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Militarism and Memorializing at the Pro Football Hall of Fame

Michael L. Butterworth

More than ever, entertainment industries work in concert with the US armed forces in the rhetorical production of militarism. This is especially the case in sport, where leagues such as the National Football League routinely make war imagery and military personnel a focal point of football culture. One such iteration of this relationship is the “Pro Football and the American Spirit” exhibit that is part of the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Understood as an example of public memory, this exhibit reveals sport’s capacity to normalize war and reduce the available models of citizenship in the United States.

Keywords: Militarism; War; Public Memory; Rhetoric of Sport; Pro Football Hall of Fame

In the past two decades, the growing relationship between the US military and entertainment industries has contributed to the expansion of a militarized society.¹ Especially in the aftermath of 9/11, sports leagues and media in the United States have cultivated highly visible partnerships with the military. This has yielded numerous events to show “appreciation” for the military or to “support the troops.” In what Samantha King terms “sport-state synergy in an era of perpetual war,” sports organizations from Major League Baseball to the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) to the National Collegiate Athletic Association have converted their events into platforms for normalizing war. However, she argues that it is the National Football League (NFL), in particular, which has most thoroughly collaborated with US politicians and military officials in service of “a marketing partnership with a war-consumed state.”²

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King's argument is set against the backdrop of George W. Bush's presidency and his self-declared "war on terror." Yet as the first term of the Barack Obama administration reveals, neither war nor the discourses of militarism have abated under the new president. Sports leagues and media, in particular, continue to feature military themes as essential components in the production of sports narratives. For example, in the week prior to Veterans Day in 2009, both ESPN and FOX Sports dedicated significant resources in their efforts to "support the troops." ESPN aired its *College Gameday* program from the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado on November 7 and its *Mike & Mike in the Morning* radio show on the deck of the USS *New York* aircraft carrier. FOX, meanwhile, sent its entire studio crew of *NFL Sunday* to a military base in Bagram, Afghanistan. Similar events were staged in 2010. FOX included live remote coverage from Afghanistan during its Thanksgiving pre-game coverage; and ESPN extended its Veterans Day coverage, literally referring to it as "Veterans Week," as the network sent its radio hosts to sites such as West Point and the US Coast Guard Cutter USS *Mohawk* in Florida. Each of these events was justified as a *non-political* enactment of respect and honor for the nation's men and women of the armed forces, or, in the words of ESPN, "America's heroes."

Such moments are reminders of how football works rhetorically to link American identity with militarism. Long associated with its militaristic language of "bombs" and "blitzes," college and professional football are powerful institutions through which we may better understand the growing marriage of the military with entertainment in the United States. Accordingly, my focus in this essay is on a particular—and more permanent—iteration of this relationship. Specifically, I examine the rhetorical production of militarism that is constituted in and by the Pro Football Hall of Fame and its exhibit, "Pro Football and the American Spirit." This exhibit, housed in the Hall of Fame throughout 2008 and 2009, and designed to travel throughout the country, features multiple points of identification between the game—especially in the NFL—and the military. As such, it constitutes an audience that is positioned to view war as necessary and noble, with the mythological warrior ethos of professional football serving as rhetorical support.

My analysis contributes to the growing scholarly engagement with articulations of the military to media and entertainment industries, what James Der Derian calls the "military-industrial-media-entertainment network" (MIME-NET).³ With war increasingly present in American popular culture, MIME-NET discourses cultivate attitudes that not only foreclose potential deliberation or dissent but also naturalize the relationship between the military and popular culture—to the extent that the presence of war-themed discourse has become the normal state of affairs.⁴ Such discourses thus produce a culture of militarism that inhibits active citizenship and weakens democratic practices. These concerns are amplified by sports generally, but particularly in this case by the mythologizing function of the Pro Football Hall of Fame, which exploits public memory in service of a sanitized and normalized vision of militarism in the United States. Therefore, I begin my engagement with "Pro Football and the American Spirit" by situating it in the context of rhetorical studies of public memory. I next turn my attention to the specific relationships

between militarism and American football. I then examine the rhetorical effect of “Pro Football and the American Spirit,” and conclude with observations and words of caution with respect to the “further indication of the militarization of everyday life, and simultaneously, of the ‘sportification’ of political life.”⁵

MIME-NET and Public Memory

As Jeffrey St. John and Todd Kelshaw identify, in recent years the concept of “memory” has “exploded into the communication discipline’s nomenclature.”⁶ Although this has included psychological and sociological dimensions of memory studies, most prominent has been the attention to the ideological effects of what they label “public/cultural” approaches to memory. Indeed, rhetorical and cultural studies recognize that uses of public memory may constitute attitudes and identities that have consequences for democratic culture. From the perspective of rhetoric, the emphasis on “public” is useful “because ‘public’ situates shared memory where it is often the most salient to collectives, in constituted audiences, positioned in some kind of relationship of mutuality that implicates their common interests, investments, or destinies, with profound political implications.”⁷ These implications are often the result of the contestability of memory’s meaning. As Stephen Howard Browne notes, “far from being merely nostalgic or retrospective, [memory] work is always and at once new, discursive, and unpredictable.”⁸ Moreover, although “there is nothing politically prescribed in . . . memory,” public memory often serves to recall an idealized past that may never have existed and to discipline the public into particular modes of behavior in the present.⁹

With these political implications in mind, rhetorical studies of public memory have attended to a range of phenomena that shape democratic culture in the United States.¹⁰ Much of this attention features discourses of *trauma* in general, and *war* in particular.¹¹ More specifically, American public memory is filtered through the contrasting legacies of World War II and the Vietnam War, both of which continue to provide lessons for the present.¹² While memories of war are commonly featured in popular culture media such as film,¹³ they are perhaps most visible in memorials and museums. As Bryan C. Taylor explains, through memorials and museums “audiences confront and reconcile competing narratives about the sacrifice and heroism of soldiers, the outcome of war, the consequences of war for future generations, and various types of citizens and enemies.”¹⁴ The rhetorical effect of these sites must be understood, at least in large measure, by their *material* dimensions. Specifically, museums “engage visitors not only on a symbolic level through the practices of collection, exhibition, and display, but also on a material level by locating visitors’ bodies in particular spaces.”¹⁵ Defining museums in material terms shifts our attention from “representation” to the “real,”¹⁶ thus acknowledging that public memory affects peoples’ attitudes and behaviors *in practice*. In her study of the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, for example, Victoria J. Gallagher maintains that “the consequences of materiality include issues of partisanship, particularly institutionalization of memory and, thereby, value.”¹⁷

Such value is communicated by what Tony Bennett refers to as “specific regimes of vision.”¹⁸ Those regimes, rooted in the historical development of modern museums in the nineteenth century, are democratic to the extent that they can “increase their public legibility” in the effort to reach the “mass public.”¹⁹ Indeed, this effort is central to cultural policy studies analyses of museums, especially those that are state-sponsored. As Elizabeth M. Crooke suggests, “museum and exhibition planners need to develop different communicative strategies in order to appeal to the many communities that compose the whole.”²⁰ It is clear, however, that museum exhibitions reflect particular political commitments and interests. Thus, in the words of Sharon Macdonald, “The task is also to explore the consequences of particular forms of representation in terms of the distribution of power: who is empowered or disempowered by certain modes of display?”²¹

As Bennett describes, the locus of power can be attributed to the apparatuses of the state. Not simply repositories of cultural artifacts, then, museums can instead be understood as vehicles for the production of order and discipline. In what he defines as the “exhibitionary complex,” Bennett contends that average citizens are constituted as subjects of the state through museum displays, primarily because the very choices of what is included in museum collections and how those inclusions are organized limit the range of their available meanings. Unlike previous disciplinary regimes, the “exhibitionary complex provide[s] a context for the *permanent* display of power/knowledge,” thus making museums sites for the display of reified modes of citizenship.²² Most importantly, those modes of citizenship are typically imagined in ways that align with state interests and diffuse the possibility of dissent against those interests.

It should be clear that rhetorical critics and cultural policy scholars agree that museums and other sites of memory are meaningful in a democratic culture. The same cannot always be said about sport, an institution that is commonly viewed by the public as apolitical and too often treated by scholars as separate from the more substantive matters of public life.²³ This is a regrettable oversight because sport is among the most ubiquitous and influential forms of popular culture in the United States. Consequently, “sporting events and sports personages . . . yield particularly vivid, compelling, accessible material to be memorialized and ascribed contemporary meaning in the retelling.”²⁴ Because sport is deemed to be distinct from—or an escape from—the world of politics, it often evades critical scrutiny, even as it produces or extends problematic political discourses. Thus, when it comes to the presentation of war, “sport rhetoric is an especially persuasive vehicle for sustaining and extending the culture of militarism.”²⁵

Football and the Culture of Militarism

Former football player-turned-academic Michael Oriard nicely summarizes the rhetorical significance of football. As he writes, “it is the function of football to tell stories, and in a way that no movie or novel can be, the stories football tells are ‘real.’ Here, ultimately, is the source of sport’s cultural power.”²⁶ Another way of

stating this is that football, just like public memory, has a material effect—it shapes and influences millions of Americans, sometimes even those who do not follow the sport. Especially in the years since the end of World War II, football has been a “truer and more vivid reflection of the American preoccupations with power and passion, technology and teamwork, than any other sporting institution in the country.”²⁷ Not surprisingly, then, football imagery and mythology commonly appeal to masculinist values of competition, control, and conquest, which makes the sport an especially appealing metaphor for war.

The consonance between sport—especially football—and war discourses has been well established.²⁸ In part, this relationship has developed over time with football’s various overlaps with the US military. Gerald R. Gems explains that, in addition to romanticized sportswriting that exalted the warrior mythology of the gridiron, college football provided a public stage for military spectacle. As he notes, “The Army–Navy game, initiated in 1890, symbolized the merger of football, militarism, and patriotism as it became a national tradition.”²⁹ Military participation in football was not restricted by national borders, however. Among college football’s most celebrated traditions are the post-season bowl games, contests that were originally designed to reward successful teams and boost the host cities’ tourism. For members of the US armed forces stationed overseas during World War II, bowl games provided the inspiration for exhibitions at military bases. Instead of the Rose Bowl or Orange Bowl, the American military hosted the “Arab Bowl” in Algeria, the “Poi Bowl” in Hawaii, and the “Spaghetti Bowl” in Italy.³⁰

For the first half of the twentieth century, professional football was largely an afterthought in American popular culture. Nevertheless, the NFL made significant contributions to the war effort during World War II, both in financial contributions and in players who served in the military.³¹ By the 1960s, professional football had become the most popular sport in the United States, and both sports media and league officials eagerly fostered the war mythology of the game. For example, a 1965 essay in *Esquire* called football “The American War Game.” Meanwhile, television and film studio NFL Films revolutionized how sporting events are documented through “montages of violent collisions and the close-ups of bloodied fists and contorted faces spraying sweat drops in super slow motion.”³² The cinematic drama on display in NFL Films productions cemented the image of the American football player as an epic hero, a warrior of uncommon courage and valor.

NFL games increasingly incorporated militaristic spectacles as the league transitioned to the modern era, marked by the late-1960s merger that absorbed the rival American Football League (AFL). The championship game between the two leagues, first played following the 1966 season, eventually became the “Super Bowl,” a quasi-religious media-sport-political festival that rivals the most sacred of national holidays.³³ As many have noted, the Super Bowl is as much about American nationalism as it is about football. Since Super Bowl II in 1968, the pregame ceremonies include a dramatic Air Force flyover, a ritual that has since become a staple of major sporting events throughout the United States.³⁴ Meanwhile, the very

production of the game on television commonly invokes patriotic celebrations of American identity.³⁵

Moments of crisis or military conflict have provoked the most dramatic displays of militaristic fervor in football contexts. It is no accident that the advent of the Super Bowl flyover occurred during the most violent period of the Vietnam War. Years later, when the United States exerted its military strength in the Persian Gulf, Super Bowl XXV served as a mediated national rally in support of the troops and President George H. W. Bush, further conflating “troops with fans, war with football.”³⁶ When FOX Sports televised Super XXXVI, the first championship game to be played after 9/11, the game had truly been reduced to a “myopic expression of American jingoism, militarism, and geopolitical domination.”³⁷

While the historic relationship between football and the media helps wed the game to the military, this metaphorical equation has also been bolstered by rhetorical practices that describe football in terms of warfare. This is perhaps not surprising, since most modern sports have their origins in some form of “military engagement or at least military-training activities.”³⁸ That football animates a warrior ethos is an essential characteristic of much of the game’s mythology. Even some academic observers, such as political scientist Michael Mandelbaum, appear eager to embrace this aggressive, masculinist vision. Insisting that a football game is similar to a war, Mandelbaum waxes nostalgic about football’s “golden age,” as he laments that after the 1960s, “the decline in the status of war in American society was accompanied by a devaluation of the norms and the practices that war cultivates and that football fosters as well.”³⁹

Accounts such as Mandelbaum’s treat war as nothing more than a rhetorical device to make sport more exciting and colorful. Yet, as was perhaps most evident during the Persian Gulf War of 1991, this relationship works in both directions, with the language of football now used to narrate the gruesomeness of war in more palatable terms. In his study of that war, Dale Herbeck insists that sport/war metaphors cannot be dismissed as merely descriptive figures of speech. Instead, the “repeated references to football in Desert Storm discourse functioned to authorize military intervention, minimize the consequences of intervention, and reinforce a dominant political ideology.”⁴⁰ Herbeck’s critique reminds us that through media spectacle and metaphorical speech, militarism has become a normal, even expected, dimension of football. Because normalized practices induce citizens to accept the ideology that supports such articulations, a critical intervention is required to forestall the expansion of the culture of militarism through sport rhetoric. The Pro Football Hall of Fame’s exhibit, “Pro Football and the American Spirit,” requires just such an intervention.

Pro Football and the American Spirit

“Pro Football and the American Spirit” is the first of what is expected to be several traveling exhibits planned by the Pro Football Hall of Fame.⁴¹ The exhibit was on display in 2010 at Patriot Place in New England and the Kansas Sports Museum near

Wichita before moving to the Green Bay Packers Hall of Fame in Green Bay, Wisconsin until February 2011. Although it was designed to travel, the exhibit spent most of 2008 and 2009 at the Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio. Because the travel schedule is still in development—the Hall of Fame wants it on the road for three years—I restrict my analysis to its presentation in the permanent museum. What follows is based on my own visit to Canton on March 12, 2009. Thus, I read “Pro Football and the American Spirit” as any visitor might, keeping in mind Bennett’s description of museums as “a place for ‘organized walking’ in which an intended message is communicated in the form of a (more or less) directed itinerary.”⁴²

In their study of the Plains Indian Museum, Greg Dickinson, Brian L. Ott, and Eric Aoki note the importance of the mythic context in which the museum is located. The “western dreamscape,” as they call it, provides the rhetorical backstory to the artifacts and exhibits housed within.⁴³ In much the same way, visitors to the Pro Football Hall of Fame likely have some orientation to football mythology that is filtered through the militaristic, warrior ethos discussed in the previous section. As I have noted, that mythology dates back well over 100 years but became a fixture of sport culture in the 1960s. The Pro Football Hall of Fame was built and opened during this time, in 1963. Indeed, the architecture and signage that welcome visitors clearly hail a mid-twentieth-century aesthetic. Moreover, the museum’s location in the acknowledged birthplace of professional football—Canton, Ohio—situates it in the landscape of modern, industrial, American identity. As a consequence, the Hall of Fame calls forth both “physical and cognitive landscapes,” what Dickinson, Ott, and Aoki call “experiential landscapes,” rhetorical sites that “invite visitors to assume (and occupy) particular subject positions.”⁴⁴ From the moment of arrival, then, visitors enter a repository of memories that remind Americans of a time of industrial prosperity, military strength, and moral certitude. In other words, they are positioned to see “football as a broad, though varied, embodiment of national values.”⁴⁵

“Pro Football and the American Spirit” was located on the second floor of the Hall of Fame, where it occupied approximately 2,500 square feet of space.⁴⁶ Visitors following the normal traffic patterns of the museum would first see a large banner with the title, accompanied by a large photograph of members of the Buffalo Bills standing at attention for the national anthem. From there, the exhibit featured an open floor plan that permitted visitors to navigate the displays in multiple directions. Nevertheless, the displays were arranged spatially in ways that could function as a chronology of American military actions from World War II to the War on Terror. Significantly, the circular arrangement of the displays placed these two wars next to one another, constituting a rhetorical effect to which I will return. Each of the displays and the artifacts contained within showcased the various ways professional football, especially the NFL, has contributed to American military efforts. This ranged from the actual service of players in the US armed forces to symbolic displays of patriotism during times of war. Throughout the exhibit, video kiosks played three short narrations that provided electronic media complements to the static artifacts contained behind the glass displays. In the following pages, I re-trace the steps of my

“organized walking” through the exhibit and explain the rhetorical production of militarism that it constitutes.

My own instinct as a museum visitor was to follow a more-or-less chronological journey through the exhibit’s displays. I began by walking forward and past the national anthem photo, veering to my left. The first section I encountered was about World War II, where titles such as “Conspicuous Gallantry” and “A World at War” acknowledged professional football players who had won the Congressional Medal of Honor (there are three) and the unusual rosters that resulted from labor shortages as more and more players joined the military. For example, in 1943 the Pittsburgh Steelers and Philadelphia Eagles combined their rosters to become the “Steagles,” and in 1944 the Cardinals and Steelers became “Card-Pitt” (and went 0–10 on the season). These quirky accommodations are not simply interesting for their novelty. Rather, they demonstrated the NFL’s commitment to staying afloat during lean times as a patriotic duty. This attitude was illustrated by the words of Frank Layden, who was the league’s commissioner at the time of the Pearl Harbor bombing in 1941:

From Aristotle’s time on down we have been told, and it has been demonstrated, that sports is necessary for the relaxation of the people in times of stress and worry. The National Football League will strive to help meet this need with the men government has not yet called for combat service, either because of dependents, disabilities, or the luck of the draw in the Army draft.⁴⁷

Thus, during World War II the NFL affirmed the virtues of *sacrifice*, revealed by its willingness not only to part with much of its talent pool but also to keep Americans entertained despite the absence of many of its players.

Some of those very players figured into the exhibit, in particular through their appearance in a video called, “GIs of the Grid Iron.” This video, sponsored by the Disabled American Veterans and narrated by NFL and broadcasting legend Pat Summerall, was viewable just to the left of the original World War II display. Each of the four players featured—Al DeMao, Art Donovan, Chuck Bednarik, and Ralph Heywood—commented on the apparent similarities between football and war. Yet even as Donovan celebrated football as “a great American sport,” DeMao was careful to insist that football is “nothing like war.” Nevertheless, after watching the video, visitors were most likely to see the displays that commemorated those players who served during the war, including those who were killed in action. All told, 46 professional football players were listed. Building on the militaristic mythology of football, then, the exhibit seemed to imply that players were especially suitable heroes for combat because of the very nature of the game itself.

Almost hidden from view—located on the back side of the opening image and title—was one of the smallest displays in the exhibit, called “The NFL and the US Armed Forces.” The contents of this section included background on former veteran, player, and politician Jack Kemp, and a summary of various USO tours made by the Dallas Cowboys cheerleaders. From my observations, this represented the only reference to women in the entire exhibit. Not only were women virtually absent, then, but their sole representation reduced them to the stereotype of the passive and

hyper-sexualized sideline supporter. Moreover, this display felt somewhat out of place, both topically and chronologically, thus further minimizing the role of women during times of war. As a consequence, the exhibit reinforced popular notions of masculine heroism that are already embedded in football mythology.

Even if one wanted to bypass “Pro Football and the American Spirit,” the outer edges of the exhibit would keep World War II in view. However, the interior sections of the exhibit were more obscure, especially the sections featuring Korea and Vietnam. Each of these wars occupies a troubled place in American public memory, of course, especially the conflict in Vietnam. To this day, the “Vietnam Syndrome” is commonly referenced to summarize the ambiguous purpose and unsatisfying outcome of that war, and also to admonish those who would risk America’s greatness by challenging the necessity of war. This legacy makes memorializing Vietnam and, to a lesser extent Korea, a difficult challenge. That difficulty was managed most clearly through an emphasis on the *heroism* of those who fought in each war. In the Korean War section, for example, one display was titled, “Pro Football’s Generals,” which included individual summaries of the 14 NFL players who served from 1950 to 1953. Meanwhile, during the video segment located between the Korea and Vietnam displays, NFL legend and Navy veteran Roger Staubach kept his focus away from the war’s purpose by stating, “Vietnam was a difficult war, and there’s so many darned heroes.” This statement was followed by Staubach’s commentary about the ongoing struggles faced by veterans with disabilities.

It is worth recalling here that Disabled American Veterans sponsored these video segments. While the physical toll of war most certainly merits attention, such a focus necessarily shifts attention away from the *purpose* of war. In this way, the human interest-based narratives contained within these displays functioned much like the common refrains of “support the troops.” Declarations of support are designed, on the one hand, to preserve the morale of American military personnel, even if there are doubts about their missions. Yet, on the other hand, “the virtue of the phrase,” writes Roger Stahl, “is part of what allows for its strategic use to suppress dissent, which it does by equating support for official policy with support for the soldiers.”⁴⁸ Here, then, “Pro Football and the American Spirit” equated good spectatorship with good citizenship, inviting visitors to see military service as necessary and noble without ever confronting the politics of a given war.

The exhibit does not exclude all complications, however. A particularly moving portion of the Korea/Vietnam video came from Ralph Heywood, who relayed a story about an especially religious soldier who was fatally shot while kneeling to pray. Heywood wondered aloud why God would allow such an obvious injustice, thus opening some space for a critique of war’s cruelty. In spite of this moment, America’s moral clarity and political purpose was not questioned. In fact, just as one might have been disturbed by the incongruities of Korea and Vietnam, the visitor’s gaze was quickly redirected toward a sprawling, floor-to-ceiling, American flag made of brushed metal and thick, translucent plastic. On the structure appeared the name of every professional football player who had served in the military. The flag was one

of the most visually captivating elements in the entire exhibit, and the design clearly held potential to arouse feelings of awe, pride, and patriotism.

The heroism entailed in military service was recaptured with Rocky Bleier, whose story is familiar to many football fans. After losing part of his foot during combat in Vietnam, Bleier was told he would never play football again. Not only did he overcome such dire predictions, he became a stalwart of the dominant Pittsburgh Steelers teams of the 1970s. Such triumph over adversity narratives are often the product of Hollywood invention. In this case, however, Bleier served as a metaphor for American determination and resolve, even during a difficult decade such as the 1970s. The end of that decade was especially traumatic, particularly because of the crisis that developed when American hostages were seized in Iran in 1979. When Super Bowl XV was played on January 25, 1981, just five days after Ronald Reagan was sworn in as president and the hostages in Tehran were released, the Louisiana Superdome was decorated with a giant yellow ribbon symbolizing solidarity with those who had been held for 444 days. That moment, which rekindled a muscular, assertive patriotism, was included in the “Gulf War” display of “Pro Football and the American Spirit.”

It might seem strange that a moment from 1981 would be conflated with a brief war from 1991. But on closer inspection, there is important rhetorical work accomplished by the connection, for this ten-year period is bookended by spectacular patriotic displays at the Super Bowl. From 1979 to 1981, the yellow ribbon served Americans as an expression of hope and faith that loved ones would return home safely. Yet by 1991, they were all too often deployed as empty nationalistic gestures. As Marita Sturken explains:

The yellow ribbon was transformed from a personal expression into an avowal of faith in the imagined national community, a means by which consent was created, and a symbol of America’s renewed confidence in its role as a world power.⁴⁹

That renewal reached its height with the memorable performance of the national anthem by singer Whitney Houston at Super Bowl XXV, played just days after US troops engaged Iraqi forces in the Persian Gulf.

The Hall of Fame’s exhibit featured Houston’s image as a reminder of this patriotic touchstone. It also further asserted the role of professional football in the nation’s collective identity:

The National Anthem performed at NFL games is obviously a highly visible method of demonstrating patriotism. However, during the Iranian Hostage crisis, Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, and the terrorist attacks of 2001, the NFL not only used its game, it used its stadiums, tapped its resources, and even modified its uniforms to honor America, salute her heroes, and inspire patriotism.

There was an important shift of emphasis by this portion of the exhibit. Whereas the memory of World War II was defined by the service of football players in the military, more recent memories celebrate the NFL’s demonstration of patriotism by sewing an American flag onto team uniforms. This shift from sacrifice to symbolism was

accentuated by text that noted Chad Hennings was the only NFL player to serve in the Persian Gulf War.

Yet if “Pro Football and the American Spirit” risked provoking a critique of American complacency and lack of service, that risk was averted by the logical progression to memories of 9/11. It is important to recall that visitors need not have proceeded through the exhibit chronologically; no matter what direction they walked, the “September 11, 2001” display was located immediately next to World War II. Moreover, on a display titled “The Day the Earth Stood Still,” the exhibit made a direct comparison between the two wars. This analogy was common in the immediate aftermath of 9/11. As David Hoogland Noon recalls, “for nearly three years, newspaper editorials, advertisements, political discourse, and ordinary conversations [were] regularly gilded with rough comparisons between the Second World War and the war on terrorism.”⁵⁰ He adds that such comparisons are not merely descriptive, but rather are designed to conflate historical lessons with contemporary concerns.

Much of the 9/11 section of the exhibit echoed the World War II emphasis on football’s ability to serve a public stricken with fear and anxiety. As one display read:

Stars and stripes were the rule of the day on Sunday, September 23, 2001, as the NFL continued to help America regain a sense of normalcy with the resumption of play. Teams, players, and fans participated in special activities during Sunday’s games to honor the victims and heroes of the 9/11 attacks.

This kind of language was consistent with many other justifications for patriotic displays during sporting events immediately following 9/11. However, the rampant use of patriotic imagery, somber tributes, military flyovers, and other demonstrations of nationalistic pride were anything but *normal*. Instead, they were carefully orchestrated productions that have since made such activities seem normal. As the many militaristic gestures noted at the beginning of this essay suggest, nationalism and militarism are indeed the norm just one decade into the twenty-first century.

The “September 11, 2001” displays eventually led to arguably the most compelling, and most troubling, section of the exhibit. Located all the way around the perimeter was a display called “Duty and Courage,” designed to honor Pat Tillman. Most visitors would likely have heard of Tillman, the former Arizona Cardinals defensive back who gave up his lucrative NFL contract to enlist in the Army Rangers. When he was killed in Afghanistan in 2004, media, politicians, and citizens alike mourned the loss of a heroic figure who appeared to symbolize all that was noble about sacrifice and duty to country. Accordingly, Tillman’s death was mythologized by those who sought affirmation for the War on Terror’s mission and who wished to celebrate the warrior ethos evidenced by his service. Two weeks after his death, ESPN televised a service for Tillman that was attended by 3,000 people, including Arizona Senator John McCain. Meanwhile, notable politicians and celebrities paid tribute to his character and spoke of the need to honor his sacrifice.

What was lost in the mythologizing of Tillman was any discussion of whether or not he should have been in the position to die in the first place. As King contends:

In focusing on his death rather than on why he died, these dedications constituted sacrifice as the goal rather than asking whether the sacrifice itself made any sense. That is, they allowed the sacrifices made by Tillman and by so many others to justify the war, regardless of its goals or the brutality of the everyday practices that sustain it.⁵¹

Even more problematically, Tillman was upheld as a paragon of American virtue and righteousness during the War on Terror, despite the fact that the details of his death were initially misreported. He was not, as was originally claimed, killed by enemy fire; rather, he was shot by so-called “friendly fire.” Even though this information emerged before his televised memorial service, military officials suppressed this fact. As many have since argued—including Tillman’s mother, Mary—it is all too easy to interpret this as a cover-up.⁵² After all, Pat Tillman killed heroically in battle makes for a far more powerful myth.

In light of the controversial details of Tillman’s death and the allegations that he was being mythologized in service of a flawed war, it is fair to suggest that the Pro Football Hall of Fame needed to be careful with its display of Tillman. It is somewhat surprising, then, that the exhibit defaulted almost entirely to the most standard mythic narrative, all but erasing Tillman’s agency as a result. Most of the narrative featured the familiar account of him leaving the NFL:

In the spring of 2002, Pat married his high school sweetheart, Marie. Upon returning from their honeymoon, he informed the Cardinals of the decision he made with Marie to place his NFL career on hold and become a US Army Ranger along with his brother Kevin. The decision shocked many and garnered national media attention despite his refusal to speak publicly about the choice.

This passage was only partially accurate, however. In a 2006 article for *Sports Illustrated*, Gary Smith details the contradictions and ambiguities Tillman felt about the war. In particular, the mythic warrior label seemed a poor fit, as Smith quotes Tillman at one point saying, “This war is so fucking illegal.”⁵³ Tillman may have enlisted out of a sense of duty, but he was clearly not interested in serving his country without questioning the policy necessitating it.

Mythic heroes serve courageously and unambiguously, however, and the exhibit’s text made sure to smooth over any possible gaps in Tillman’s sacrifice. Thus, the final line of the narrative was also the only place to acknowledge the circumstances of his death, as it read, “His heroic efforts to provide cover for his fellow soldiers as they escaped from the canyon led to his tragic death via fratricide.” Even with the emphasis on Tillman’s purported heroism, this text was overwhelmed by the power of the visuals contained within the same display. Indeed, the glass case prominently displayed his Arizona Cardinals jersey and Army Ranger uniform, as well as a large copy of what has now become an iconic photograph of Tillman running onto the field, helmet in hand and hair flying from his head. This image, which first appeared on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* after his death, provided the blueprint for the 8-foot-tall statue of Tillman that is located in the “Freedom Plaza” outside the University of Phoenix Stadium where the Arizona Cardinals play. Thus, the inclusion

of the image in the exhibit echoes uses of the photo elsewhere, all of which articulate with one another to cement the mythologizing of his death.

What is most striking, however, was the juxtaposition of the “Duty and Courage” display with the third and final video kiosk, which was located on the opposite wall. Thus, a visitor would likely look at the Tillman artifacts with the kiosk to her or his back. Even without facing the video, the narration was audible so that one could look at and listen to the Pat Tillman myth at the same time. The video, again narrated by Summerall, was about the NFL’s role after 9/11 more generally, but a specific segment celebrated Tillman’s legacy. It included a very brief clip of Tillman himself saying of 9/11, “Times like this, you think about . . . what freedom we’re allowed.” That was the first—and *only*—contribution from Tillman. Immediately afterward, visitors see and hear Donovan (“He’s a genuine hero . . . he’s a patriot”) and Hennings (“He’s a role model”), two players who were featured veterans in other portions of the exhibit. It is deeply and bitterly ironic that the video quoted Tillman contemplating the “freedom we’re allowed” even as the exhibit’s display stripped him of any freedom or individual agency. Rather than honor Tillman as a complex and even contradictory figure, “Pro Football and the American Spirit” defaulted to the common mythic image that has been discredited.

The end of this final video also provided a summary of the exhibit as a whole. Throughout each segment, it featured numerous images of flags, ostensibly “average” citizens showing support for America, and players demonstrating their patriotism in myriad symbolic gestures. In its conclusion, clearly designed to offer affirmation and inspiration, Summerall declared:

Whenever America called, the mighty of the NFL responded with courage and sacrifice, showing they treasure freedom above all else . . . In war and in football, the will to win and the will to excel are the things that endure.

With these final words, “Pro Football and the American Spirit” offered a full-throated endorsement of the conflation of football with war while celebrating the sport’s symbolic importance to American identity.

Reimagining Pro Football’s Public Memory

Public memory scholarship demonstrates that memory texts are not innocent references to moments and people of the past. Rather, they are ideologically laden sites of rhetorical substance, places where citizenship is constituted and enacted. Given football’s rich historical articulation with military imagery, as well as the NFL’s legacy of supporting the US armed forces, it is critical to engage the rhetorical production of militarism on display at the Pro Football Hall of Fame, a site that welcomes approximately 200,000 visitors each year.⁵⁴ Especially because “Pro Football and the American Spirit” is now a traveling exhibition, it has a growing potential to reach and affect a large and impressionable audience. Accordingly, at least three implications of this analysis bear scrutiny.

First, this exhibit is a reminder that the culture of militarism continues to encroach on American life. It is significant not only that officials at the Pro Football Hall of Fame chose to feature the military in an exhibit, but also that this was their *first* choice for a traveling exhibit. As sports leagues and officials increasingly partner with sports media to honor, promote, and celebrate American military efforts, it becomes more and more difficult to separate the mythology of the military from actual policies or war campaigns. When war is depicted in such noble and normal terms, it is sanitized for public consumption. In this way, the Hall of Fame exhibit articulates with other elements of the MIME-NET, such that it “cleans up the political discourse as well as the battlefield.”⁵⁵ As a consequence, war is celebrated for its romantic virtue and its ability to inspire patriotism.

Second, when we make myth of war, we also delimit our expressions of appropriate citizenship. As Barbara Biesecker’s study of World War II memory illustrates, contemporary memory texts constitute the “good citizen” by “manufacturing and embracing a particular *kind* of American.”⁵⁶ The good citizen of “Pro Football and the American Spirit” is clearly one of virtuous service, sacrifice, and unwavering duty to country. Among the most notable features of the exhibit was the *complete absence* of any representation of dissent from war. One might conclude from the exhibit that dissent simply did not occur, but that is, of course, inaccurate. Although a clear minority, voices of dissent and protest have been present in the NFL for decades. Perhaps most representative is Dave Meggysey, whose book, *Out of Their League*, struck a counter-cultural chord when it was published in 1970. Meggysey’s account is part autobiography and part critique of the hyper-masculinity and “militaristic aura” that characterizes professional (and college) football.⁵⁷ Unfortunately no one like Meggysey, who openly opposed the Vietnam War, appeared in the displays at the Hall of Fame. Giving respectful space to such players might have opened the exhibit to more complexity and nuance. In its presented form, however, it reduced citizenship to flags and anthems and foreclosed honoring dissent as a critical democratic function.

Third, this analysis also has implications for public memory scholarship, as my critique of “Pro Football and the American Spirit” invites further investigation into the civic lessons contained within the Hall of Fame and other similar sites of memory. On the one hand, the exhibit provides compelling historical evidence of the sacrifices made by football-affiliated veterans and thus reminds its visitors of the value of national service. On the other hand, this value is stripped of any ambiguity and presented so as to valorize all service as heroic and all American military efforts as noble. Competing images of heroism and citizenship are all but erased, thus demonstrating the Pro Football Hall of Fame’s complicity with contemporary conceptions of order and discipline, especially as they are envisioned through popular culture’s increasingly militaristic worldview. If modern museums are indeed characterized by the “exhibitionary complex,” then “Pro Football and the American Spirit” is an exercise in a form of power that articulates with other efforts to constitute “Americans” in ways that blunt democratic expression and neutralize dissent.

Unlike state-sponsored museums of science and natural history, halls of fame could be easily dismissed as trivial repositories of sports memorabilia. It should be clear, however, that sporting memories contribute to the “regimes of vision” that help constitute democratic citizenship. Similarly, as important as it is for rhetorical critics to understand contemporary democratic culture through studies of political speeches, memorials, or even photo journalism,⁵⁸ rhetorical studies of public memory scholarship would be well served to engage more robustly with the discourses of sport. In the case of “Pro Football and the American Spirit,” it is evident that the very nature of football mythology enables a particular kind of identification with nationalistic and militaristic discourses. As a consequence, the exhibit is not really about, as its website maintains, “the many ways in which the National Football League and its players have responded to America’s call during military conflicts.”⁵⁹ Rather, it is about war itself, about constituting and conditioning citizens to accept the necessity and normalcy of war, and about extending and celebrating a culture of militarism.

Notes

- [1] For an extended discussion of this idea, see Carl Boggs and Tom Pollard, *The Hollywood War Machine: US Militarism and Popular Culture* (Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2007); Geoff Martin and Erin Steuter, *Pop Culture Goes to War: Enlisting and Resisting Militarism in the War on Terror* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2010); and Roger Stahl, *Militainment, Inc.: War, Media, and Popular Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2010).
- [2] Samantha King, “Offensive Lines: Sport-State Synergy in an Era of Perpetual War,” *Cultural Studies & Critical Methodologies* 8, no. 4 (2008): 529.
- [3] James Der Derian, *Virtuous War: Mapping the Military–Industrial–Media–Entertainment Network* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2001).
- [4] For more on these ideas, see Michael L. Butterworth and Stormi D. Moskal, “American Football, Flags, and ‘Fun’: The Bell Helicopter Armed Forces Bowl and the Rhetorical Production of Militarism,” *Communication, Culture & Critique* 2, no. 4 (2009): 411–33; Gordon Mitchell, “Public Argument-Driven Security Studies,” *Argumentation and Advocacy* 39, no. 1 (2002): 57–71; and Roger Stahl, “Have You Played the War on Terror?” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 23, no. 2 (2006): 112–30.
- [5] King, “Offensive Lines,” 528.
- [6] Jeffrey St. John and Todd Kelshaw, “Remembering ‘Memory’: The Emergence and Performance of an Institutional Keyword in Communication Studies,” *Review of Communication* 7, no. 1 (2007): 51.
- [7] Carole Blair, Greg Dickinson, and Brian L. Ott, “Introduction: Rhetoric/Memory/Place,” in *Places of Public Memory: The Rhetoric of Museums and Memorials*, ed. Greg Dickinson, Carole Blair, and Brian L. Ott (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2010), 6.
- [8] Stephen Howard Browne, “Arendt, Eichmann, and the Politics of Remembrance,” in *Framing Public Memory*, ed. Kendall R. Phillips (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2004), 48.
- [9] Marita Sturken, *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 7; also see Stephanie Coontz, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* (New York: Basic Books, 1992).
- [10] For examples, see Victoria J. Gallagher, “Memory and Reconciliation in the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute,” *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 2, no. 2 (1999): 303–20; Rachel M. Gans,

- “The Newseum and Collective Memory: Narrowed Choices, Limited Voices, and Rhetoric of Freedom,” *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 26, no. 4 (2002): 370–90; Todd F. McDorman, “History, Collective Memory, and the Supreme Court: Debating ‘the People’ through the *Dred Scott* Controversy,” *Southern Communication Journal* 71, no. 3 (2006): 213–34; or Kenneth S. Zagacki and Victoria J. Gallagher, “Rhetoric and Materiality in the Museum Park at the North Carolina Museum of Art,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 95, no. 2 (2009): 171–91.
- [11] For examples, see Barbara Biesecker, “Remembering World War II: The Rhetoric and Politics of National Commemoration at the Turn of the 21st Century,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88, no. 4 (2002): 393–409; Carole Blair, Marsha S. Jeppeson, and Enrico Pucci Jr., “Public Memorializing in Postmodernity: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial as Prototype,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 77, no. 3 (1991): 263–88; Elisia L. Cohen and Cynthia Willis, “One Nation under Radio: Digital and Public Memory after September 11,” *New Media & Society* 6, no. 5 (2004): 591–610; Robert Hariman and John Louis Lucaites, “Public Identity and Collective Memory in US Iconic Photography: The Image of ‘Accidental Napalm,’” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 20, no. 1 (2003): 35–66; and Bryan Hubbard and Marouf A. Hasian Jr., “Atomic Memories of the *Enola Gay*: Strategies of Remembrance at the National Air and Space Museum,” *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 1, no. 3 (1998): 363–85.
- [12] David Hoogland Noon, “Operating Enduring Analogy: World War II, the War on Terror, and the Uses of Historical Memory,” *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 7, no. 2 (2004): 342.
- [13] Peter Ehrenhaus, “Why We Fought: Holocaust Memory in Spielberg’s *Saving Private Ryan*,” *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 18, no. 3 (2001): 321–37.
- [14] Bryan C. Taylor, “The Bodies of August: Photographic Realism and Controversy at the National Air and Space Museum,” *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 1, no. 3 (1998): 334.
- [15] Greg Dickinson, Brian L. Ott, and Eric Aoki, “Spaces of Remembering and Forgetting: The Reverent Eye/I at the Plains Indian Museum,” *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 3, no. 1 (2006): 29.
- [16] Carole Blair, “Contemporary US Memorial Sites as Exemplars of Rhetoric’s Materiality,” in *Rhetorical Bodies*, ed. Jack Selzer and Sharon Crowley (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999), 16.
- [17] Gallagher, “Memory and Reconciliation in the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute,” 304.
- [18] Tony Bennett, “Civic Seeing: Museums and the Organization of Vision,” in *A Companion to Museum Studies*, ed. Sharon Macdonald (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 263.
- [19] Tony Bennett, “Speaking to the Eyes: Museums, Legibility, and the Social Order, in *The Politics of Display: Museums, Science, Culture*, ed. Sharon Macdonald (London: Routledge, 1998), 29.
- [20] Elizabeth M. Croke, *Museums and Community: Ideas, Issues and Challenges* (London: Routledge, 2007), 23.
- [21] Sharon Macdonald, ed., “Exhibitions of Power and Powers of Exhibition: An Introduction to the Politics of Display,” in *The Politics of Display*, 4.
- [22] Tony Bennett, “The Exhibitionary Complex,” in *Culture/Power/History: A Reader in Contemporary Social Theory*, ed. Nicholas B. Dirks, Geoff Eley, and Sherry B. Ortner (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 129.
- [23] I want to be clear that I am not suggesting that all communication scholars have ignored sport. Scholars in mass communication and media and cultural studies, in particular, have developed a robust sport literature. However, until quite recently, it has been a marginal area of study among rhetorical scholars. For some exceptions, see Michael L. Butterworth, “The Politics of the Pitch: Claiming and Contesting Democracy through the Iraqi National Soccer Team,” *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 4, no. 2 (2007): 184–203; “Saved at Home: Christian Branding and Faith Nights in the ‘Church of Baseball,’” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 97, no. 3 (2011): 309–33; Thomas B. Farrell, “Media Rhetoric as Social Drama: The Winter Olympics of 1984,” *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 6, no. 2 (1989): 158–82; Daniel A. Grano, “Ritual Disorder and the Contractual Morality of Sport: A Case Study in

- Race, Class, and Agreement,” *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 10, no. 3 (2007): 445–74; and Daniel A. Grano and Kenneth S. Zagacki, “Cleansing the Superdome: The Paradox of Purity and Post-Katrina Guilt,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 97, no. 2 (2011): 201–23.
- [24] Stephen G. Wieting and Judy Polumbaum, “Prologue,” in *Sport and Memory in North America*, ed. Stephen G. Wieting (London: Frank Cass, 2001), 4. Although it is not primarily about sport, a good example of the memory work done by sporting iconography can be found in Victoria J. Gallagher and Margaret R. LaWare, “Sparring with Public Memory: The Rhetorical Embodiment of Race, Power, and Conflict in the *Monument to Joe Louis*,” in Dickinson et al., *Places of Public Memory*, 87–112.
- [25] Butterworth and Moskal, “American Football, Flags, and ‘Fun,’” 413.
- [26] Michael Oriard, *Reading Football: How the Popular Press Created an American Spectacle* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 9.
- [27] Michael MacCambridge, *America’s Game: The Epic Story of How Pro Football Captured a Nation* (New York: Random House, 2004), xiv.
- [28] For examples, see Dale A. Herbeck, “Sports Metaphors and Public Policy: The Football Theme in Desert Storm Discourse,” in *Metaphorical World Politics*, ed. Francis A. Beer and Christ’l De Landtsheer (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2004), 121–39; Sue Curry Jansen and Don Sabo, “The Sport/War Metaphor: Hegemonic Masculinity, the Persian Gulf War, and the New World Order,” *Sociology of Sport Journal* 11, no. 1 (1994): 1–17; and Jeffrey Segrave, “The Sports Metaphor in American Cultural Discourse,” *Culture, Sport, Society* 3, no. 1 (2000): 48–60.
- [29] Gerald R. Gems, *For Pride, Profit, and Patriarchy: Football and the Incorporation of American Cultural Values* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2000), 78.
- [30] Wanda Ellen Wakefield, *Playing to Win: Sports and the American Military, 1898–1945* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 89.
- [31] MacCambridge, *America’s Game*, 11–2.
- [32] Michael Oriard, *Brand NFL: Making and Selling America’s Favorite Sport* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 30, 18.
- [33] See Joseph Price, “The Super Bowl as Religious Festival,” in *Sport and Religion*, ed. Shirl J. Hoffman (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 1992), 13–5.
- [34] Gordon R. Mitchell, “Patriotism at 500 Feet and 450 MPH: Whoosh and Awe in Military Flyovers at Sporting Events,” (paper, National Communication Association 94th Annual Convention, San Diego, CA, November 2008).
- [35] Lawrence A. Wenner, “The Super Bowl Pregame Show: Cultural Fantasies and Political Subtext,” in *Media, Sports, & Society*, ed. Lawrence A. Wenner (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1989), 157–79.
- [36] Douglas Kellner, *The Persian Gulf TV War* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992), 258.
- [37] Michael Silk and Mark Falcous, “One Day in September/A Week in February: Mobilizing American (Sporting) Nationalisms,” *Sociology of Sport Journal* 22, no. 4 (2005): 464.
- [38] Michael J. Shapiro, “Representing World Politics: The Sport/War Intertext,” in *International/Intertextual Relations: Postmodern Readings of World Politics*, ed. James Der Derian and Michael J. Shapiro (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1989), 80.
- [39] Michael Mandelbaum, *The Meaning of Sports: Why Americans Watch Baseball, Football, and Basketball and What They See When They Do* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), 196.
- [40] Herbeck, “Sports Metaphors and Public Policy,” 122.
- [41] Jennifer Souers Chevraux (Exhibit Specialist), personal correspondence with author, March 31, 2010.
- [42] Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995), 6.
- [43] Dickinson, Ott, and Aoki, “Spaces of Remembering and Forgetting,” 30.
- [44] *Ibid.*

- [45] Kurt Edward Kemper, *College Football and American Culture in the Cold War Era* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 2.
- [46] "Pro Football and the American Spirit," Pro Football Hall of Fame, <http://www.profootballhof.com/AmericanSpirit.aspx>.
- [47] All quotations from the exhibit's displays are based on my own notes taken during my visit.
- [48] Stahl, *Militainment, Inc.*, 29.
- [49] Sturken, *Tangled Memories*, 141.
- [50] Noon, "Operating Enduring Analogy," 340.
- [51] King, "Offensive Lines," 534.
- [52] Mary Tillman with Narda Zacchion, *Boots on the Ground by Dusk: My Tribute to Pat Tillman* (New York: Modern Times, 2008).
- [53] Gary Smith, "Remember His Name," *Sports Illustrated*, September 11, 2006, <http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/vault/article/magazine/MAG1108561/3/index.htm>.
- [54] Annual attendance information available at "Facts and History," Pro Football Hall of Fame, <http://www.profootballhof.com/hall/hof-history.aspx>.
- [55] Der Derian, *Virtuous War*, xv.
- [56] Biesecker, "Remembering World War II," 394.
- [57] Dave Meggyesy, *Out of Their League* (Berkeley, CA: Ramparts Press, 1970), 147.
- [58] Just as examples of these forms, see Stephen H. Browne, "Reading Public Memory in Daniel Webster's *Plymouth Rock Oration*," *Western Journal of Communication* 57, no. 4 (1993): 464–77; Carole Blair and Neil Michel, "The AIDS Memorial Quilt and the Contemporary Culture of Public Commemoration," *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 10, no. 4 (2007): 595–626; or Robert Hariman and John Louis Lucaites, *No Caption Needed: Photographs, Public Culture, and Liberal Democracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).
- [59] "Pro Football and the American Spirit," Pro Football Hall of Fame.