

Do Not Say Boston Strong When Your Team Wins

I awoke this morning to read my social media newsfeeds replete with Red Sox infused posts, several of which included “*Boston Strong*.” Likewise, the news quoted public figures who were congratulating the Sox and adding “Boston Strong” to their statements.

I understand why “*Boston Strong*” has become the thing to say. It was part of the healing process from the terrorist attack during the Boston Marathon. However, to now marry that phrase with sports is obscene. The connection being made speaks to the marriage of violence and conformity with organized sports. Our children are indoctrinated through peewee sports and little leagues. They are later absorbed into scholastic sports to be thoroughly brainwashed to ultimately worship teams and players, purchase their merchandise, spend thousands to watch the games, and pontificate endlessly about the quasi-science of statistics versus team management.

Before you write me off as a sports hater, consider the part that sports play in the proliferation of violence. I speak not just about acts of violence but also the acceptance of violence. Americans worship violence. We hail it as the logical response to most situations and sports foster this mindset. Further, sports drive the concepts of conformity and division into our heads. Conformity is demonstrated by large groups of people wearing team uniforms as well as the dominance of sports-related chat infused into casual conversations (*to make a connection with strangers*). The division is infused by the people choosing and following teams. This literally pits “*us*” against “*them*” in the minds of fans.

These principles are taken advantage of by school administrators. Students who conform are protected. Those who are considered undesirable (e.g., *anti-authoritarian, misfits, low income, racially different*) are punished and marginalized. The elite students (*jocks and those who come from middle to high income families*) are encouraged to torment and brutalize the undesirables. This is enabled by scholastic sports. Check out how the parents act at little league and school games. Check out how teachers turn a blind eye when undesirable students are openly harassed or assaulted. Just try to complain and watch as the school administrators circle the wagons and proceed to punish the complaining student.

This mentality is carried over into adult life as people drink alcohol and gather in groups to passionately infuse themselves into games that are played by overly paid jocks. Euphoria is achieved when one’s team wins. This mirrors religious fervor. The camaraderie at these gatherings is permeated with adrenalin, alcohol, and aggression. There is no wonder that they usually invoke acts of violence (*whether a team wins or loses as we have seen in Boston repeatedly*). Sports should be a healthy activity that teaches teamwork, healthy competition, and exercise. Instead, sports consistently teach pack mentality, violence, attacking the weak, division, and elitism.

Therefore, repeating “*Boston Strong*” when celebrating a team win is obscene. “*Boston Strong*” invokes an “*Us Against Them*” attitude. It will become a call for violence against all enemies real and perceived. “*Boston Strong*” is tied to a terrorist act. It was originally a slogan for citizens to band together in opposition to violent enemies. Now, it is a taunt against other teams that can escalate into invitations to assault opposing team fans, misfits, people who do not like sports (*or do not conform to*

*team spirit*), and any other reason to punish undesirables.

Let us face the truth here; a conformist-driven elitist American society has historically brutalized minority factions and undesirables. Just because this is a large part of our history does not mean that it is a good policy or that it should continue. In fact, it is part of the uglier side of America.

If America is the truly greatest country in the world, it is high time that we act it.