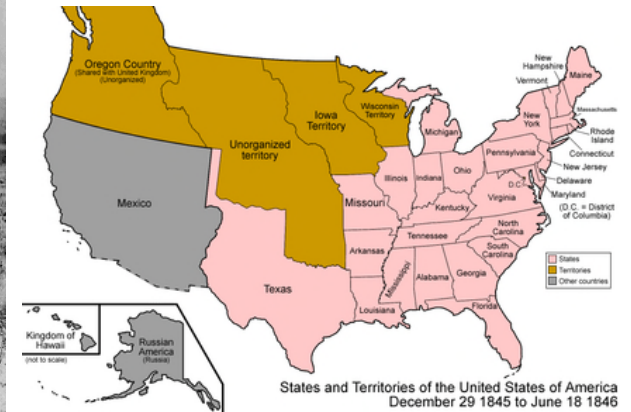
# The Importance of Frontier ideology to the American Psyche



Frederick Jackson Turner  
"Frontier Thesis"



Homesteaders, 1866



The American Frontier c. 1845



Cowboy, 1888



Wagon Train



President Theodore Roosevelt, 1902

The understanding of America as an **EXCEPTIONAL** nation: **A young, rugged, creative, and dynamic society.**



## The Closing of the American Frontier, Frontier Anxiety, and Sport

With the closing of the American frontier in the 1890s, many Americans (most notably Theodore Roosevelt) became anxious that America would lose the source of its **EXCEPTIONALISM**, and hence looked for new frontiers to conquer.

According to Frederic Paxson in 1917, sport/athletic contests were:

“a fitting **substitute for the old frontier** and promised ‘honest sport’ would produce ‘a **new Americanism** for a new century’”

Source: Dyreson, Mark. (2005). Prologue: The paradoxes of American insularity, exceptionalism and imperialism. *The international Journal of the history of sport*, 22(6), 938-945.

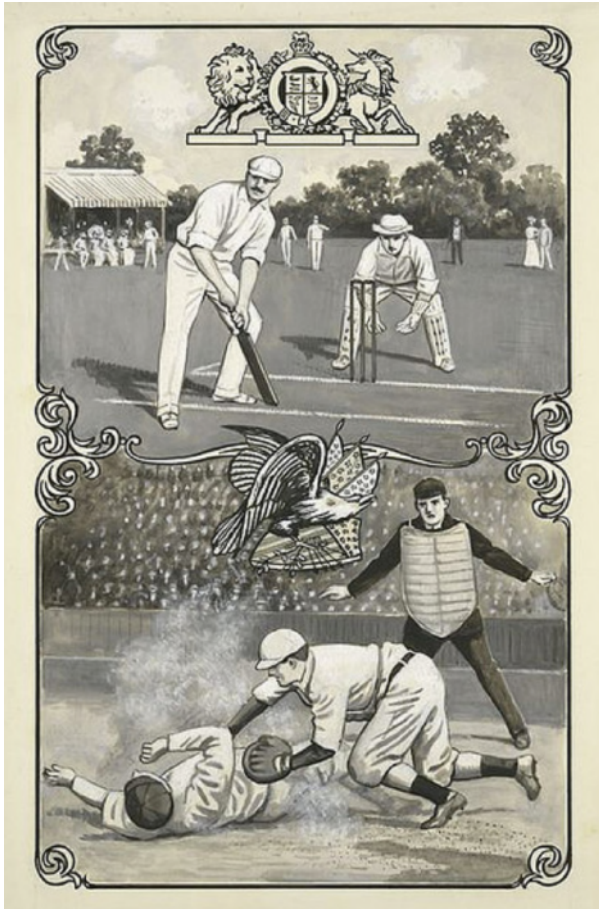
**American sporting exceptionalism developed as a means of NATIONAL differentiation (from European sport models) around:**

**“the home-grown national trinity of American football, baseball and basketball”**

**(Dyreson, 2005, p. 941)**

**Source: Dyreson, Mark. (2005). Prologue: The paradoxes of American insularity, exceptionalism and imperialism. *The international Journal of the history of sport*, 22(6), 938-945.**

# The INVENTION of American SPORTING EXCEPTIONALISM



**BASEBALL:** American myth of origin story (Doubleday) positioned it as an American alternative to CRICKET, when in actuality it developed over time from cricket and other English bat and ball games.



**FOOTBALL:** Directly descended from RUGBY FOOTBALL, the AMERICANNES resulted from rule changes in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century which differentiated it from its rugby roots.



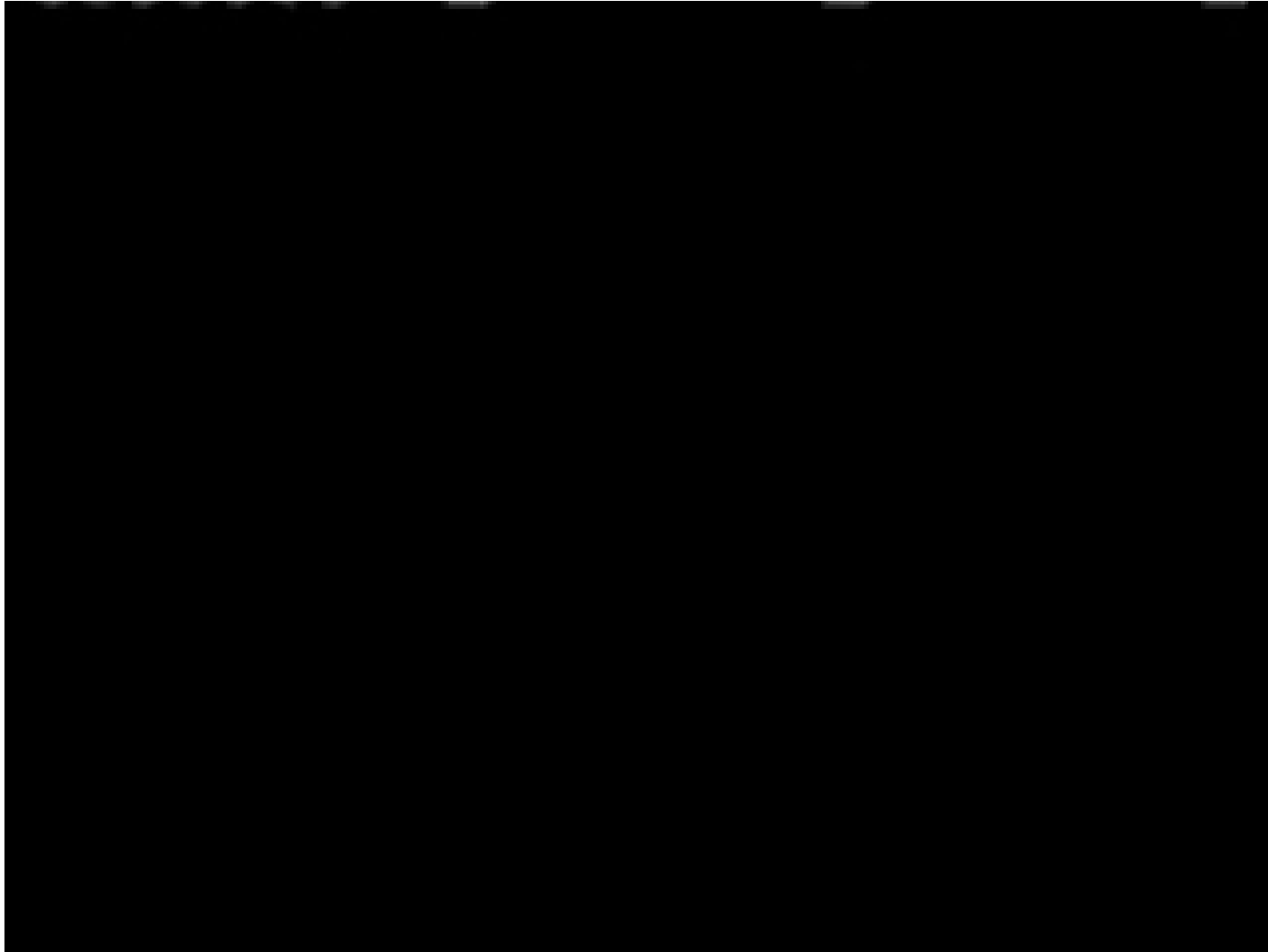
**BASKETBALL:** Despite being invented by a Canadian, this was arguably the most AMERICAN of the sports, in terms of its origins. Developed as a response to the needs for male indoor (Winter) physical activity.

## **SPORT: “uniquely effective a medium for inculcating national feelings”**



**Source: Hobsbawm, E. J. (1990). Nations and nationalism since 1870: Programme, myth, reality (p. 143). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.**

# **“Baseball, Hot Dogs, Apple Pie, and Chevrolet”**



**See Video Clip 4**



# Sport as METONYM for American Society



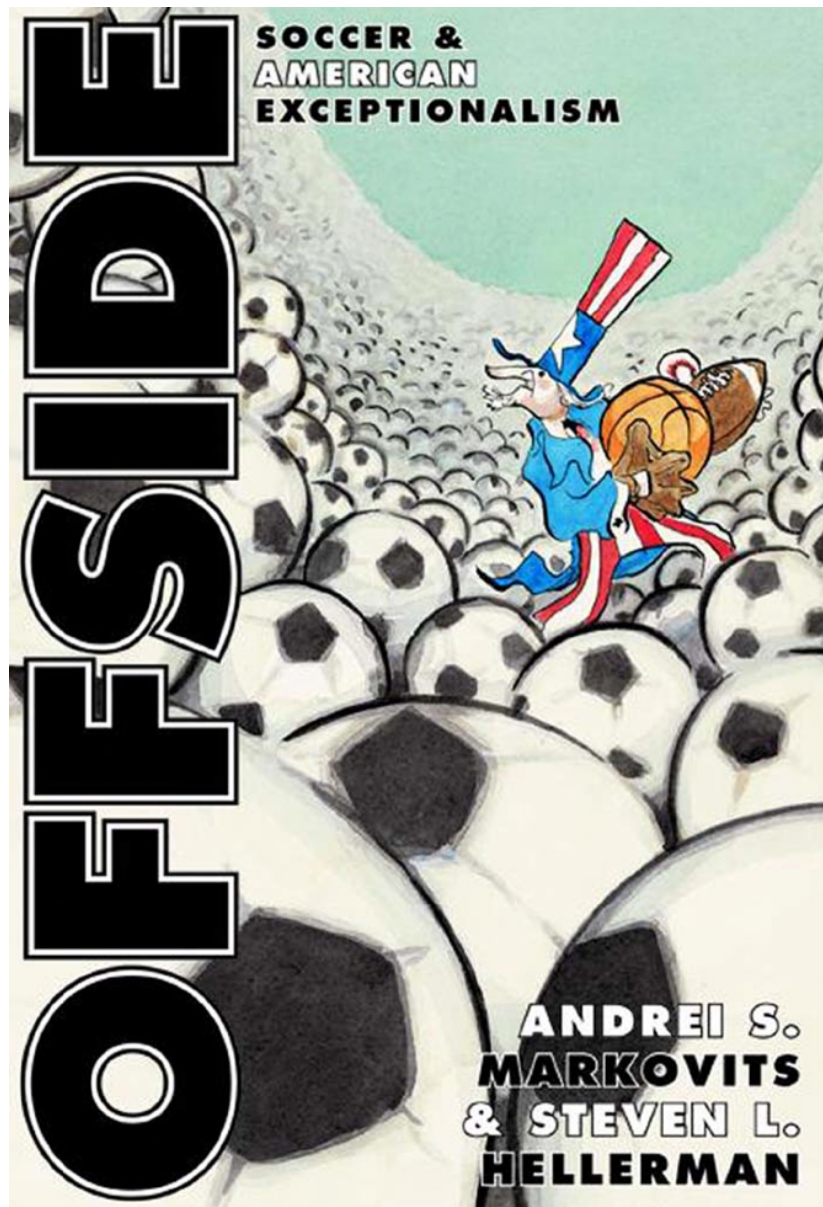
**Metonym: Something that stands in place for/ comes to represent something else.**

## “How Football Explains America”



**The Frontier Thesis Lives On...**

[See Video Clip 5](#)

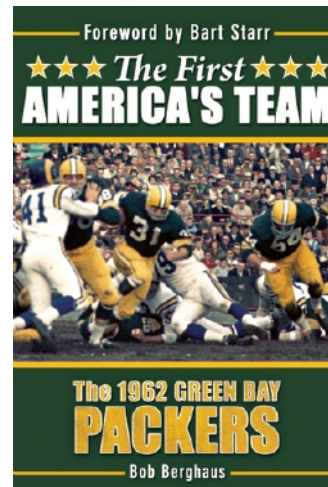
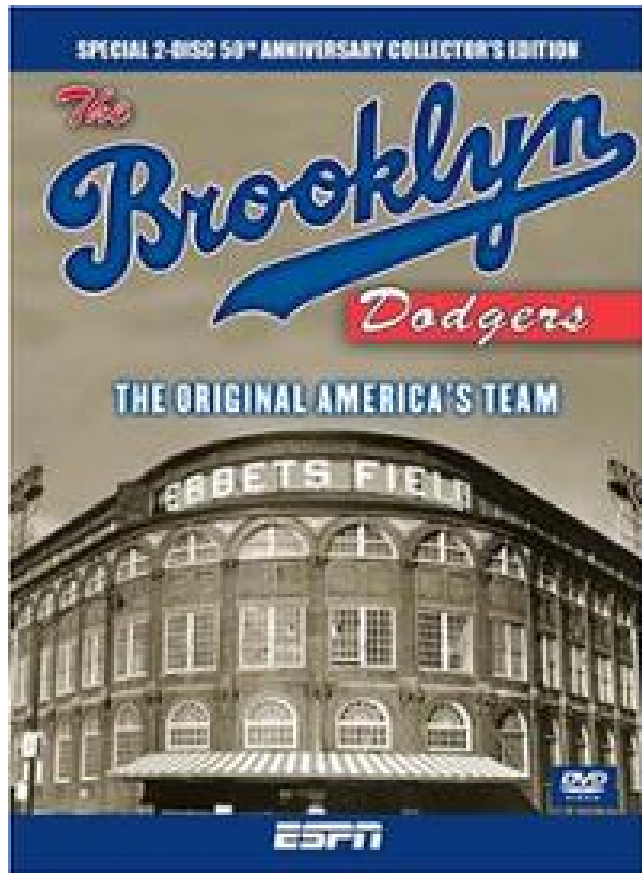


Part of the reason for “soccer’s” failure to can be explained by its evident foreign/international identity, which distinguished it from the AMERICAN SPORTING EXCEPTIONALISM of baseball, football, and basketball..

Source: Markovits, A.S., & Hellerman, S.L. (2001). *Offside: Soccer and American exceptionalism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.



**“The imagined community of millions seems more real as a team of eleven named people”**



## **Performing American Sporting Exceptionalism I: Playing**

**Source: Hobsbawm, E. J. (1990). Nations and nationalism since 1870: Programme, myth, reality (p. 143). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.**

**“The individual, even the one who only cheers, becomes a symbol of his nation himself”**



## **Performing American Sporting Exceptionalism II: Spectating**

**Source: Hobsbawm, E. J. (1990). Nations and nationalism since 1870: Programme, myth, reality (p. 143). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.**



# American **SPORTING** **INSULARITY**

The structure of American sport leads to a form of **SPORTING INSULARITY**, in as much as the globally elite forms of the sporting “holy trinity” are all based in the U.S.

Hence, there has been a tendency to focus on these “American” sports to the exclusion of others.

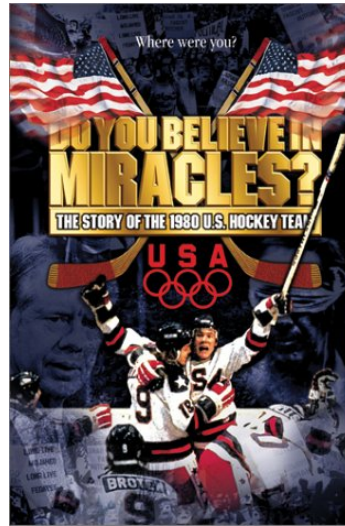
Source: Dyreson, Mark. (2005). Prologue: The paradoxes of American insularity, exceptionalism and imperialism. *The international Journal of the history of sport*, 22(6), 938-945.

This sporting **INSULARITY** has meant that, despite being a regular participant within international sporting competition...

...only infrequently have American sporting teams captured the imagination of the American sporting public, and become sites for the expression of a:

**FERVENT SPORTING  
NATIONALISM**

**“The imagined community of millions seems more real as a team of eleven named people”**



**Source: Hobsbawm, E. J. (1990). Nations and nationalism since 1870: Programme, myth, reality (p. 143). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.**



**“The individual, even the one who only cheers, becomes a symbol of his nation himself”**



## **Performing the American (Sporting) Nation**

**Source: Hobsbawm, E. J. (1990). Nations and nationalism since 1870: Programme, myth, reality (p. 143). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.**



# The Women's US Soccer Team





# The Women's US Soccer Team



[See Video Clip 6](#)

# **Theme 3:**

## **The Contextuality of Sporting Nationalism**

**Specific sports are vehicles for expressing AMERICAN NATIONAL IDENTITY, and thereby helping constitute the very sense of communal belonging (COMMUNITAS) of the NATION.**

**In other words, in different ways and to different intensities, they EMBODY what it is to “be” American.**



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Nevertheless, sport plays **ANOTHER** important role in the **CONSTITUTION** of the **NATION** and **NATIONAL IDENTITY**.

Popular **SPORT SPECTACLES** provide the high profile sites for the **RITUALISTIC DISPLAY/ PERFORMANCE** of the current forms of **AMERICAN NATIONALISM**.

**SPORT SPECTACLES** are thus important agents of **NATIONAL PEDAGOGY**: they are sites at which the population are **PRESENTED** with, and **LEARN**, what it is to “**BE**” American.

# **The National Politics of SPORT SPECTACLES**

**Unavoidably, the manner in which SPORT SPECTACLES are structured/delivered is related to the contemporary CONTEXT.**

**Sport spectacles are both RITUALISTIC products, and producers, of POPULAR ways of thinking about America at any given moment.**

**They are both POLITICAL and COMMERCIAL entities in actively looking to address/resonate with MAINSTREAM VIEWS and VALUES.**



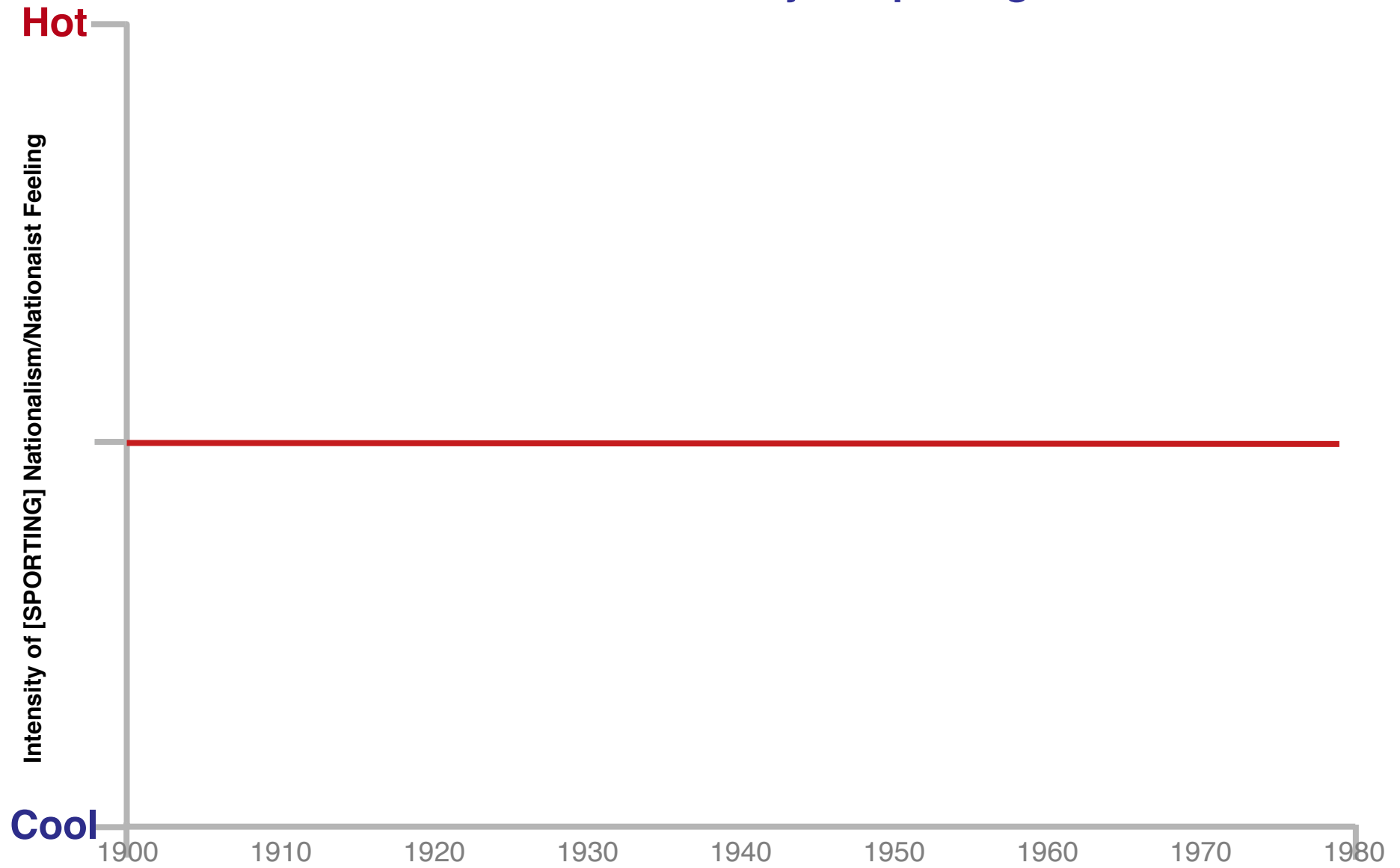


# THE MONUMENTAL SPORT SPECTACLE

(a high profile, mass interest,  
commercially oriented sporting event)

Source: Debord, G. (1994 [1967]). *The society of the spectacle* (D. Nicholson-Smith, Trans.). New York: Zone Books.

## The Consistency of Sporting Nationalism?





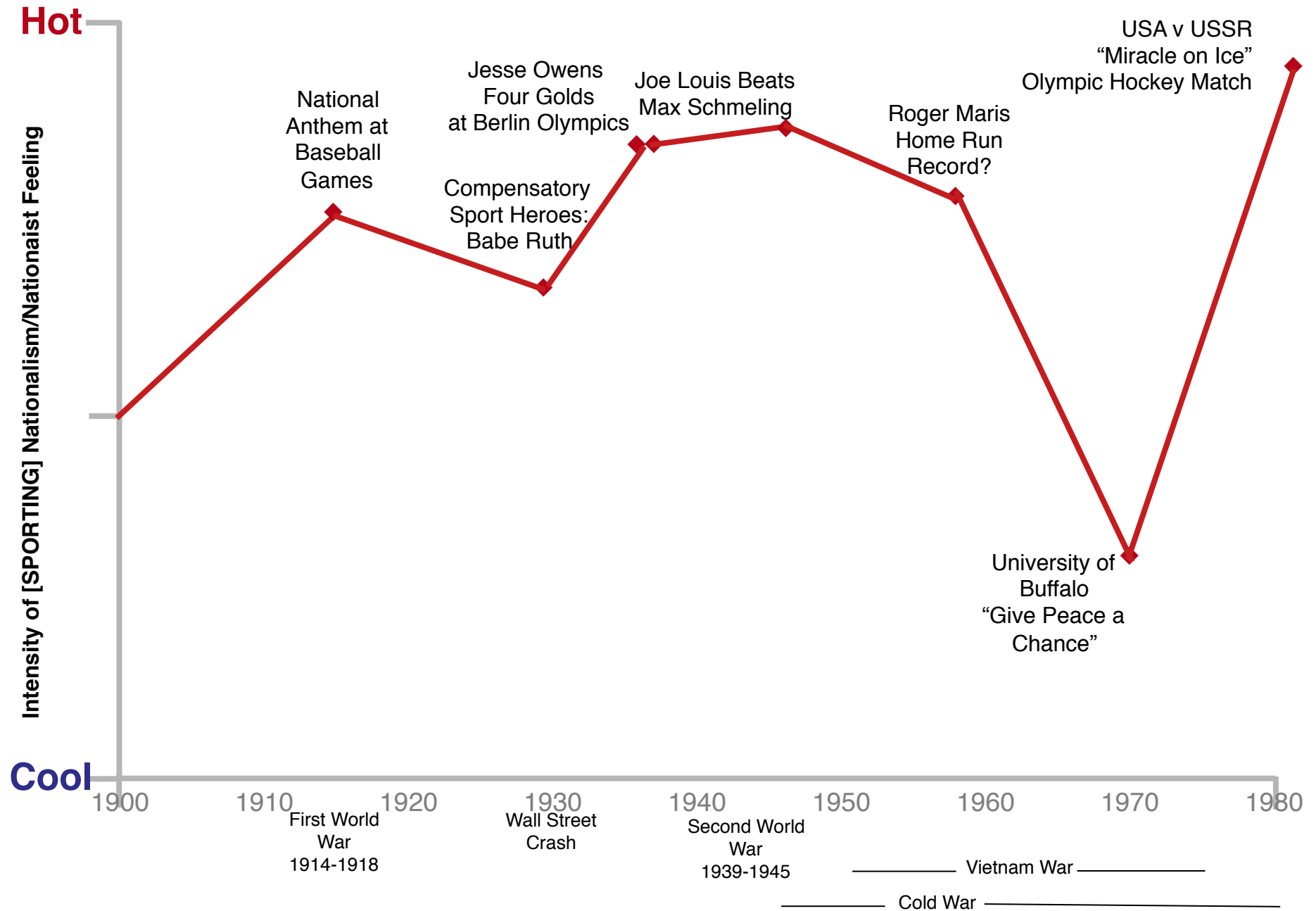
**Hot Nationalism:** the intensified, extreme, or overt forms of nationalism which often occur during times of real/perceived national crisis/threat/attack.

**Banal Nationalism:** The routine, everyday, and often unacknowledged expressions and performances of nationalism which punctuate all aspects of our lives.

**Cool Nationalism:** the expressions of indifference and/or hostility toward the nation, and an reluctance to acknowledge it as a source of identity

Source: Billig, M. (1995). *Banal Nationalism*. London: Sage.

# The Consistency of Sporting Nationalism?



# Sport and Cool American Nationalism

**Cool Nationalism:** the expressions of indifference and/or hostility toward the nation, and an reluctance to acknowledge it as a source of identity



# Early 1970s Anti-War Politics/Movement



**U.S. National Community Divided by Involvement in Military Conflict**

## Sport in the Immediate Post-Kent State Shootings Moment



Following the shootings, the NCAA met with ABC and implored the broadcaster not to show any acts or expressions of student activism at sporting events.

The NCAA did not want their events to be used as a vehicle for political opposition.



**The suppression of the oppositional political spectacle?**

May 4, 1970: Anti-War students protesting against the Nixon Administration's Cambodia/Vietnam Campaigns. **The National Guard opened fire killing 4, wounding 9.**



# The Contextuality of Sporting Nationalisms/Nationalist Politics



Peace Sign



MLK

**October 31, 1970**  
**University of Buffalo Football:**  
**“Thunder of the East Marching Band”**

**A half-time show titled “Give Peace a Chance” was planned by the marching band to highlight the issues and concerns of the era:**

- 1. Opposition to the Vietnam War**
- 2. Support for the peace movement in general**
- 3. U.S. race relations and the death of Martin Luther King**
- 4. Concerns for the environment**

**The broadcaster ABC decided to turn its cameras to traffic, trees, and clouds in order to avoid any controversy.**

**Source: Hollander, S. (2013, April 8). 1970 Buffalo Football. <http://digital.lib.buffalo.edu/news/2013/04/08/1970-buffalo-football/>**

# Sport and **Hot** American Nationalism

**Hot Nationalism:** the intensified, extreme, or overt forms of nationalism which often occur during times of immediate national crisis/threat/attack.



# Sites of **Hot** Sporting Nationalisms



1980 Olympic “Miracle on Ice”:  
USA v USSR



1996 Olympic Bombing:  
Atlanta Centennial Park

# **Theme 4:**

## **Sport, Nationalism, and the 9/11 Moment**

## **SPONTANEOUS COMMUNITAS:**

Spontaneous and short-lived experiences of collective unity, oftentimes prompted by unexpected events (i.e. 9/11).

## **MANUFACTURED COMMUNITAS:**

The attempt to perpetuate the feelings and relations of spontaneous communitas, usually motivated by political/ideological aims.

Source: Turner, V. (1969). The ritual process: Structure and anti-structure. Chicago: Aldine.

# 9/11 and Transformations in American Society

“The decade after the 9/11 attacks reshaped many facets of life in America. Some changes were **temporary** -- an immediate response out of concern for our safety -- while some proved to be more **lasting** transformations in American life.”

Source: Villemez, J., & Mortada, D. (2011, September 14). 9/11 to Now: Ways We Have Changed. PBS Newshour.

**The New York Times** Late Edition  
New York, Friday, Sept. 14, 2001  
Page 1 of 2  
Section 1: U.S. Attacks  
Section 2: Hijacked Jets Destroy Twin Towers and Hit Pentagon in Day of Terror  
Section 3: President Vows to Exact Punishment for 'Evil'

## U.S. ATTACKED

### HIJACKED JETS DESTROY TWIN TOWERS AND HIT PENTAGON IN DAY OF TERROR

**A CREEPING HORROR**  
Buildings Burn and Fall as Onlookers Search for Elusive Safety

**By N. K. SENESE**  
It has become a scene of horror, a scene of unimaginable destruction. The World Trade Center towers, the twin towers of New York City, were hit by two hijacked jets. The towers are now in flames, and the smoke is billowing out of the top. The towers are now in flames, and the smoke is billowing out of the top. The towers are now in flames, and the smoke is billowing out of the top.

**President Vows to Exact Punishment for 'Evil'**  
By MICHAEL SCHWARTZ  
President Bush today vowed to exact punishment for the "evil" that struck the United States on Friday. He said the United States would not be intimidated by the attack and would continue to fight for freedom and justice.

**Awaiting the Aftermath**  
Washington and Nation Plunge Into Fight With Enemy Hard to Identify and Punish

**By N. K. SENESE**  
A sense of equilibrium, with warplanes and missiles soaring overhead, was shattered by the attack. The towers are now in flames, and the smoke is billowing out of the top. The towers are now in flames, and the smoke is billowing out of the top. The towers are now in flames, and the smoke is billowing out of the top.

**AMERICAN TOWERS**  
A full of fire exploded outward after the second of two jets struck the World Trade Center. The towers are now in flames, and the smoke is billowing out of the top. The towers are now in flames, and the smoke is billowing out of the top. The towers are now in flames, and the smoke is billowing out of the top.

**RESCUE EFFORTS**  
Rescue workers are racing to the scene of the attack. The towers are now in flames, and the smoke is billowing out of the top. The towers are now in flames, and the smoke is billowing out of the top. The towers are now in flames, and the smoke is billowing out of the top.

**OFFICIALS SEARCH FOR SUSPECTS**  
Officials are searching for the hijackers. The towers are now in flames, and the smoke is billowing out of the top. The towers are now in flames, and the smoke is billowing out of the top. The towers are now in flames, and the smoke is billowing out of the top.

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**In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, three sporting spectacles played an important role in capturing and communicating the national sentiment:**

- 1. The resumption of NFL regular season games (September 23, 2001)**
- 2. The Ceremonial First Pitch of the 2001 World Series Game 3 (October 30, 2001)**
- 3. The 2002 Super Bowl (February 3, 2002)**
- 4. The opening ceremony of the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympics (February 8, 2002)**

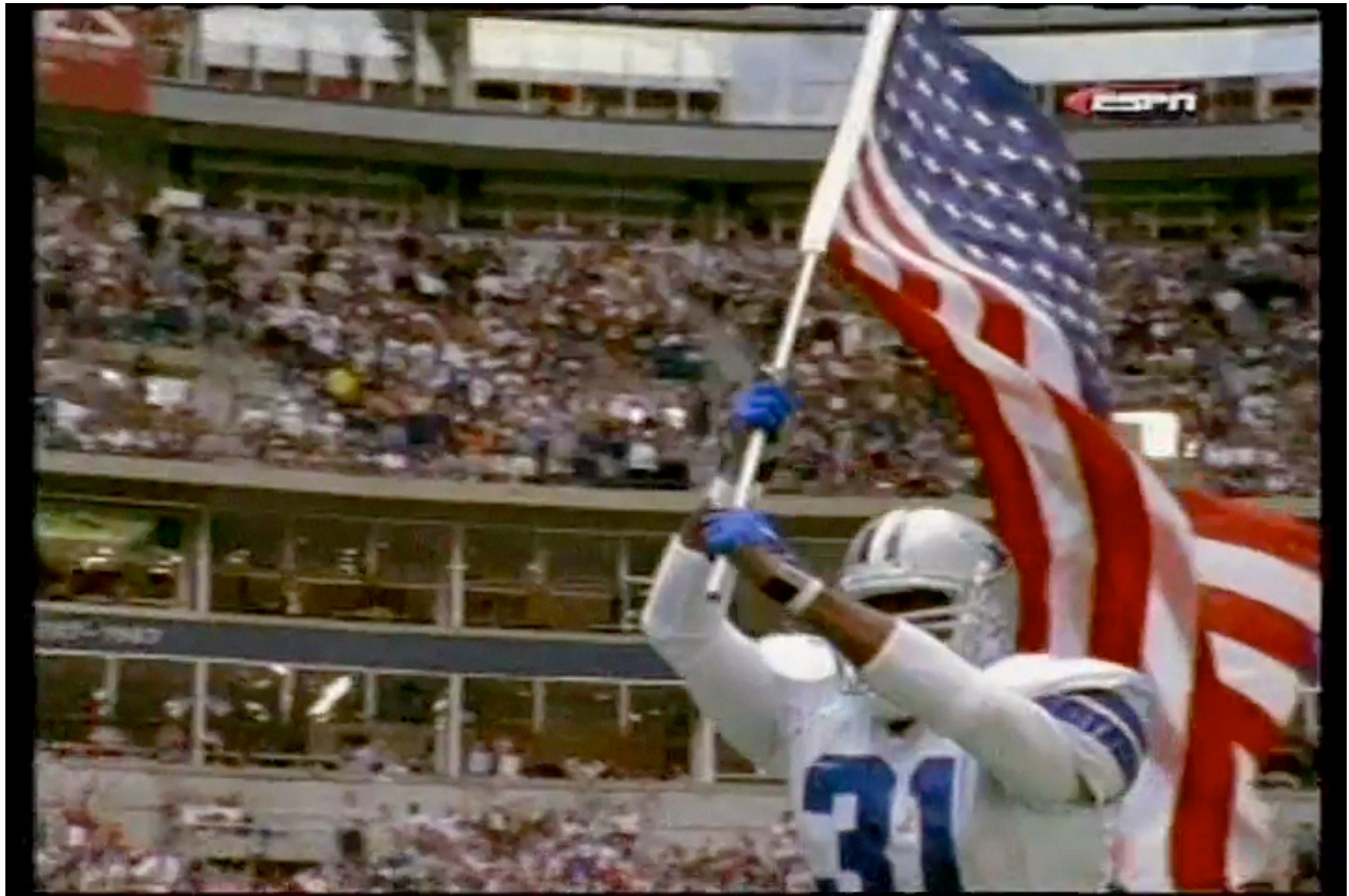


## 9/11 and the NFL Spectacle



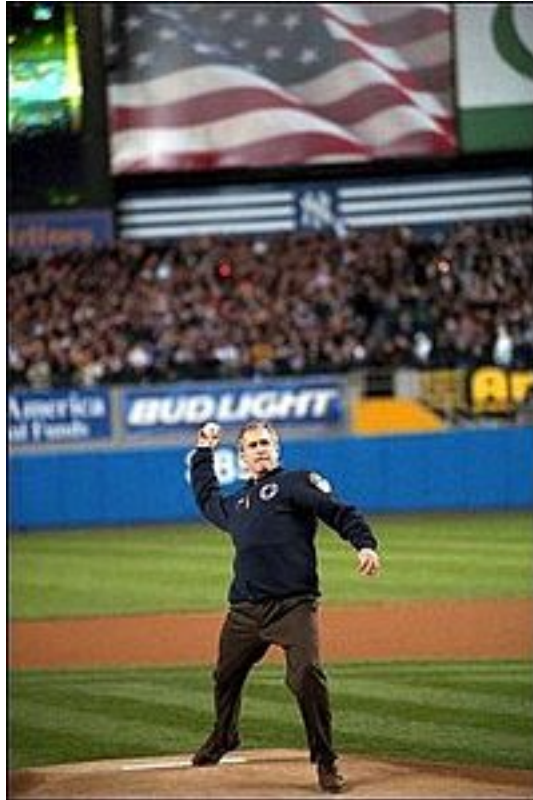
**SPONTANEOUS NATIONAL COMMUNITAS:**  
National mourning, remembrance, and recovery



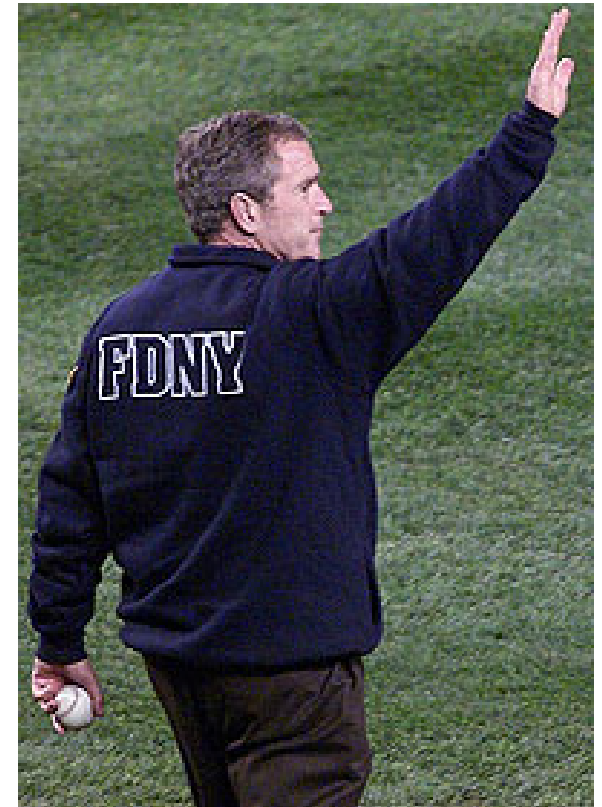


[See Video Clip 7](#)

**MANUFACTURED COMMUNITAS:** Game 3, 2001 World Series, Yankee Stadium  
October 30



U.S. flag recovered from Ground Zero



**“To see the commander in chief say, 'I'm not vulnerable. I'll stand right here on the mound at Yankee Stadium and nobody can bring harm to our country.' That's what that appearance represented. It had tremendous impact.” (Ari Fleischer, White House press secretary)**

**Source: Bodley, H. (2011, September 6). President's first pitch provided healing image. *MLB.com***

# The Presidential Pitch

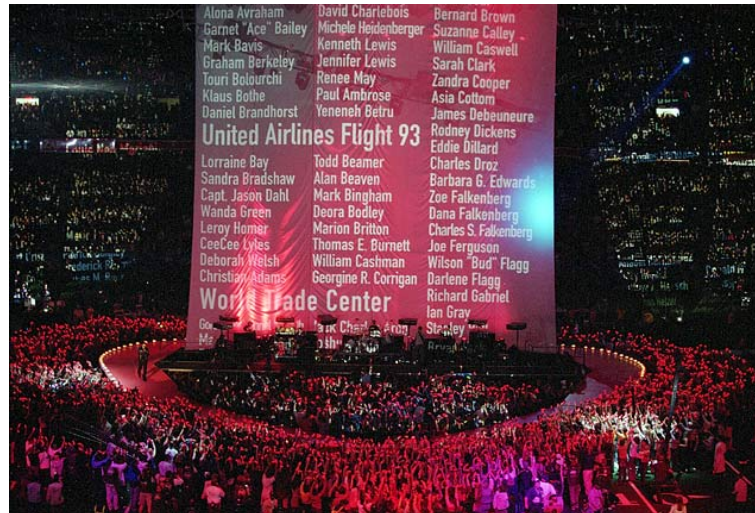


[See Video Clip 8](#)



# Super Bowl 2002: 9/11 Nationalism

## February 3, 2002, New Orleans



**MANUFACTURING NATIONAL COMMUNITAS:**  
National mourning, remembrance, and militarism.



# Salt Lake City 2002: 9/11 Nationalism



Video Clip 9

# The Nationalized Olympic Spectacle



Blessing America



Political Friends... (UK)



Military Embodiments of Nation



Cold War Heroes Revisited  
(1980 hockey heroes)



...and Foes (Iran)



Sanctified National Symbols  
(flag recovered from Ground Zero)

**MANUFACTURING NATIONAL COMMUNITAS:**  
National mourning, remembrance, and militarism.



Such expressions of American Nationalism undoubtedly assisted in the process of **NATIONAL EMOTIONAL/PSYCHIC RECOVERY**, as people sought **COLLECTIVE** strength in coming to terms with America's newly perceived **VULNERABILITY**.



**MLB's Symbolic Resiliency**

Much of the political discourse that framed 9/11 did so in a manner which keyed on American **EXCEPTIONALISM** in relation to **FREEDOM**. As President George Bush noted:

““In every generation, the world has produced **enemies of human freedom**. They have attacked America, because we are **freedom's home and defender**.”

(McCartney, 2004, p. 408)

Source: McCartney, P.T. (2004). American Nationalism and U.S. Foreign Policy from September 11 to the Iraq War. *Political Science Quarterly*, 119(3), 399-423.

# These 9/11 Sport Spectacles IMAGINED the NATION as a HARMONIOUS and UNITED WHOLE:

**“The spectacle appears at once as society  
itself, as a **part of society** and as a **means of  
unification.**” (Debord, 1994, p. 12)**

Source: Debord, G. (1994 [1967]). *The society of the spectacle* (D. Nicholson-Smith, Trans.). New York: Zone Books.



Through these **MANUFACTURED (and MILITARIZED) SPORT SPECTACLES**, the nation is **(re)imagined as the stricken home and (global) defender of freedom.**

This framing justified the U.S.'s heightened **security and military policies** at home and abroad.

- 1. Military Incursions in Afghanistan and Iraq**
- 2. USA Patriot Act (2001) extended intelligence gathering, and strengthened immigrant detainment and deportation**

**However, let us not forget that we live in a capitalist consumer culture, and oftentimes national symbols are used within advertising and promotional campaigns as a form of:**

**COMMERCIAL  
NATIONALISM**





**MANUFACTURING NATIONAL COMMUNITAS:** [See Video Clip 10](#)

**Commercialized National mourning and remembrance**

**“Many would probably conclude that using the flag to sell diapers is over the top, but all kinds of products are being sold with 9/11 visual symbolism tie-ins—most with an American flag motif.”**



**Source: Lester, P.M., Dente, S. (2003) *Images that injure: pictorial stereotypes in the media*. Greenwood Publishing Group.**



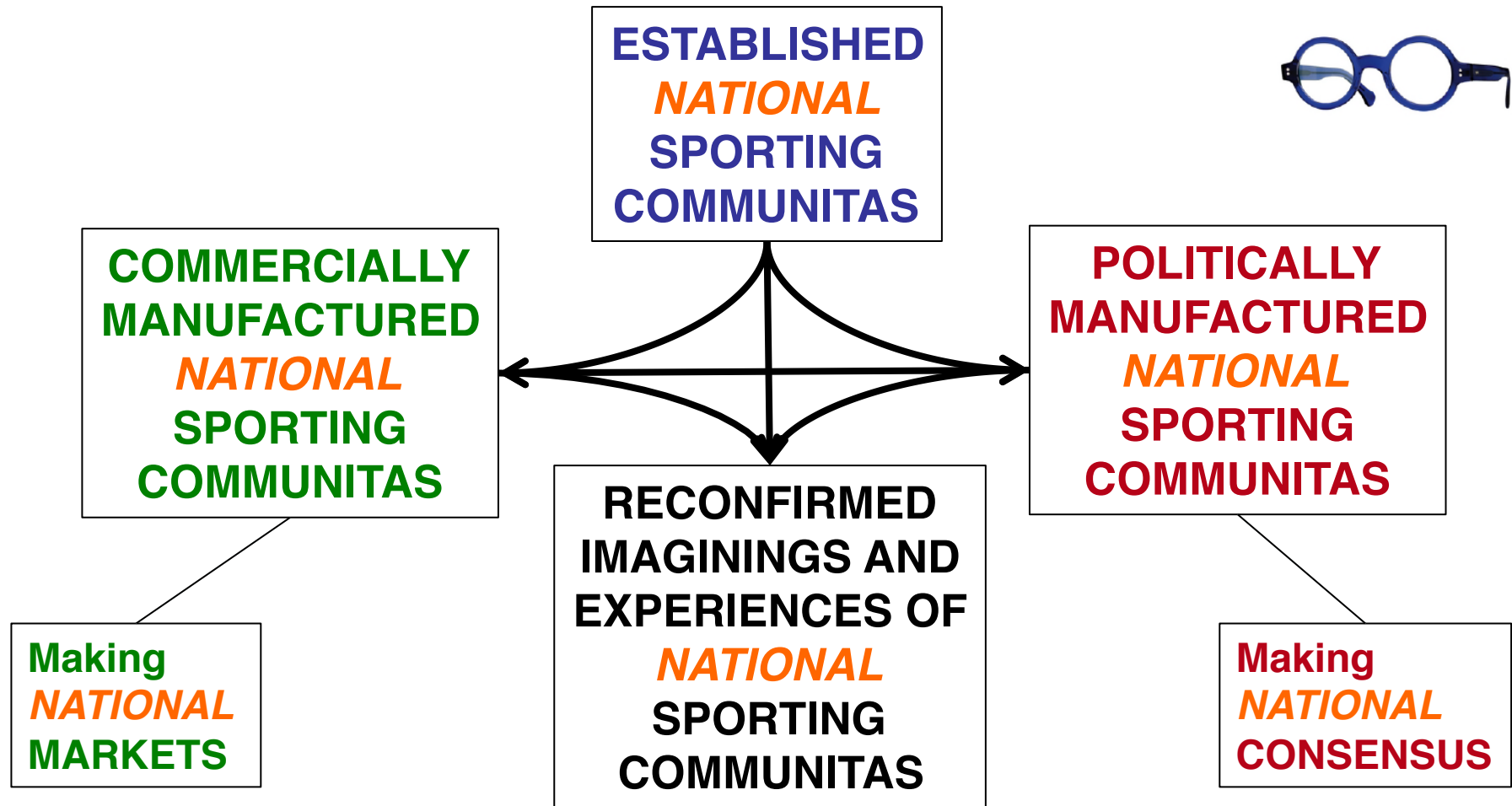
# “Pizza Box” Nationalism (c. 2002)



# “Gummi” Patriotism (2013)



“Sport, as a civic [**NATIONAL**] ritual, is embedded in political-economic relations” (Ingham et al, 1987, p. 460)



Source: Ingham, A.G., Howell, J.W., & Schilperoort, T.S. (1987). Professional sports and community: A review and exegesis. *Exercise and Sport Science Review*, 15, 427-465.

# **Theme 5:**

## **Hot and Banal Sporting Nationalism in Post-9/11 America**





**Hot Nationalism:** the intensified, extreme, or overt forms of nationalism which often occur during times of real/p national crisis/threat/attack.

**Banal Nationalism:** The routine, everyday, and often unacknowledged expressions and performances of nationalism which punctuate all aspects of our lives.

**Cool Nationalism:** the expressions of indifference and/or hostility toward the nation, and an reluctance to acknowledge it as a source of identity

Source: Billig, M. (1995). *Banal Nationalism*. London: Sage.

# The Perceived and Real THREATS to American Society: Post-9/11



**Terrorist**



**Economic**



**Environmental**



**Cultural**



**Military**



**Population**

Among certain sections of American society this experience of perpetual threat created an enduring climate of **HOT NATIONALISM**, with heightened and intensified feelings of **NATIONAL BELONGING** and **IDENTIFICATION**.

# **The Post-9/11 Context**

**In the aftermath of 9/11, American society has been described as being in a:**

**Perpetual State of War, Terror, Fear, and Insecurity**

**Source: Silk, M. (2012). *The Cultural Politics of Post- 9/11 American Sport: Power, Pedagogy and the Popular*. New York: Routledge.**

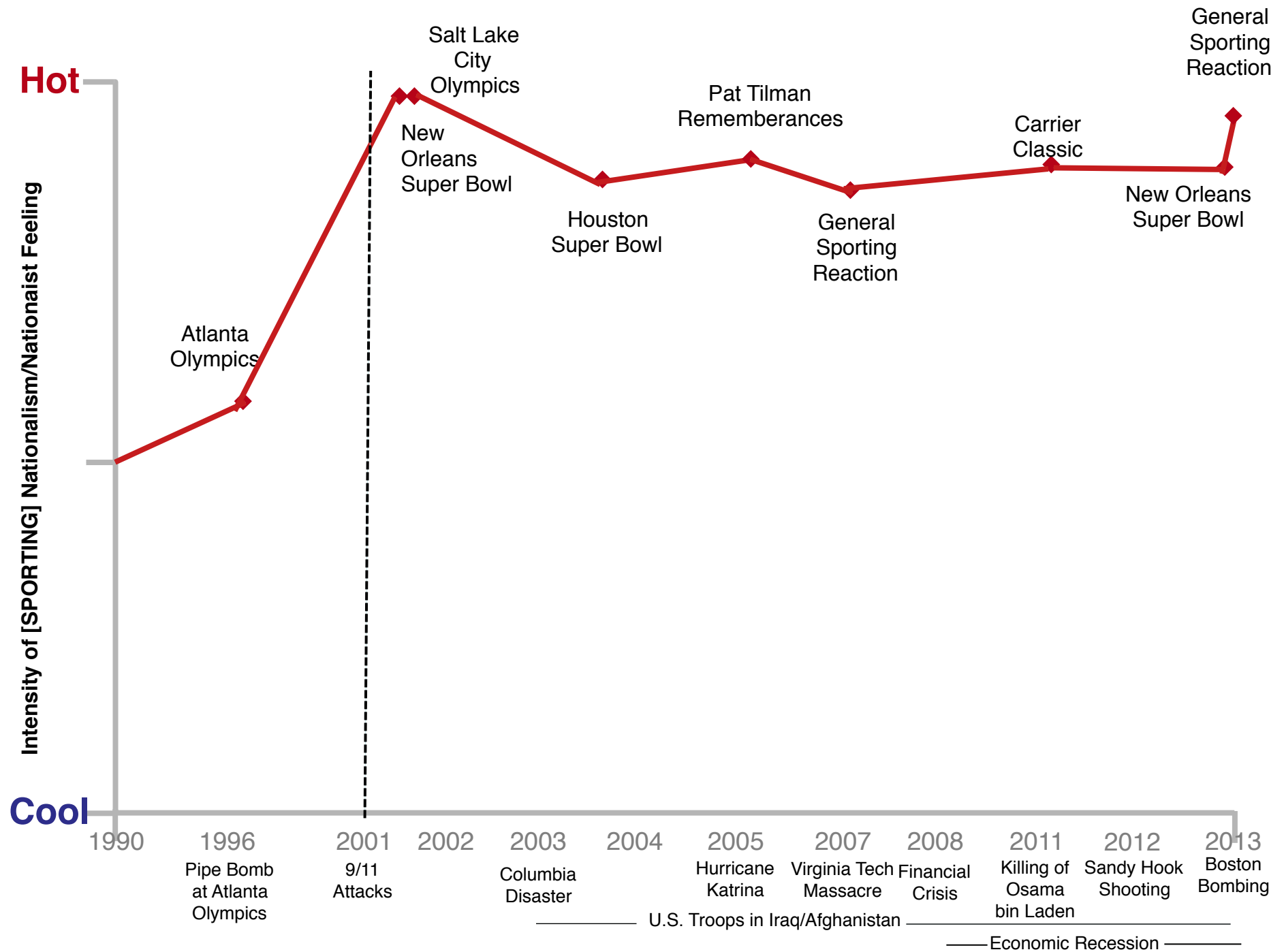
# The Nationalism of SPORT SPECTACLES within the Context of a Perpetual State of War, Terror, Fear, and Insecurity





Periods of **HOT NATIONALISM** can, over time, raise the levels of **THE BANAL NATIONALISM**.

In effect, these raised levels of nationalism become experienced as the **NEW NORMAL**, and become **ROUTINE AND UNACKNOWLEDGED ASPECTS OF EVERYDAY LIFE**.



## Super Bowl 2004: The American Heroes - Tragedy and the Colonization of Space







[See Video Clip 11](#)



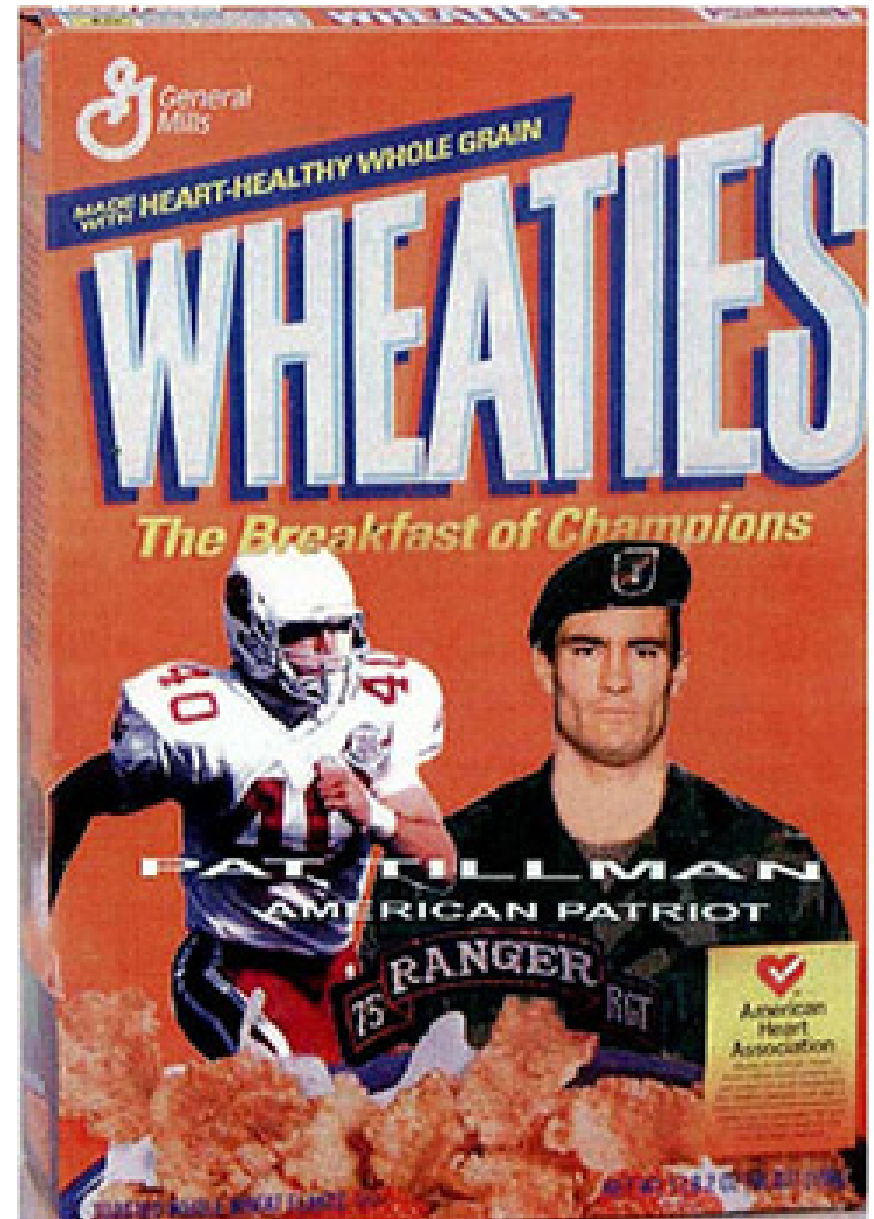
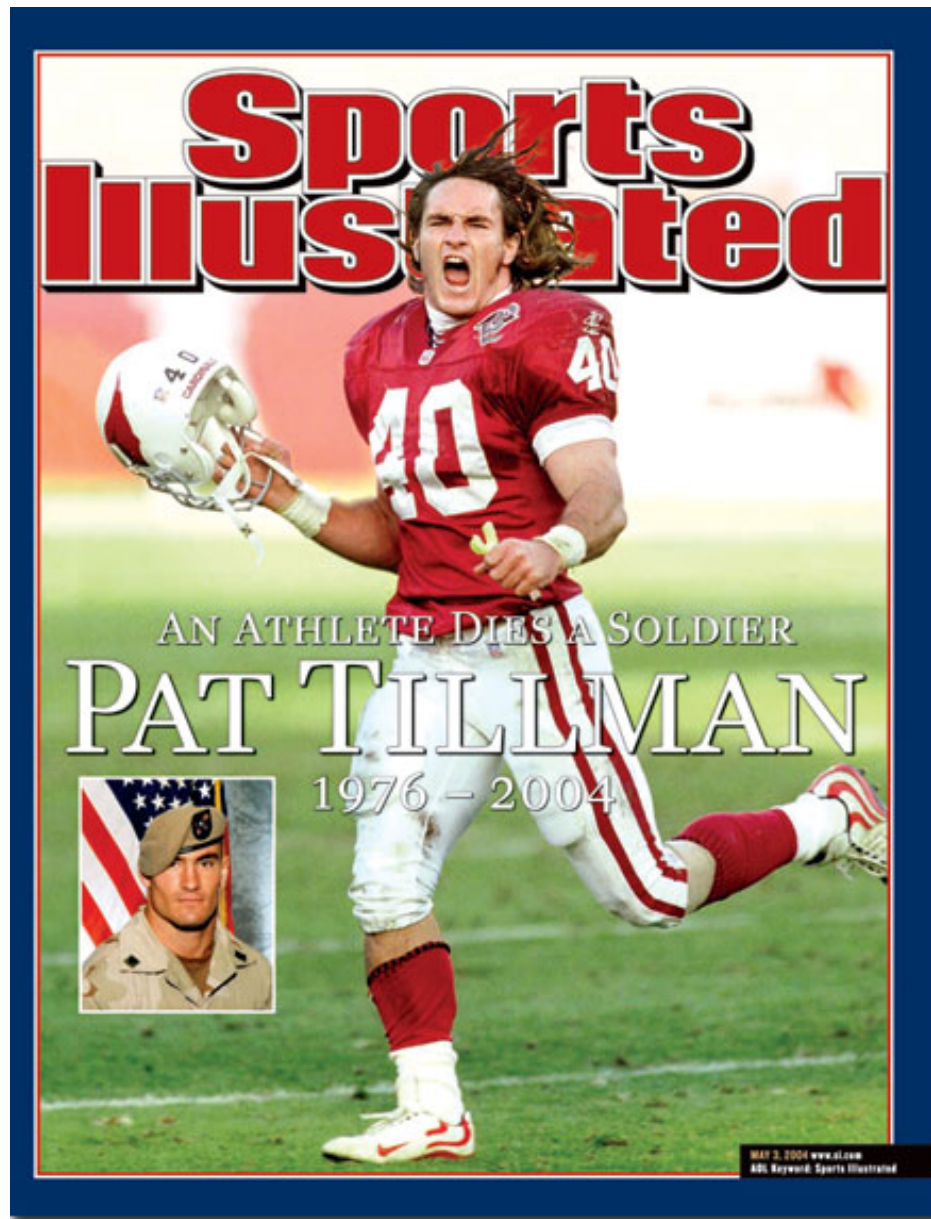
# The MILITARIZATION of SPORT

Both soldiers and athletes are **EMOTIVE** and **EMBODIED** representatives of **NATION**. Hence the **MILITARIZATION** of popular sport spectacles in the post-9/11 context was a natural development.



Source: King, S.J. (2008). Offensive Lines: Sport-State Synergy in an Era of Perpetual War. *Cultural Studies<-->Critical Methodologies*, 8 (4), 527-539.

# Mythologizing Pat Tillman: Embodying Post-9/11 America

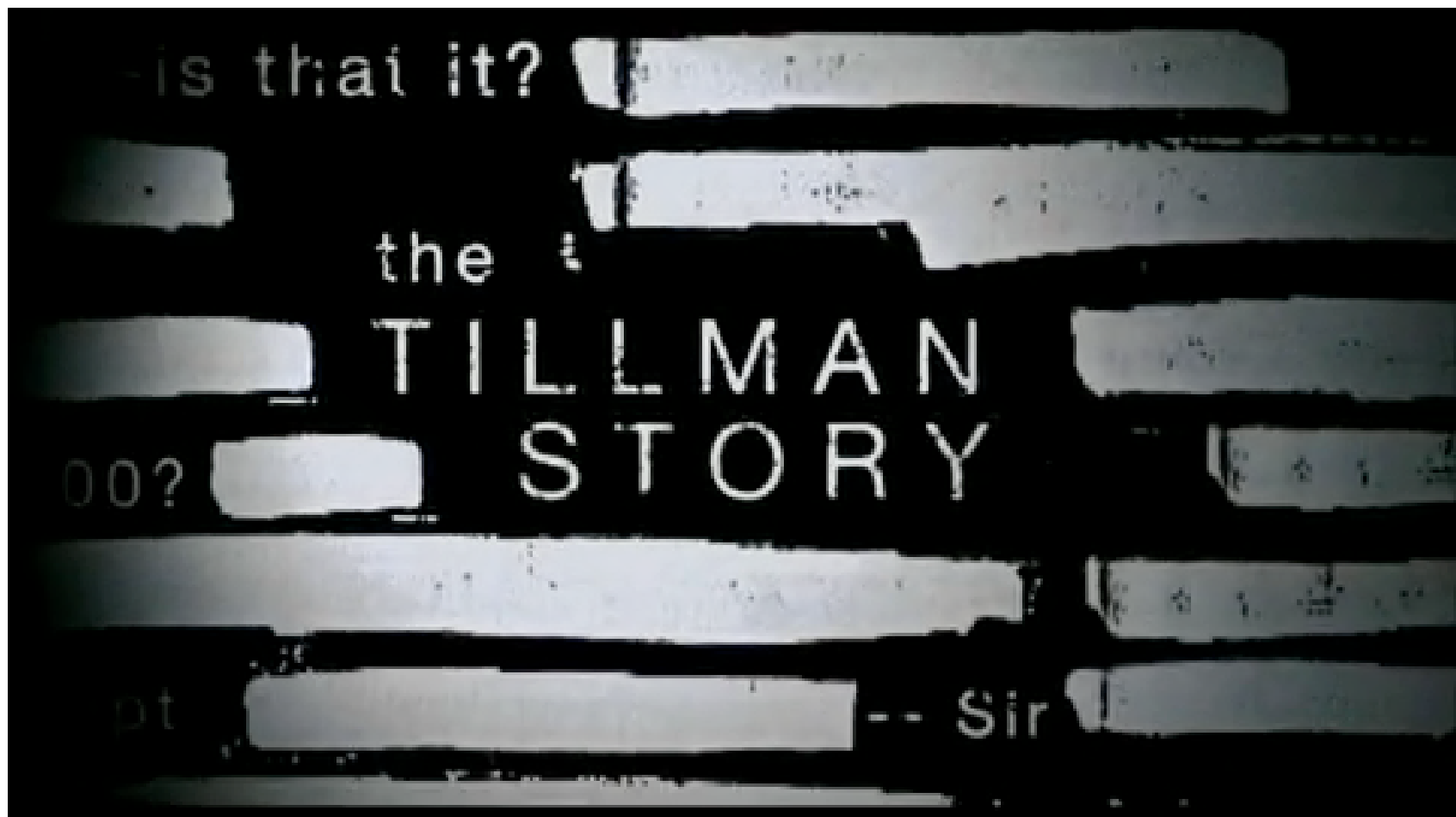




Although the **fabrication** of Pat Tillman's **demise for political gain** was highly problematic, the **POPULIST** rationale behind it was perhaps understandable.

Within the context of an increasingly **unpopular conflict/Bush administration**, Tillman's unique persona as both **military and sporting hero** was sought to be **mobilized for political gain** (to secure popular support for the **Afghanistan/Iraq military involvements**), and homeland security initiatives.



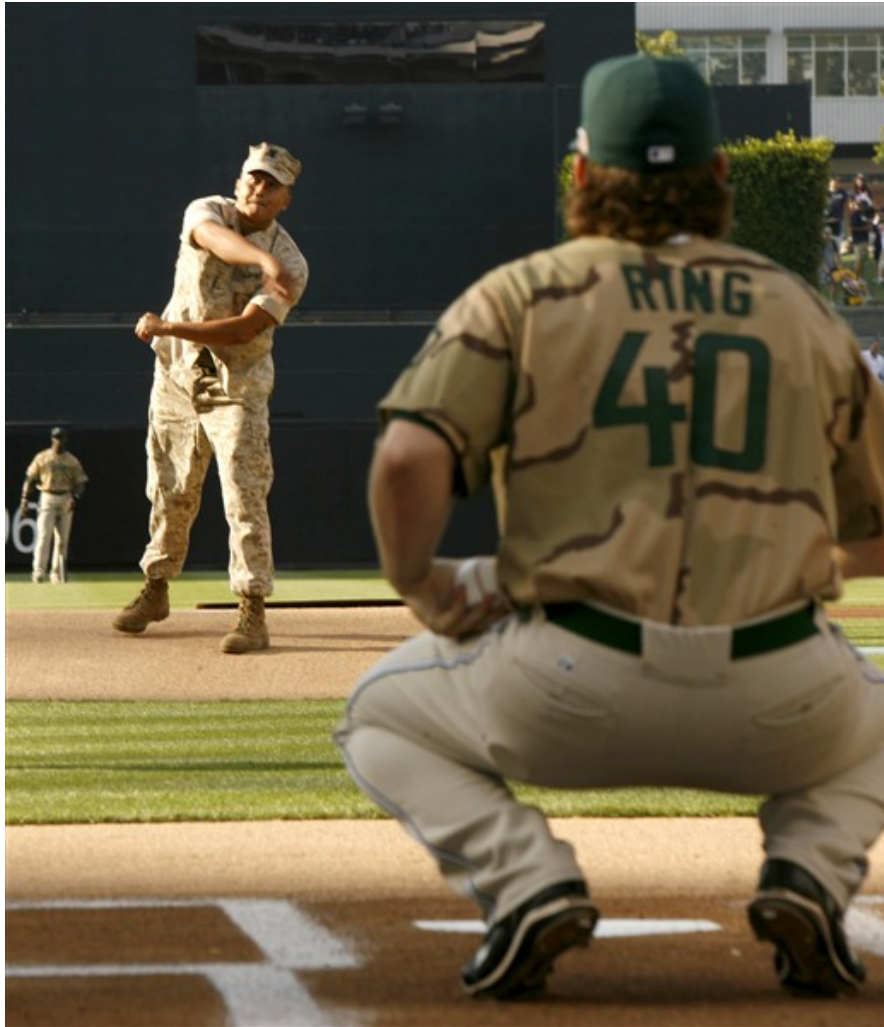


See Video Clip 12





# San Diego Padres Military Uniforms



Ceremonial first pitch, July 4, 2007

**“We are honored to join the America Supports You team,” said Padres’ Chief Executive Officer Sandy Alderson.**

**“Located in the city with the largest concentration of military in the country, we understand and have great respect for what our dedicated men and women in uniform do for our country – day in and day out.”**



**Elsewhere, the line between sport,  
the nation, and militarism has been blurred:**



**WOUNDED WARRIOR  
PROJECT**



# Recreating Iwo Jima



San Diego Padres Petco Park



# The Militarization of NASCAR



Source: Newman, J.I., & Giardina, M. (2011). *Sport, Spectacle, and NASCAR Nation: Consumption and the Cultural Politics of Neoliberalism*. Palgrave Macmillan.



# Fusing Sport, the Military, and Nationalism

## “Quicken Loans Carrier Classic” USS Carl Vinson: Veterans Day 2011

- Warship from which Osama bin Laden's body buried at sea
- Ship personnel involved in effort to “bring bin Laden to justice”
- First to launch airstrikes in support of US war in Afghanistan in 2001
- Both teams wore camouflaged uniforms, with USA on the backs
- Pre-game speech: Obama used it as an opportunity to underscore the need to thank and support servicemen...

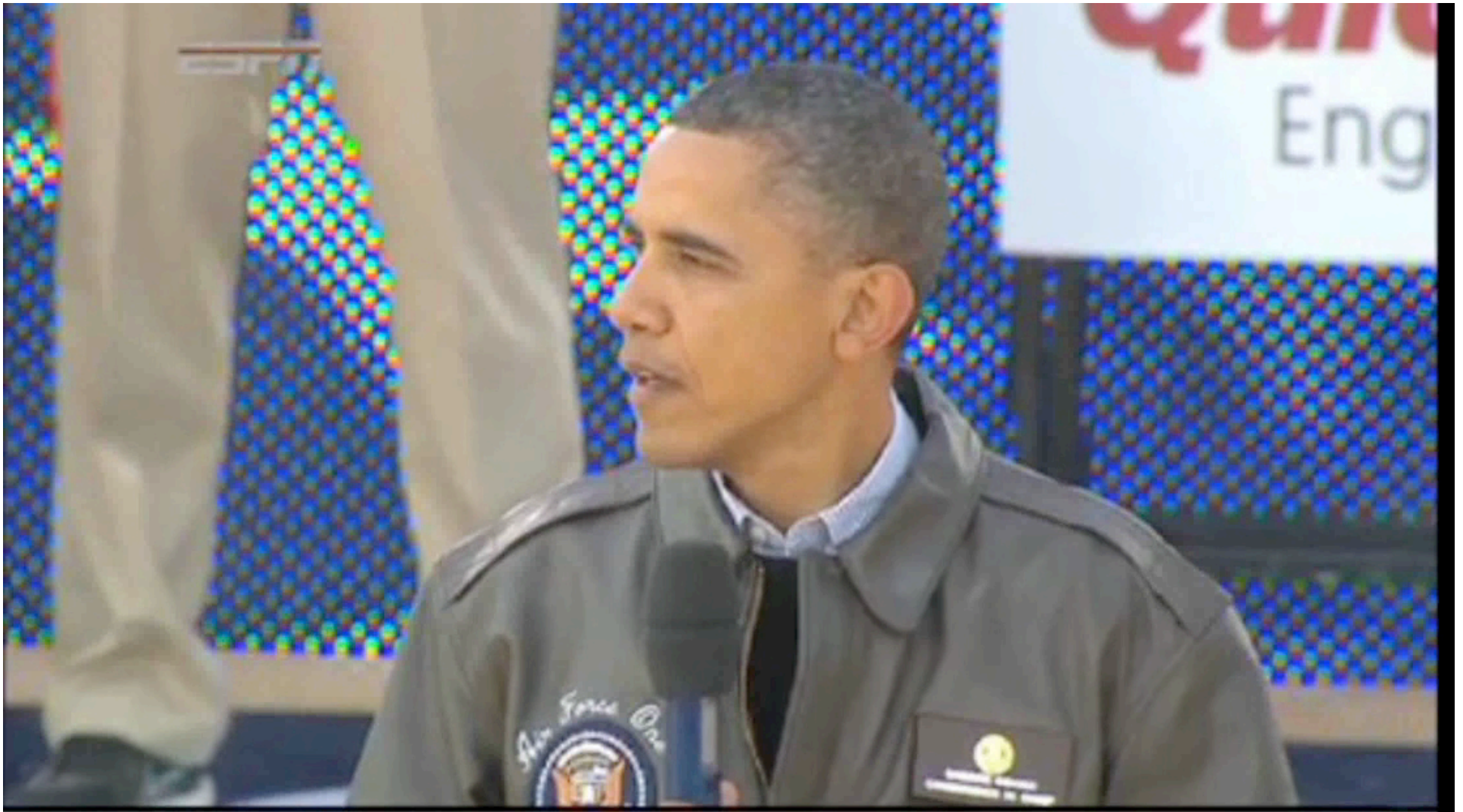




**President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama aboard the USS Carl Vinson on Nov. 11, 2001 — for the “Quicken Loans Carrier Classic” between North Carolina and Michigan State.**



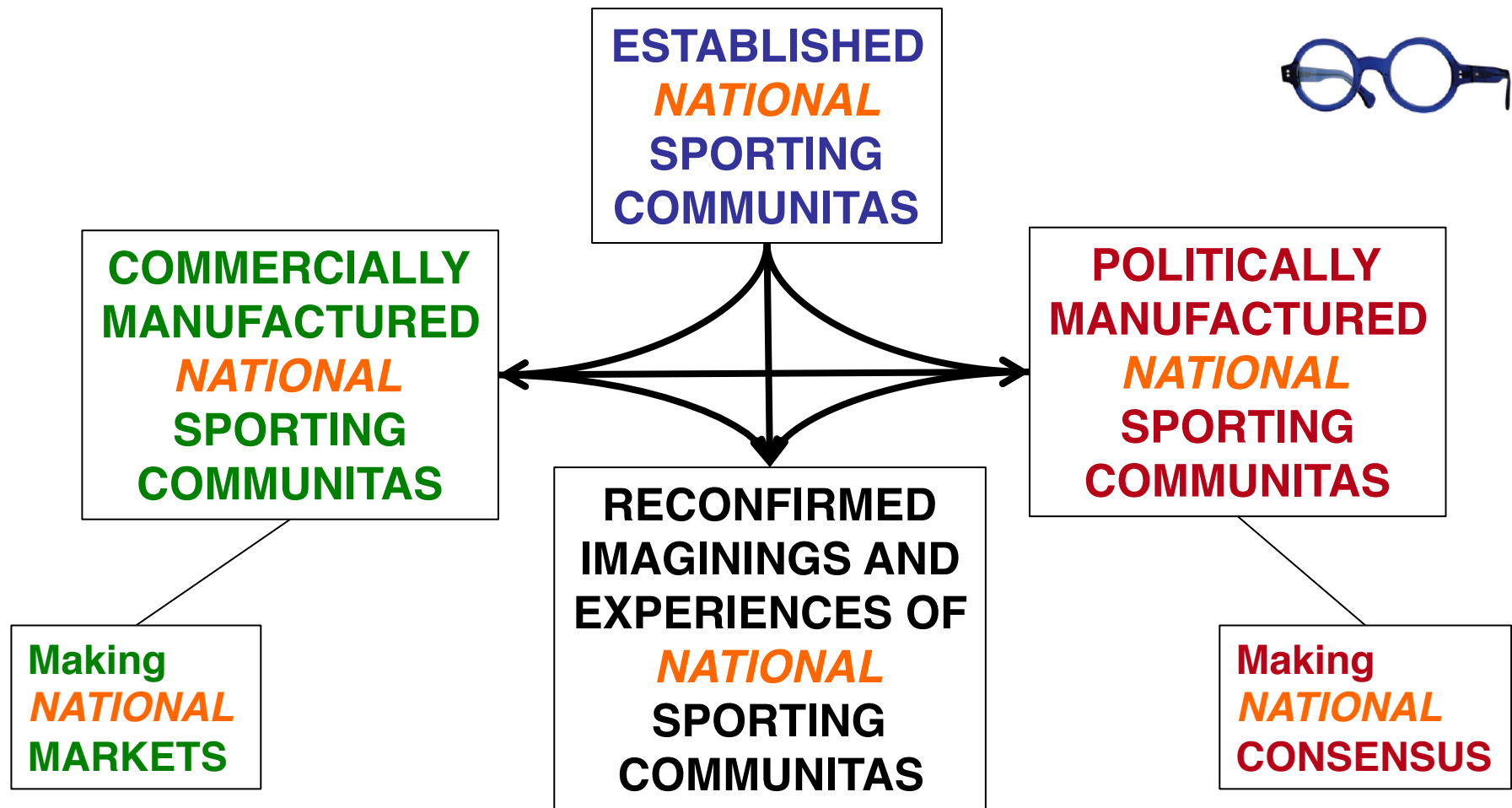
# The President's Basketball Pulpit



[See Video Clip 13](#)



“Sport, as a civic [**NATIONAL**] ritual, is embedded in political-economic relations” (Ingham et al, 1987, p. 460)



Source: Ingham, A.G., Howell, J.W., & Schilperoort, T.S. (1987). Professional sports and community: A review and exegesis. *Exercise and Sport Science Review*, 15, 427-465.

Within this context, the **MILITARY** are celebrated as the **SAVIORS** and **DEFENDERS** of American nation/  
American life.



Hence, the **MILITARIZATION** of sport is viewed uncritically as the natural way of being American/  
supporting America.

**These sport spectacles display and  
“construct the illusion of consensus”**

**(Ingham et al, 1987, p. 458)**



**There is an implied unity and cohesion  
(communitas) felt within the national.**

**Source: Ingham, A.G., Howell, J.W., & Schilperoort, T.S. (1987). Professional sports and community: A review and exegesis. *Exercise and Sport Science Review*, 15, 427-465.**

Through these **MANUFACTURED (and MILITARIZED) SPORT SPECTACLES**, the nation is **(re)imagined as the stricken home and (global) defender of freedom.**

This framing justified the U.S.'s heightened **security and military policies** at home and abroad.

- 1. Military Incursions in Afghanistan and Iraq**
- 2. USA Patriot Act (2001) extended intelligence gathering, and strengthened immigrant detainment and deportation**



Any dissent/opposition is thus viewed as being un-American.



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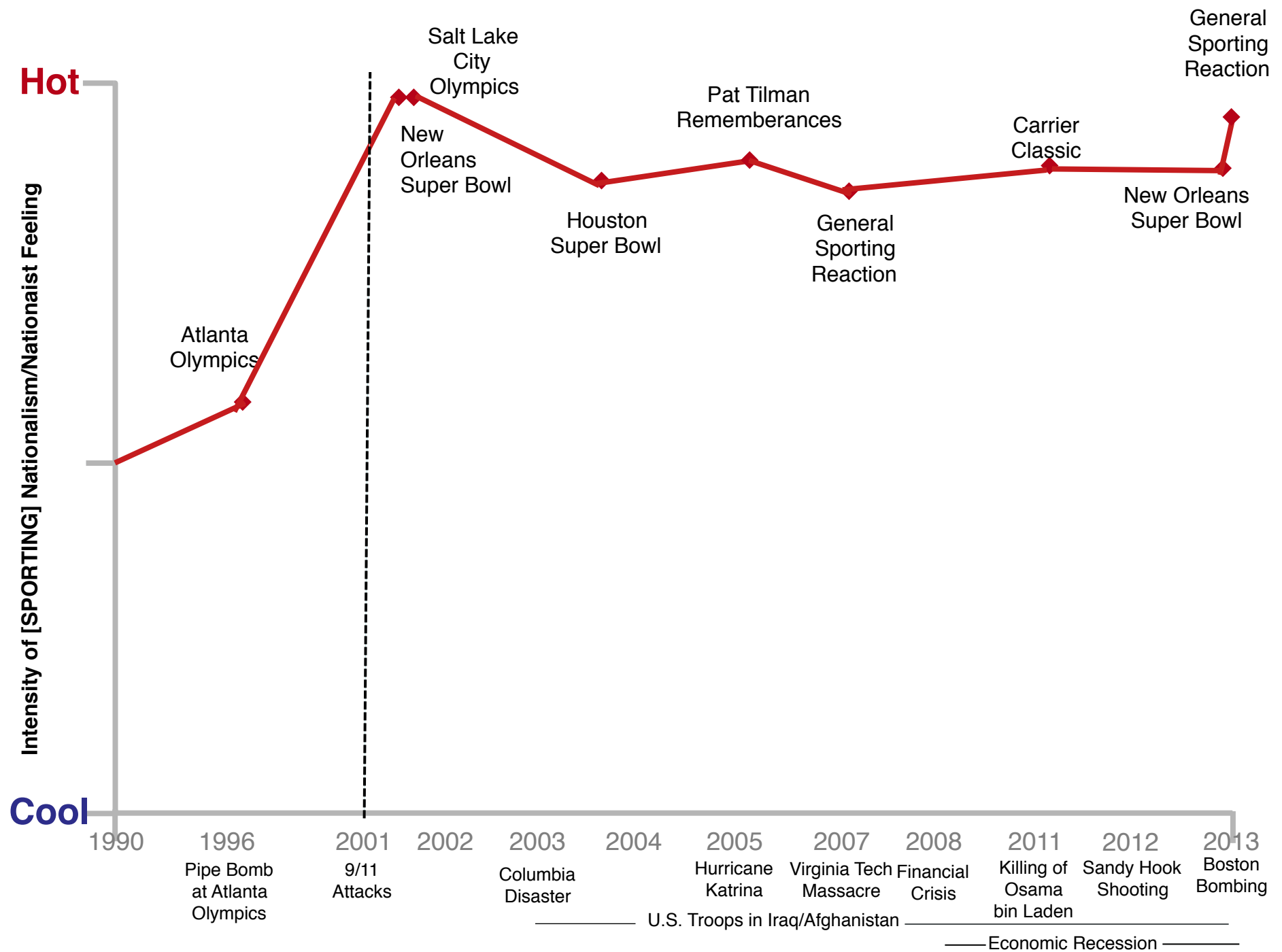
[www.unitedforpeace.org](http://www.unitedforpeace.org)

**Peace** needs **Truth**

Reach out to our brothers and sisters in the peace movement.

# **Theme 6:**

## **The New Normal Within Sporting Nationalism?**



# American Sporting Nationalism: The *NEW* Normal?



The Nationalism of **SPORT SPECTACLES** within the Context  
of a Perpetual State of **War, Terror, Fear, and Insecurity**



# Recent Metonymic Personifications of Insecure (Sporting) Nationalism



**Tim Tebow and Tebowing?**

# NASCAR as *American* Christian Ministry



Source: Newman, J.I., & Giardina, M. (2011). *Sport, Spectacle, and NASCAR Nation: Consumption and the Cultural Politics of Neoliberalism*. Palgrave Macmillan.



# One NASCAR Nation Under God?

(militarism meets Christianity through corporate capitalism)



Invocation at the Nashville 300 NASCAR race at the Nashville Superspeedway, July 23, 2011

Video Clip 14

# NASCAR: Contemporary “Dixie”?

Projecting an image of  
America(ns) that is largely:



**WHITE**

**MALE**

**HETEROSEXUAL**

**CHRISTIAN**

**“SOUTHERN”**

Source: Newman, J. I., & Giardina, M. D. (2008). NASCAR and the "Southernization" of America: Spectatorship, Subjectivity, and the Confederation of Identity. *Cultural Studies <=> Critical Methodologies*, 8(4), 479-506.



# Sporting Nations and Ethnic Absolutism?



# NASCAR's Conflicted National Politics?



Michelle Obama and Jill Biden acting as two of the official starters of the NASCAR season finale at the Homestead-Miami Speedway race in 2011.

**Video Clip 15**



# Uniting or Dividing the Nation?



# Soccer and Ethnically Exclusionary American Nationalism

## *Hearing*

### Prologue:

*RFK Stadium, October 13, 2004, USA Mens  
National Soccer Team v. Panama*

(Taunts directed towards Latino/a supporters)

Mow my lawn, mow my lawn, mow my lawn

Mow my lawn, mow my lawn, mow my  
l a w n

Mow my lawn, mow my lawn, mow my  
lawwwwn

Mow *my* L A W N, Mow my Lawn

**Source: Silk, M. L. (2008). Mow My Lawn. *Cultural Studies <=> Critical Methodologies*, 8(4), 477-478.**



# Sport as a Site for National Mourning and Remembrance



**Sandy Hook Elementary Shooting: December 14, 2012**





# The Super Bowl and the NATIONAL POLITICS of Gun Control?



The Sandy Hook Elementary School Chorus and Jennifer Hudson singing at the 2013 Super Bowl in New Orleans

See Video Clip 16



# Marathon terror



A woman received help at the scene of the first two explosions on Boylston Street Monday. Medical workers at the finish line treated life-threatening wounds and losses of limbs.

## AMID SHOCK, A RUSH TO HELP STRANGERS

**By David Abel**  
GLOBE STAFF

The woman's eyes stared vacantly into the sky. The runners had been bounding in, beaming with relief. She wasn't moving. Her eyes appeared lifeless as she lay beside the metal barriers on the sidewalk, where dozens of people were sprawled on the concrete, their limbs mangled. Blood and broken glass everywhere.

I had been in a crouch shooting video of runners talking when the first bomb exploded.

## A MOTHER REELS AS 2 SONS LOSE LEGS

**By Patricia Wen**  
GLOBE STAFF

Liz Norden, a mother of five, had just finished buying groceries into her Wakefield home Monday afternoon when her cellphone rang.

"Ma, I'm real bad," said her 31-year-old son. He was in an ambulance, he told her, being rushed to Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center.

It was her second boy, who had gone with his older brother

to watch a friend run in the Boston Marathon.

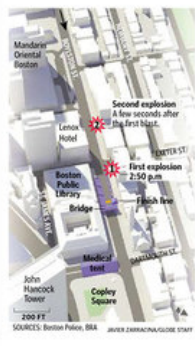
On the phone, her son said his legs were badly hurt in an explosion. His brother had been next to him, but he didn't know where he was.

Within the next two hours, amid frantic phone calls and a panicked drive into Boston, Norden pieced together the horrific truth that his two sons — and her own — were

injured in the Boston Marathon bombings.

The president vowed to find those responsible and protect the public in Boston. A test for hospitals. The annual celebration turned into a jumble of screams, smoke, and blood. A7.

## 3 killed, 130 hurt by bombs at finish line; area locked down



**By Mark Arsenault**  
GLOBE STAFF

Two bomb blasts, 12 seconds apart, rocked the finish line of the 117th running of the Boston Marathon Monday, killing at least three people, including an 8-year-old Dorchester boy, wounding more than 130, and leaving the sidewalks of Boylston Street covered in blood.

Medical professionals on hand to care for blisters and sore knees in Copley Square suddenly found themselves treating life-threatening injuries and lost limbs, as a high holiday in Boston, Patriots Day, turned into an epic tragedy. Emergency workers rushed to the scene, despite the very real possibility of more blasts.

The explosions blew out windows, sent plumes of smoke into the sky, and left victims piled on each other in a scene far more reminiscent of a battlefield than a celebrated day in Boston's Back Bay. The blasts occurred at 2:50 p.m., several hours after the elite runners had finished the race.

About 30 people were transferred to hospitals under a Code Red, meaning life-threatening injuries, which may point to a rising death toll, said a law enforcement official.

They were lowered in half-staff in

Washington, D.C., and around the nation, as the country mourned with Boston.

"We will find out who did this. We'll find out why they did this," pledged President Obama, in remarks from the White House. "Any responsible individuals, any responsible groups will feel the full weight of justice."

The grief resonated sharply in Dorchester, where residents gathered Monday night at Tando Restaurant in memory of 8-year-old Martin Richard, who was killed in the attack, and his mother and sister, who suffered grievous injuries. Martin's father, Bill, is a community leader in the Ashmont section of Dorchester. A third child was reportedly unharmed.

"They are beloved by this community," said City Councilor at Large Anthony Pires, who was among the mourners. "They contribute in many ways. That's why you see this outpouring. It's surreal. It's tragic."

A massive investigation was underway Monday night under the direction of the FBI, as much of the Back Bay was locked down to protect the sprawling crime scene. Last night, officials called the investigation "very active and fluid." The authorities were questioning

**Clues to the attack**  
The blasts appeared to be the work of domestic rather than international terrorists. A10.

**A test for hospitals**  
The annual celebration turned into a jumble of screams, smoke, and blood. A7.

**High security today**  
Police will patrol. T. riders' bags may be searched, and the area will be a crime scene. B1.

**Firms take stock**  
After quick evacuations, companies prodded when to resume normal operations. A11.

**Abrupt ending**  
Runners were halted without explanation, starting hours of uncertainty for many. A6.

**Vast network**  
The questions and worries were compounded for those close to the 22,000 competitors. C1.

**The path from here**  
Globe columns examine what the Marathon attacks have done to the soul of the city. A15, B1, C1.

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04.16.13  
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JITTERY WALL STREET **1B**

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# TERROR RETURNS

Boston blasts rattle Americans as nation goes on alert



Federal investigators join police; authorities pore over video, seek witnesses. A4.



Photos, videos and news of Boston's horrors spread quickly on social media. 7A.



Blast injuries can be difficult to treat; many are similar to war wounds. A4.



Bill Uffig, 76, of Lake Stevens, Wash., who was knocked down by a blast, says he got a scrape on his knee and was able to walk across the finish line. Others weren't as lucky: Some lost limbs or suffered other severe injuries. "I don't know if I'll come back to Boston," one runner says. A4.

## That post-9/11 quiet? It's over.

As Boston news sweeps America, nation's worst fears are reawakened

**By Rick Hanson and Chuck Russell**  
USA TODAY

The blasts on Boylston Street were felt across the nation, shaking and unsettling a country that has long been lulled by a sense of safety. In a video that captured the moment of the blast, viewers turned to terrified screams as panic swept over the crowd.

"We've been a calm island in a sea of trouble," said Thomas Whelan, a political historian at Boston College. "We think of this as something that happens somewhere else. And now it's happened here."

And if it could happen there, it could happen anywhere. Events like

## Massive search to answer who, why

Bombing investigation won't be "simple, easy," Mass. governor says

**By William M. Walsh**  
GLOBE STAFF

Federal and local investigators are waging a massive search for whoever is responsible for a pair of explosions that tore through the final stretch of the Boston Marathon on Monday, killing at least three people, injuring more than 140 and inflicting one of the most severe and public attacks on the nation since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

This time, the search was still unknown, and 1500 across the nation went on alert against the possibility of another bombing.

President Obama vowed to bring "the full weight of justice" on those

## We'll 'get to the bottom of this'

In D.C., flags lowered, a moment of silence, a vow for justice **3A**

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STORY CONTINUES ON A4



## Community and National Recovery: Boston as Metonym for Nation



**Metonym: Something that stands in place for/ comes to represent something else.**

# Boston Communitas





## A Moment of Communal/National Healing and Recovery?



Neil Diamond Singing “Sweet Caroline” at Fenway Park, April 20, 2013

[See Video Clip 17](#)

# The *NEW* Normal of the Sport Spectacle?



**A SPORTING NATION UNDER THREAT?:**  
Overt and covert security presence at sport events



## **9/11 and the Reaffirmation of American Exceptionalism**

**“The attacks of September 11th were intended to break our spirit. Instead we have emerged stronger and more unified. We feel renewed devotion to the principles of political, economic and religious freedom, the rule of law and respect for human life. We are more determined than ever to live our lives in freedom.”**

**(New York City Mayor, Rudolph W. Giuliani, December 31, 2001)**

## The Critique of Post-9/11 America

“in the post-9/11 era there has emerged a new form of social control **[NATIONALISM]**, one centered around fear, terror, the military, and an attack on democracy and civil liberties.”

(Silk, 2012, p. 10)

Source: Silk, M. (2012). *The Cultural Politics of Post- 9/11 American Sport: Power, Pedagogy and the Popular*. New York: Routledge.

Is the post-9/11 NATIONALISMS based on a form of **ETHNIC ABSOLUTISM** which **MARGINALISES** sections of the **NATIONAL POPULACE**? Is it a form of:



## Ethnic Nationalism

An understanding based on the “natural” origins of the nation being based upon definite characteristics:

- Ethnic/racial

- Language

- Cultural

An ethnically/racially **EXCLUSIVE** form of nationalism and national belonging.

Basically, is post-9/11 **SPORT** and **SPORTING NATIONALISM** a **UNIFYING** or **DIVIDING** agent? Is it an **EXPRESSION** of American **FREEDOM** or American **CONFORMITY**?





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Issues of Continuity and Change, Sameness and Difference

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