2013

Fighting for the Home Team; Music and Stadium Violence

Avital Rosen
CUNY City College

How does access to this work benefit you? Let us know!
Follow this and additional works at: http://academicworks.cuny.edu/cc_etds_theses

Part of the Music Commons

Recommended Citation
Rosen, Avital, "Fighting for the Home Team; Music and Stadium Violence" (2013). CUNY Academic Works.
http://academicworks.cuny.edu/cc_etds_theses/207

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the City College of New York at CUNY Academic Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master’s Theses by an authorized administrator of CUNY Academic Works. For more information, please contact AcademicWorks@cuny.edu.
Fighting for the Home Team: Music and Stadium Violence

Avital Rosen

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
Master of Arts in Musicology
at the City College of the City University of New York

May 2013
Table of Contents

Acknowledgements...........................................................................................................iii

Introduction.......................................................................................................................1

Section I: College Football..................................................................................................5
    A Brief History of Military Marching Bands..............................................................5
    Fight Songs and Stadium Anthems.............................................................................12

Section II: Baseball............................................................................................................24
    The Power of the Human Voice.................................................................................24
    The Super Fan..............................................................................................................28

Section III: Soccer...........................................................................................................36
    A Seven Nation Army Couldn’t Hold Me Back.........................................................36
    Who Do You Love More: Your Team, or Your Wife?..............................................41

Section IV: Solutions......................................................................................................50

Conclusion.......................................................................................................................53

Bibliography....................................................................................................................56
Acknowledgements

I would first like to express my sincere gratitude to my thesis advisor, Dr. Jonathan Pieslak. Dr. Pieslak’s graduate course, Music and Extremist Cultures, revitalized my interest in research and scholarly writing and ultimately served as the catalyst for my thesis. I deeply admire his expertise in his subject matter, and I have grown tremendously under his tutelage. His continued patience and encouragement motivated me throughout the course of this project. Dr. Pieslak has been a true mentor, and I would not have been able to complete this thesis without his help.

I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Shaugn O’Donnell, who helped me realize the importance of choosing the right topic for my thesis. During my time at City College, Dr. O’Donnell has made a huge impact on my interest in popular music studies. He is an exceptional educator, and I very much appreciate the kindness he has shown me. I also wish to thank Dr. Chadwick Jenkins who, in addition to being my second reader, gave me the incredible opportunity to teach an undergraduate class at City College. Dr. Jenkins also helped me navigate through the ins and outs of my graduate program, for which I am sincerely grateful.

Thanks also to my family. Their continued love and support guided me through a difficult transition when I made a career detour to follow my dreams of studying musicology. My father especially nurtured my love of music from a young age, and I am grateful that he encouraged me to make it my life’s work. Lastly, I must thank the biggest (non-violent) sports fan I know; Jonathan Zagha. His love, patience, and support have truly guided me though this process. His intelligence and strength have motivated me to finish what I have started.
Introduction

On July 14, 2012, the Club Brugge (Belgium) and Borussia Dortmund (Germany) soccer match was delayed before kickoff when a riot erupted in the stands between fans of these rival clubs. A video posted online shows segments of the altercation between fans who walked onto the field and others who remained in the stadium.\footnote{Soccer match between Club Brugge and Borussia Dortmund \url{http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cj7p2yQqmZI} (accessed December 10, 2012).} To many observers, this might be another case of all-too-frequent soccer stadium violence, in this instance ironically occurring at a “friendly” match. However, a notable component of this video is that, after the start of the altercation and security attempting to break up the fight, one can clearly hear singing in the background. The singing during this fight literally provides the accompaniment to the altercation, and the fans’ violent actions are clearly encouraged and intensified by the cheering and singing.

Soccer history, and sports history in general, abounds with such examples of songs setting the soundtrack to violent confrontations between fans. Among the many examples is a soccer match between rival clubs River Plate and Boca Juniors (both from Buenos Aires) from November 16, 2010. Video footage from this game shows that a fire was started in the stands. As the flames rose higher, singing can be heard throughout the stadium; the fans continued to provide a musical accompaniment to the ensuing chaos.\footnote{Soccer match between River Plate and Boca Juniors \url{http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-r3jAN5X6M} (accessed April 23, 2013).} Another example is a soccer match between Polish rivals Wisla Krakow and Cracovia from June 11, 2011. In the video, one can see agitated fans being sprayed with tear gas by police. Various fans are sprayed repeatedly as they continue to taunt police officers.\footnote{Soccer match between Wisla Krakow and Cracovia \url{http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8HxUNa17MKI} (accessed April 23, 2013).}
Throughout this alarming video footage, the voices of fans joined together in song can be heard ringing throughout the stadium. Finally, consider a match between two rival teams from Northern Ireland: Glentoran and Linfield. The riots that occurred at this March 28, 2011 soccer game began after the match itself was over. Video footage shows various incidents that resulted from fans rushing the field. In addition to the fighting among fans on the field itself, there were fans on the field throwing things at rival fans who remained in the stands. Once again, there was vocal accompaniment to these riots; fans can clearly be heard using their voices to cheer on and intensify the fighting.

The role of music at sporting events has always been and remains complex. Fans often show support for their favorite team by cheering and singing songs to boost the morale of their favorite players, seemingly harmless acts of rooting for the home team. However, music can also act as a catalyst for or an accompaniment to violent acts in stadium settings. This thesis explores the significant role that music plays within the world of sports rivalries and stadium violence. The role that music plays within the world of sports violence is a topic that has yet to be deeply explored by musicologists. Sports psychologists and cultural theorists have much to offer on the topics of fanaticism, crowd behavior, and how sports operate in the social bonding aspect of group theory. Violent encounters are becoming more and more common at sporting events, from the college level to professional games. One need only search the Internet for “violence at sports games” to become aware of this growing issue; four-million hits are generated when that phrase is entered into a Google search. Further, sports stadiums like Lincoln Financial Field, home of the Philadelphia Eagles, were built to include a rather unusual section: a

---

4 Soccer match between Glentoran and Linfield
5 Google search from February 11, 2013.
jail which holds four cells for particularly rowdy fans, demonstrating that stadiums have come to expect violent behavior from their fans.6

Music adds fuel to this fire, which invites us to examine both its cause and effect with the hopes of gaining an understanding as to why fans are inspired to add a musical soundtrack to their intense sports rivalries. By concentrating on the manner in which music is used within sports rivalries and violence, I address several questions: How is music used as a tool of aggression at sports games? At what level do participants engage with music at sporting events? How have fight songs and the military culture of marching bands affected the role of music at college football games? How do sports fans use music to further connect with their favorite players and teams? To address these questions, my primary research data comes from articles and videos that present specific instances in which music was used as a soundtrack to a violent encounter. Additionally, my research also draws upon my interviews conducted with both sports fans and various professionals within the world of sports fan violence. The theoretical framework through which I examine these questions is informed by musicology, but also from other disciplinary perspectives and scholarly resources in the fields of sociology, psychology and cultural studies.

The topic of music’s role within sports rivalries and violence is multifaceted and invites examination from several different angles. As such, I explore three different sports that abound with examples of sports rivalry, each offering a unique perspective on music’s role within its particular culture: college football, baseball, and soccer.7 In my

6 Jail at Lincoln Financial Field
7 While European soccer fans refer to their sport as football, I have chosen to call it soccer for the sake of clarity, as it is easier to distinguish from American football.
first section, I examine the role of fight songs and marching bands at several colleges within the Big 10 Conference to understand the culture that allows fans to view their team’s stadium as a second home. The role of marching bands at college football game is extremely important. These bands have strong military origins, and there are several links between music from the Civil War era with regard to marching bands that can be found in today’s collegiate marching bands. The first section lays the foundation for the subsequent sections by demonstrating the significance of music in the stadium setting and the underlying connections comparing the role of music to soldiers with the role of music to athletes in sports environments. The second section explores the power of the human voice, and how this power can manifest in physical altercations at sporting events. This section will further emphasize the importance of the social bonding aspect of fan bases, and the role that music plays in promoting such groups. I will discuss the “Bleacher Creatures” of Yankee Stadium who, with their own songs and chants, continue to cheer on their beloved team year after year as examples of “true” fans. In my third section, I examine music’s role in sports rivalry as it applies to soccer. Here I will apply the theories of fanaticism from cultural studies scholar Lawrence Grossberg and from several sports psychologists to gain a greater understanding of the intense level of rivalry that exists within soccer. Particularly, we are able to see how easily the metaphors of violence articulated through the sung human voice can trigger actual violence. My final section offers preliminary ideas on how music can be used in a positive manner within sports rivalries throughout the world.
1. College Football

The Military History of Collegiate Marching Bands

Over the last several decades, the popularity of college football games has risen to the level seen among fans of professional football. College games are featured on ESPN and other major network channels in conjunction with commercials that add to the excitement of a big game with a rival school.⁸ Among the most important aspects of any college football game are the performances from each school’s marching band. In addition to their complex, choreographed routines, marching bands are also known for playing their school’s alma mater and fight songs, which typically feature words that are sung enthusiastically by each school’s students, their families, and alumni. In this section, I provide a historical context for present-day college marching bands by documenting the military history of the genre and discussing the music and fight songs of the University of Michigan, Ohio State University, and Indiana University. Of particular importance, as shown through my interviews with marching band members from the University of Michigan, is the fact that music catalyzes heightened emotional responses to sports rivalry.

With the role of the marching band being so prominent within collegiate football culture, it is important to discuss the history of the marching band, which has strong military origins. During the time of the Civil War, General Robert E. Lee was quoted as saying “I don’t believe we can have an army without music.”⁹ The prominence of military-style marching bands during this era grew substantially, as there was no shortage

---

⁸ ESPN commercial for Ohio State/Michigan rivalry
of amateur musicians throughout the country.\textsuperscript{10} Initially, local men were recruited as band musicians when armies came through their area. As this practice became more popular, these men became recruited as true army members just to be a part of an official military marching band. The role of these marching bands ought not to be undervalued, as they provided both inspiration and entertainment to the soldiers. During their downtime in the evening, band members played patriotic songs, religious melodies, marches, classical music, and popular tunes to entertain one another around the campfire with the hopes of keeping morale high.\textsuperscript{11} During active combat, the marching band members themselves were often found standing alongside the soldiers in the heat of the battle, playing their instruments as bullets flew by. As time went on, the practice of having musicians accompany soldiers directly on the field began to wane. Band members continued to entertain the soldiers with their music, but the role of marching bands ultimately became more ceremonial, as is seen with marching bands today.\textsuperscript{12}

In addition to providing these important roles to armies throughout the country, marching band members were also helpful to America’s economy during the Civil War by “…. [g]reatly stimul[ating] the enterprise by creating an enormous demand for percussion instruments. U.S. Army records show that over 32,000 drums were purchased between 1861 and 1865. With the potential for profits so great, many individuals and

\textsuperscript{10} In their book A Pictorial History of Civil War Era Musical Instruments and Military Bands (Pictorial Histories Publishing Company: West Virginia, 1985), authors Robert Garofalo and Mark Elrod include a note from an 1889 issue of Harper’s Weekly: “At present there are over ten thousand military marching bands in the United States. In the smaller cities they average twenty-five men each [usually six woodwinds, fifteen brasses, and percussion]. In small country towns they number from twelve to eighteen members.”\textsuperscript{9}

\textsuperscript{11} Erbsen, Songs and Tales of the Civil War, 7.

\textsuperscript{12} The Military History of Marching Bands
companies became directly or indirectly involved in the making, distribution, and selling of drums during the war.”¹³

A most important musician to each infantry company was the drummer. In addition to a fifer, the drummer provided musical accompaniment to most of an army’s daily activities. According to Robert Garofalo and Mark Elrod, “A day’s routine usually included the playing of some fifty short pieces to initiate, accompany, or end military activities. Field maneuvers were controlled by the same means.”¹⁴ These field musicians were a part of every infantry company for both the Union and Confederate armies, while larger units, such as regiments and brigades, had marching bands.

In comparison with today’s collegiate marching band system, the drummer is still an integral part of the group. In addition to being the rhythmic backbone of any marching band, drummers often form a smaller subgroup called the drum line, or drum corp. These groups often perform independently of the entire marching band during football games. Additionally, opportunities for drum corp membership exist outside of a traditional collegiate marching band.¹⁵ Suffice to say, the role of the drummer has remained ever strong and their presence has come to be expected at collegiate sporting events.

Marching bands served as a major inspiration and motivating force to soldiers during the Civil War. This brief historical overview allows us to see the strong historical connection that military marching bands have to collegiate marching bands. The connection occurs to this day, as marching bands are still an integral part of any college football experience. To gain a greater understanding of the role that music plays at these

¹⁵ For example, see the website for the Drum Corps International, a nonprofit group known as the “Marching Music’s Major League.” http://www.dci.org, the official (accessed March 15, 2013).
games, I interviewed several members of the University of Michigan’s marching band. The students answered four questions:

1. Do you believe that music can be an important factor in riling up an already agitated fan at a sporting event? (Think: very loud music, stadium chants, popular songs that are staples to prominent fan bases)

2. College football games are notable for their marching band performances and school songs, known as fight songs. Do you find the term fight song to be at all problematic in an environment where tensions from strong rivalries are often expressed both physically and verbally?

3. Do you believe that music can be used as a tool to intensify one’s feelings (either positively or negatively)?

4. What do you think it is about sports games that bring out violent tendencies in people who may not otherwise express themselves in such a manner?

After they completed these four questions, I asked the students to share any violent incidents they witnessed during a football game. Generally speaking, the responses to these four questions were mixed. While most students generally agreed that music could be used as a tool to intensify one’s feelings, the answers for my first question drew some strong responses. Student 1 (male) commented that he “absolutely” believed that music was an important factor in riling up an already agitated fan. He remarked that, “If by agitated, the fan is angry, then stadium chants, especially if the fan is at an away game, can be really disconcerting and annoying.” Student 2 (female) shared this opinion, and further explained the role music can play in pumping up a crowd of students: “Music can definitely bring up the energy level of the student section. The typical pump up songs (Seven Nation Army, Lose Yourself) get students excited and back into the game. Even Don’t Stop Believing gets them riled up, probably because of the line about ‘South

16 Interview with Student 1, conducted by the author via email on March 10, 2013.
Detroit’ — many of our students are from the greater Detroit area.”  

Student 2 further shared an anecdote about a particular song that riles up the students in the home section at the University of Michigan’s football stadium: “We play a section of Temptation (yes, the old song from 1933) before the 4th down to ‘tempt’ the opposing team to punt. Unfortunately, our students have made up their own lyrics to the song and it is known among everybody except the band as the ‘you suck’ cheer.” Another student (male) mentioned this ritual, noting that the addition of the words “you suck” from the student body prompted “the band to add two additional chords to the piece to drown out the swearing on national television.” The song “Temptation,” as noted by student 2 was a hit from 1933 as sung by Bing Crosby.

While most acts of violence (both physical and verbal) at a sporting event can be attributed to the behaviors of fans in the stands regarding a play on the field, a few of the University of Michigan marching band students reported that they personally were verbally attacked by fans of an opposing school. While the behavior of these fans usually results from a bad play or a losing team, it should be noted that their frustration is not exclusively directed towards the players on the field and can be taken out on other fans throughout the stadium. This point is made clear by Student 3, who summarized some common incidents that the band members have come to expect:

I have had so many fans boo me and tell me that I suck, that I fuck my mother, etc. while in the Michigan Marching Band. I’ve also been told on multiple

---

17 Interview with Student 2, conducted by the author via email on March 7, 2013.
18 Excerpt from interview with Student 2.
19 Interview with Student 3, conducted by the author via email on March 8, 2013.
occasions that “Ann Arbor is a whore.” These taunts typically come from Ohio State or Michigan State fans, though Notre Dame fans dish it out, too, but are generally much tamer than our Big Ten rivals. OSU fans are the worst of the bunch, sometimes throwing things at the band and frequently taunting, swearing at, or otherwise demeaning our band. At all of our rivals’ schools, we are loudly booed upon taking the field (as their bands are when they come to Michigan Stadium).\textsuperscript{21}

As the association of marching bands with football teams is quite strong, the accounts recalled by Student 3 may not seem so surprising. Verbal aggression, a topic I will discuss in greater detail in a subsequent section, is one of the most common forms of aggression that occurs at stadiums. The hateful terms reported by Student 3 are extremely common in a rivalry-fueled stadium environment; even when thinking about being directed toward a marching band member, as opposed to a student seated in the stands. What one may not expect, however, is physical aggression being employed against a member of an opposing team’s marching band. Student 2 shared two stories regarding physical aggression that was aimed directly at members of the University of Michigan’s marching band members:

As band members, we’re not allowed to swear or be overly rude to anyone, especially the other team and their fans, and we stick to that. We are very self-disciplined when we’re in the public eye. Our job is to support our team and our fans, not to bring down the other team. Despite this, we’re still picked on. At an away trip to a rival school this past season, some of us were walking around the outside of the field to go to the restrooms. As we reached the point where we had to go up some stairs to get into the concourse, we passed their baseball team who was waiting on the sideline to be recognized during one of the time outs for some accomplishment they had reached. So here we are, just some band members minding our own business on the way to the restrooms, and one of the baseball players decides to spit on one of the girls. We didn’t provoke him, we didn’t say anything, and he intentionally spit on us.\textsuperscript{22}

There are a few points worth noting from this anecdote. The first is that Student 2 decided to preface her story by noting that the band members are given a directive not to

\textsuperscript{21} Excerpt from interview with Student 3.
\textsuperscript{22} Excerpt from interview with Student 2.
“swear or be overly rude to anyone.” She further acknowledged that the band members take their job of representing their school seriously, and that their job is to provide support and entertainment at appropriate times during the football game. While Student 2 claims that band members are “self-disciplined” and do not (intentionally) add to the verbal or physical aggression that occurs during their games, the fact that these band members are associated with a rival team is abundantly clear to the baseball players accused of spitting on them. As such, they are marked targets for these acts of aggression and are clearly seen as unwelcome guests as much as a student sitting in the visitor’s section. Student 2 shared additional stories regarding both physical and verbal aggression that the University of Michigan band members experienced while visiting rival schools:

I think that rivalry games are where the violence is the worst. At Ohio State last year, one of their event staff members flipped us the double bird when we were marching into their stadium. Yes, an event staff member. He was a younger guy, and most of them are older folks who are actually quite polite to us. We often experience verbal abuse at the hands of the OSU and MSU fans, and a few years ago, an OSU fan hit one of our trombone players in the head with an orange after we had lost the game.23

These incidents as described by Student 2 show that acts of verbal and physical aggression are present at many levels between rival schools. The frustration that many fans feel as the result of a bad play on the field often manifests in physical violence towards others off the field. Further, these acts are often intensified when they are articulated through music. Marching bands provide the musical accompaniment that has become so important to these games and, as such, have become a significant part of the rivalries that are so common throughout college football.

---

23 Excerpt from interview with Student 2.
**Fight Songs and Stadium Anthems**

Another important musical aspect of these college football games is the performance of each school’s fight songs and alma mater, along with ever-popular stadium anthems that have become associated with a particular school. The vast majority of students in attendance at these games know the words to their school’s fight songs and stadium anthems, allowing for a truly overwhelming performance, considering the fact that some college stadiums seat over 100,000 people. I suggest that the term fight song, which differs from a stadium anthem, is in and of itself problematic. Maintaining popularity since the eighteen-hundreds, fight songs have lyrics that are not only prideful towards their specific college/university team, but often make references to soldiers fighting a battle.²⁴

As the music for fight songs is typically played by a school’s marching band, the connection between marching bands from the Civil War era and from today is further intensified. Additionally, it is not uncommon to see song lyrics for a school’s fight songs that were featured in a song from the time of the Civil War. As seen on the next page in Figure 1.1, the fight song from the University of Georgia, “Glory,” bears a striking resemblance to famous patriotic song, “The Battle Hymn of the Republic.”

---

²⁴ The Military History of Marching Bands
Figure 1.1 Lyrics and music for “Glory,” a fight song from the University of Georgia.  

In fact, the exact same melody is used in both songs; the University of Georgia wrote
lyrics to this melody to serve as an inspiration to their football team. The lyrics for “The
Battle Hymn of the Republic” were first published in 1862 in *The Atlantic Monthly* as
seen below:

```
THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY.

A MAGAZINE OF LITERATURE, ART, AND POLITICS.

*       *       *       *       *

VOL. IX. FEBRUARY, 1862.—NO. LII

*       *       *       *       *

BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC.

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord:
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword:
His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps:
   His day is marching on.26
```

There are three more verses that follow in “The Battle Hymn of the Republic.” This song
is based on an abolitionist song called “John Brown’s Body” which was popular during
the early years of the Civil War. Julia Howe is credited with rewriting the lyrics to
encompass the feelings of American soldiers during the Civil War.27 In terms of inspiring
a school’s sports teams and student body as a whole, this patriotic song serves as
wonderful inspiration. According to Wayne Erbsen, the earlier version of this song was
extremely popular during the Civil War time:

---

26 The Atlantic issue from February, 1862
27 “The Battle Hymn of the Republic”
   http://www.civilwar.org/education/history/on-the-homefront/culture/music/the-battle-hymn-of-the-
With an infectious rhythm and an easy chorus, the popularity of the song quickly spread. Among the first to sing it was Colonel Fletcher Webster’s 12th Massachusetts Regiment. On their way to the front in northern Virginia, they sang it with gusto as they marched through the streets of New York City on July 24, 1861. The crowd’s wild and enthusiastic response earned Webster’s soldiers the nickname, “The Hallelujah Regiment.” The song became so popular, in fact, that it quickly became the marching song of the entire Union army.28

Given the military origins of collegiate marching bands, the University of Georgia’s fight song, “Glory,” provides a strong link between their own marching band with those from the Civil War era.

A stadium anthem, on the other hand, is a popular song that has no specific tie to a school’s history or athletes. The goal of the stadium anthem is to pump up the crowd and keep spirits high throughout the sporting event. In my interviews conducted with the University of Michigan marching band members, I asked them if they felt that the term “fight song” was problematic; each student responded in kind that they did not find the term problematic. Student 3, in his response to this particular question, raised an interesting point: “…While it does use a combative word, it’s in the spirit of fighting hard for a win, not in physically fighting other fans.”29 The idea of fans “fighting hard” for a win is one that will be further developed throughout this thesis, as the connection that fans have with their favorite team or players is a driving force with violent incidents that occur due to sports rivalries. Fight songs are important because they create an opportunity for the crowd (and larger fan base) to cheer on their beloved players through music. According to the University of Michigan’s marching band website, their popular fight song, “The Victors,” first originated in 1898:

After Michigan’s season-ending come from behind victory against the University of Chicago, a post game celebration began in the streets of Chicago. Leading the

29 Excerpt from interview with Student 3.
festivity was the University of Michigan Band. Among the revelers was Louis Elbel who thought that the band “didn’t have the right celebration song.” Later, Elbel claimed to have heard a band “singing” a tune in his head which he described as “victory song.” At that moment, the refrain of what was to become *The Victors March* came to him. Thus, partly because of the University Band, Michigan received its great fight song.\(^{30}\)

On the sports website bleacherreport.com, “The Victors” was given the number one spot on their list of “The Top 15 College Fight Songs.” According to the website, John Philip Sousa was quoted as saying that this was the best fight song ever written. They further claim that, “[o]ne of the most recognizable fan interactions in all of college football is the sight of over 108,000 fans raising a clenched fist on…[the] recitation of the word, ‘Hail!'”\(^{31}\) In addition to the clenched fist, fans are also known to raise yellow pom-poms when saying the word “hail,” as seen in several videos online.\(^{32}\) The chorus of “The Victors” is as follows:

```
Hail! to the victors valiant
Hail! to the conqu’ring heroes
Hail! Hail! to Michigan
The leaders and the best
Hail! to the victors valiant
Hail! to the conqu’ring heroes
Hail! Hail! to Michigan
The champions of the West!
```

The spirit of this song is both celebratory and competitive. In referring to their team as “conquering heroes,” there are clear allusions to a battle that had true “valiant victors.”


\(^{32}\) The University of Michigan students sing “The Victors” http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjkJ6rpvgVc (accessed February 7, 2013). Another angle with this gesture is less friendly. During a discussion with a Professor who attended the University of Michigan, it was mentioned that his wife noted (while attending a football game at the school) that if you change the ‘a’ in ‘hail’ to an ‘e’ then you have the word ‘heil.’ A German word meaning hail, it is a term associated with the Nazis, as they commonly used it as their salute to leader Adolf Hitler.

Coupled with the raised fist on the word “Hail!”, these lyrics lend themselves perfectly to the idea of intense rivalry, and it is not difficult to see why this is such a popular fight song.

There are several examples of college fight songs that have the word “fight” in the title. Some are traditional in that the title states directly that it is a fight song belonging to a particular school, such as the “Michigan State Fight Song.” There are other contexts in which the word “fight” is used, however, such as when the word is transformed into an action verb: “Fighting Bulldogs” (Ferris State University), “The Fighting Chippewa” (Central Michigan University), or when fight is used as a directive to the team: “Fight On” (San Diego University), “Fight for California” (University of California at Berkeley), and “Fight on Sioux!” (University of North Dakota). These are merely variations on the traditional use of the word, although the value of the term is not diminished; rather, it is intensified by using the word “fight” as a directive. Another unique fight song belongs to Vanderbilt University, called “The Dynamite Song:”

Dynamite, dynamite, When Vandy starts to fight,
   Down the field with blood to yield,
     If need be, save the shield,
   If vict’ry’s won, when battle’s done
   Then Vandy’s name will rise in fame,
   But, win or lose, The Fates will choose,
   And Vandy’s game will be the same,
Dynamite, Dynamite, When Vandy starts to fight!

The imagery in this song is more graphic than most fight songs. The line “Down the field with blood to yield” draws visions of soldiers in the heat of battle. This intensifies the meaning of the song and also the element of rivalry between fan bases. Having lyrics like these imply that there is much on the line and that competition should be taken seriously.

---

34 Schueneman and Studwell. Collegiate Fight Songs: An Annotated Anthology. Index.
35 Ibid., 211.
The song also acknowledges that, even if the team does lose the game, the players will continue to play in the same serious manner.

Ohio State University, a major rival of the University of Michigan, is another school with numerous musical rituals associated with their football team. A part of the Big 10 Conference, this school has an enormously dedicated student and alumni fan base. Their marching band is made up entirely of brass and percussion instruments, and was founded in 1870. With a whopping 225 members, it is one of the largest marching bands of its kind.\textsuperscript{36} One extremely popular song with an accompanying ritual performed by the marching band is “Script Ohio,” which is based on a French military poem called “The Regiment of Sambre and Meuse,” written in 1870. The poem was then turned into a popular French folk song in 1871 by the French composer Jean Robert Planquette. Several years later, the song was arranged into a military march. The poem’s lyrics make clear its inspiration and military history:

\begin{tabular}{ll}
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verse 2</th>
<th>Chorus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To beat us, they were a hundred and thousand; At their head, they had kings. The General, weak old man, Weakens for the first time Indicator certain the defeat, It brings together all its soldiers. Then it made beat the retirement But they did not listen to it.</td>
<td>The regiment of Sambre and Meuse Always went to the cry of “Freedom”, Seeking the glorious road Who led to immortality.\textsuperscript{37}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
\end{tabular}

This piece was first performed at Ohio State University in 1929, when Professor Eugene Weigel began working at the school. Weigel became familiar with “The Regiment,” as it is affectionately called, from playing in a Navy band during WWI, and first conducted

\textsuperscript{36} For a more extensive history of Ohio State University’s marching band, see their website: http://www.sgsosu.net/ (accessed November 25, 2012).
this piece for the school’s concert band during the year of his arrival. The following year, it was performed by the marching band and has become a home game staple ever since. During this song, the members of the marching band form themselves into a script-style formation of the word Ohio.\textsuperscript{38} In an interview conducted with Matt Sass, a student at Ohio State, he admitted to me that he had no idea what the story behind “Script Ohio” was: he limited himself to saying that it was “really awesome; you should check out videos on YouTube.”\textsuperscript{39} With the song’s rich military history, it makes for an interesting choice, giving a modern-day inspiration to the athletes-as-warriors of the field, marching off to conquer their opponents.

The fact that Sass admits that he did not have a knowledge of the history of the song is quite interesting. There is great significance to all of the military overtones within the marching band experience. People are largely unaware of the connections that exist through the military-inspired songs, symbols, and pageantry of today’s collegiate marching bands. This is demonstrated by the fact that marching bands are viewed positively within society. However, the examples that I have provided show that marching bands do not exist merely to support the team and enliven fans. The bands carry with them the history and ritual aspects of military bands. From the evidence I have seen, music and singing emotionally animates these underlying tendencies for violence.

To many, the lyrics to songs are just words; they do not necessarily take on meaning to each and every listener. It is probably fair to say that most college students are unaware of the history surrounding their team’s fight songs. The lyrics are an element

\textsuperscript{38} For a video example of Ohio State University’s marching band in action, see: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ag1E-H9lZYc (accessed December 10, 2012).
\textsuperscript{39} Interview with Matt Sass, conducted by the author via telephone on December 2, 2012. Hereafter referred to as Sass interview.
of tradition that they associate with their college football experience. It is unlikely that having a greater understanding of the history behind a school’s fight song would change one’s impression toward the song itself or even their school. The emotions that are tied in with singing a fight song will remain; the fight songs and marching bands serve as a musical accompaniment to one of the longest-lasting traditions: college football games.

The traditional fight song performed at every Ohio State University game is called “The Buckeye Battle Cry.” At the end of the lengthy entrance of the marching band which leads directly to the football team’s entrance on the field, the entire stadium traditionally sings the first verse and chorus of this song:

**Verse 1**
In old Ohio (Columbus) there’s a team,
That’s known thru-out the land;
Eleven warriors, brave and bold,
Whose fame will ever stand,
And when the ball goes over,
Our cheers will reach the sky,
Ohio Field will hear again
The Buckeye Battle Cry.

**Chorus**
Drive! Drive on down the field;
Men of the scarlet and gray;
Don’t let them thru that line,
We’ve got to win this game today,
Come on, Ohio!
Smash thru to victory,
We’ll cheer you as you go;
Our honor defend
So we’ll fight to the end
For Ohio.  

To begin, the term battle cry is typically associated with soldiers engaging in combat. In the third line of the first verse, the lyrics reference “eleven warriors, brave and bold.”

Each lineup on a football team, both offensive and defensive, is made up of eleven starting players. Are the students at Ohio State University knowingly likening their athletes to soldiers? While the lyrics make this association clear, I am not suggesting that every fan who participates in singing this fight song agrees with that sentiment. However, these lyrical associations with soldiers cannot be ignored. Songs such as “The Buckeye

---

40 Lyrics for “The Buckeye Battle Cry”
Battle Cry” and “The Regiment,” performed by a military-style marching band, help to perpetuate the notion that college football rivalries are more than just good, clean fun. When asked if the students at Ohio State University found these songs important, student Matt Sass responded that, “Yes, a lot of people do. The band is very traditional, they play classic songs…without the music, it would make things less traditional, less authentic. We’re known for things like that. If you go to the game you know that you’re going to see certain things. You expect it.”

Another school in the Big 10 Conference with a long history of athletes-as-warriors-themed fight songs is Indiana University. Known as the Marching Hundred, the school’s marching band was formed in 1896 and has become one of the best-known collegiate marching bands. Indiana University’s fight song is called “Indiana, Our Indiana,” with lyrics by Russell P. Harker, and music by Karl L. King. King composed the piece “The Viking March,” on which the melody of “Indiana, Our Indiana” is based:

Indiana, Our Indiana
Indiana, we’re all for you
We will fight for
the Cream & Crimson,
For the glory of Old IU
Never daunted, we cannot falter
In the battle, we’re tried and true
Indiana, Our Indiana
Indiana, we’re all for you!

As seen with the aforementioned songs from Ohio State University, “Indiana, Our Indiana” also makes use of references to athletes competing in a battle. Further, it is explicitly stated that, in order to maintain the glory of their institution, the team must

---

41 Excerpt from Sass interview. Emphasis mine.
42 For a more extensive history of Indiana University’s marching band, see: http://www.indiana.edu/~bands/history.php (accessed December 7, 2012).
“fight” and that it will not be a problem to do so, as “in the battle, we’re tried and true.”

The marching band presents this piece during the pregame show along with the school’s alma mater, “Hail to Old IU,” and other fight songs including “Indiana Fight.” Karl L. King, the composer of the “The Viking March,” was very active in the marching band scene in the early nineteen-hundreds. He served as director of the Ford Dodge Military Band in 1920, and was undoubtedly inspired by traditional military marching band music.

Another aspect of collegiate marching bands that has ties to the marching bands from the time of the Civil War is the element of competition. Today, there are several national associations that promote competition amongst collegiate marching bands. During the time of the Civil War, there are accounts of “battle of the bands.” Wayne Erbsen shares that, “In early December 1862, the Union and Confederate armies gathered on opposite sides of the Rappahannock River near Fredericksburg, Virginia to do battle. One evening a Confederate band came forward and played “Dixie.” From across the river, a Union band responded with “John Brown’s Body.” The Confederates “retaliated” with “The Bonnie Blue Flag” and received “The Star-Spangled Banner” in return.” Dr. Lynn Jamieson of Indiana University noted that, due to the element of competition between the rival school’s marching bands, there was the potential for issues to arise given the ultra-competitive environment.

---

44 Indiana University’s Marching Hundred
45 Biography on Karl L. King
46 Erbsen. Rousing Songs and True Tales of the Civil War. 58.
47 Interview with Dr. Lynn Jamieson, conducted via telephone on February 28, 2013. Hereafter referred to as Jamieson interview.
known for engaging in fights with rival band members, it is just another element of rivalry that heightens the tension throughout a stadium of riled-up fans.

The role of marching bands within the world of college football is tremendously important. While other musical elements such as stadium anthems (that are not played by the marching band) are certainly a part of the stadium experience that a fan can expect while attending a college football game, the element of tradition that marching bands bring has become extremely important to the culture of a school’s athletic department. The music that has inspired these college marching bands and the fight songs they play comes directly from military marching bands, and this link should not be underestimated. As shown from my interviews with marching band members from the University of Michigan, fan aggression is not limited to the players on the field. Rival fans, including members of their marching band, are just as likely to experience acts of verbal and physical aggression. The prideful lyrics of college fight songs intensify the level of emotion in the crowd at college stadiums throughout the country.
II. Baseball

The Power of the Human Voice

There are many factors to consider when thinking about the prevalence of violence at sporting events. In an article sponsored by the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing by Tamara Madensen and John Eck, “The Problem of Spectator Violence in Stadiums,” the authors propose six of the most common forms of aggression that occur at stadiums:

1. Verbal: singing, chanting, and yelling obscenities
2. Gesturing: making obscure motions to one another
3. “Missile” throwing: throwing items at the opposing team’s fans
4. Rushing the field: either before, during, or after a game or performance, which may result in injury or death by trampling
5. Physical destruction: knocking over speakers or starting fires
6. Physical altercations: including fist fights, stabbings, shootings, etc

In the past several decades, popular culture has seen the rise of the super fan, also known as a fanatic. In fact, the word fan itself exists merely as a shortened version of the word fanatic. These super fans try to help their team win by cheering for them with a variety of songs or chants to keep a high morale. Additionally, it appears that acts of verbal aggression often accompany the other forms of aggression listed above. Many fans see it as part of their duty to verbally taunt members of the opposing team, and this form of aggression has become increasingly common throughout the sport of baseball. On the importance of the power of the human voice, J. Martin Daughtry notes that, “The things we say and sing and shout generate effects in the world. They can inspire and intimidate, tickle and infuriate. Their vibrations set other bodies in motion, provoking an immediate

---

physical reaction from all who are within earshot, and often provoking thought, bemusement, pain, confusion, and other sundry delayed reactions. At its most powerful, vocal performance contains within itself the notional possibility of reconfiguring the world. This is one example of how recent theories of the human voice suggest how to understand the importance of the chanting, singing, and even the taunting that goes on in the stadium setting. By understanding the nature of the human voice, through which these messages of rivalry and violence are articulated, we can begin to see the potency that these songs carry and what happens when the messages and lyrics are raised to the level of chant and song.

At baseball games, fans use their voices to cheer for their favorite players throughout the game, often providing “help” or inspiration while they are at bat. Conversely, these same fans often choose to shout at rival players to serve as a source of distraction, or to reinforce their pride for their home team. Booing, whistling, and shouting obscenities can be heard throughout most sporting events. However, due to the individual nature of baseball (one player hits at a time, only one player may catch the ball at a time, one pitcher throws at a time, etc.), fans may feel as though these acts of vocal intimidation may have a greater effect on the psyche of players. Daughtry asserts that by using one’s voice in an aggressive manner, the vocalizer takes on a position of power over the addressee that can potentially lead to a violent encounter:

By repeating hateful speech to an addressee, the vocal aggressor ventriloquizes the victim’s inner voice, taking it out of the victim’s control and thereby inducing the kind of psychic trauma that is one of the more subtle but most pervasive by-products of violence, be it military or domestic. In this way, voices resonating in space don’t just encounter a violent world—at times, they help construct it. Of course, shouting curses at someone is not the same as shooting bullets at them.

---

But shooting people, it must be said, is often preceded, accompanied, and followed by shouting, and screaming, and sobbing, and laughing, and singing, and all manner of vocal expression, both ritualistic and improvised. *Our voices are actions that set the stage for further action*, and that action can bend toward or away from violence, sometimes in keeping with our intentions, sometimes in contradiction to them.\(^{51}\)

While some may doubt the power that the voice holds, as described by Daughtry, there are also those to take it very seriously. In the past several years, for instance, the attention surrounding the issue of bullying has greatly increased. This is likely due to the rise of suicides by young people who experienced well-documented instances of bullying; students who are bullied are between 2-9 times more likely to consider suicide than those students who are not bullied.\(^{52}\) Many school districts throughout the country have cracked down on the issue of bullying. In the state of New Jersey, an Anti-bullying Bill of Rights Act was signed into law in 2010. After years of compiling data gathered from an appointed anti-bullying task force, it was deemed necessary to create laws to handle the growing issue of bullying in the public schools. The legislature stipulated that any case of bullying that was reported by a student, teacher, or parent must be dealt with immediately; it also must be documented and kept on file for the state.\(^{53}\)

Words can hurt people; our voices are powerful tools that can have long-lasting effects on our victims. Thus, in relation to sports violence, acts of verbal aggression can be just as serious as acts of physical aggression. Fans who taunt one another with words may receive a punch in an act of retaliation. A fan who is heard using derogatory language may be escorted out of the stadium by security; they will not wait around for the

\(^{51}\) Ibid., 254-255. Emphasis mine.
\(^{52}\) Bullying Statistics
\(^{53}\) State of New Jersey Department of Education policy on bullying
first punch to be thrown. As tensions from team rivalries rise during games, security teams are on heightened alert throughout their stadiums. At baseball stadiums, some fans have the privilege of sitting very close to either their favorite players or to members of the rival team. Dedicated fans take the opportunity to continue to encourage their favorite players throughout the game, or, try to act as a distraction to the opposing team.

In a game between the New York Yankees and the Boston Red Sox from August 28, 2007, fans of the rival teams engaged in what has become a typical occurrence at these games. Video footage from this game shows a Red Sox fan being yelled at by Yankees fans. Yankees fans can clearly be heard chanting “Asshole” loudly and repeatedly. Before a fight could break out, security members can be seen moving the Red Sox fan away from the large group of Yankees fans. Many times, a seemingly harmless interaction like this between rival fans can lead to fights. Countless videos on YouTube have captured baseball fans throwing beer at one another, yelling obscenities, and throwing punches. While many of these videos depict fights that take place in the stands between the fans themselves, there are also many instances of fans using their voices to attempt to distract or discourage rival team members themselves. A video taken at Fenway Park in Boston from June 10, 2009 shows footage of Yankee star player Alex Rodriguez at the plate, waiting for the ball to be thrown by the pitcher. In the video, strong chants of “You do steroids” can be heard very clearly being directed towards Rodriguez. Rumors of steroid use have surrounded the Yankee star for years, and Red Sox fans took the opportunity to verbally attack him. The Yankees/Red Sox rivalry is one

---

of the strongest in baseball, and there have been countless incidents throughout the years of both verbal and physical violence.

The Super Fan

Baseball fans are seen as some of the most dedicated fans in sports, especially considering the long 162-game season, which spans from early April to October. Some baseball fans travel all over the country to cheer on their beloved team as they play in a rival team’s stadium. Many stadiums have their own section of super fans, who maintain a constant presence throughout the season. These groups often have songs and chants that they perform at every home game. In the early years of baseball, it was very common to sing positive songs such as “Take Me Out to the Ballgame” to cheer on one’s favorite team. This popular song, written in 1908 by Jack Norworth, is still heard during baseball games at stadiums across the country. The super fans of today, however, have a more extensive repertoire of songs from which they can choose to celebrate their favorite team or intimidate a rival team’s fans.

One of the most popular groups of this kind is the famed Bleacher Creatures of Yankee Stadium. The Bleacher Creature organization was started in the 1980s by a small group of dedicated fans who sat in section 39 at the original Yankee Stadium. The Creatures have been known for several songs and chants throughout the years, but perhaps none have been quite as popular as their “roll call.” After the first pitch of every

---

56 While conducting research for this section, I could not help but think of the hundreds-of-thousands of Deadheads (super fans of the band the Grateful Dead) who dedicated enormous amounts of time and energy to their favorite band. These super fans were known to travel in packs all over the country to see their favorite band perform. Parents took their children on endless summer road trips so that they too would get to experience the joy of being “a part” of the band and its history.

57 “Take Me Out to the Ballgame”
home game has been thrown, Vinny Milano, the leader of the organization, calls out the name of the Yankees’ center fielder, as the other Bleacher Creature members join in. They continue calling each starting player’s name (except for the pitcher and catcher) until the player gestures some form of acknowledgment their way. According to Milano, the roll call began in the summer of 1997 during a particularly slow game. Milano and some of his friends decided to see if they would be successful in trying to get the attention of former Yankees player Tino Martinez. “We got everyone to cheer for him; he turned around and waved, and then it became a daily thing from there. You don’t think they can hear you…wow, they do! It was enlightened moment [sic].”

While Milano admits that some songs have been shut down by the Yankees organization over the years for being too defamatory in nature, he also acknowledges that, “the chanting in particular [is important] because it gives us interaction.” When asked why sports tend to bring out violent tendencies in otherwise rational adults, Milano responded: “I think a lot of it is looking for an outlet. For me, the biggest draw of going to the bleachers was getting to go to the stadium, sitting on a bench, and yelling. It felt great to get it all out and vent. What brings it over the edge is taking that passion and coupling it with a feeling of helplessness…there’s nothing you can do on the field…it gets magnified because frustration builds when people fail.” This frustration, coupled with alcohol and loud music, is often what brings the tension in a stadium to a boiling point. Milano feels strongly about the role that a fan can play in helping his team win. He said, “I can’t hit a curveball, but if I can get in someone’s head, I can help my team win. I

58 Interview with Vinny Milano, conducted by the author via telephone on November 30, 2012. Hereafter referred to as Milano interview.
59 Ibid.
60 Ibid.
can use my voice...if the guy on the other team is distracted for a second, and it increases the pressure on the athletes to perform, then I helped...we helped. That’s what being a fan is about...you feel that connection, we won.”

The idea of the “we” element in sports is an incredibly important variable within sports rivalries. There is more to consider here than fans simply attending the game to have a good time and feel a superficial or imaginary connection with their favorite players. Noted sports psychologist Daniel L. Wann, co-author of “The Team Identification—Social Psychological Health Model: Sport Fans Gaining Connection to Others via Sport Team Identification,” examines the psychological effects of the “we” mentality in sports fans. Specifically, he explores the deep, intrinsic need that one may feel to belong. Wann often argues that the need to belong is a contributing factor to one’s loyalty to a particular fan base, and this need is fed by two different factors. First, there is the idea that is referred to as “basking in reflected glory.” This feeling is evoked within a particular fan when they feel as though their social identity is elevated due to associating with a successful sports team. The second factor at work does not pertain to associating with a successful team, but rather, involves how a particular fan identifies himself within his particular team. Wann explains: “Team identification concerns a fan’s psychological connection to a team and involves the extent to which the fan views the team as an extension of his or herself. Highly indentified persons (i.e., those with a strong psychological attachment to the team) should be able to gain tangible psychological benefits simply through their association with a group because social activities are

---

61 Excerpt from Milano interview. Emphasis mine.
expected to produce social capital.”

Wann has published a series of works that detail how emotions come into play for a sports fan who identifies with a particular sports team and associates himself with a strong fan base. Essentially, when cheering for their team with a group of their peers, these fans feel less lonely and express fewer negative thoughts than they do when they watch a game on their own. Further, these fans are more extroverted and open when they are connected with others who share their affiliation with their sports team. Wann also stresses the importance of living within the community of one’s favorite team (the home team). Vinny Milano acknowledges this sense of pride for local fans, “The Bleacher Creatures were started by a group of regulars [locals] during the 1980s. These guys were going to the games after work and on the weekends, and they were passionate about the Yankees. The team wasn’t so great back then, and the Bronx wasn’t so great either, so there was a group who banded together to try to make the experience better.”

It may sound obvious to describe the merits of living near one’s home team, but the value of this proximity should not be undervalued. There are fans who do not have the luxury of living close to their favorite team, and they may well be very loyal fans. However, the devotion felt by one who has the opportunity to attend most (if not every) home game is extraordinary. Milano discussed how he felt drawn to the Bleacher Creatures when he sat in their section for the first time in 1997: “What attracted me to sitting in that section [section 39 at the original Yankee Stadium] was that I recognized the songs they were singing…as an outsider, I realized that they were having so much

---

63 Ibid.
65 Excerpt from Milano interview.
fun.” Milano grew up in Long Island, New York; not too far away from Yankee Stadium’s location in the Bronx, and certainly not far enough to be considered an “outsider.” However, Milano did not begin to regularly attend games until he moved into the area in 1997. From the time of his first game in section 39 until 2001, Milano attended home games as often as he could. In 2001, he decided to make t-shirts to distribute to the members of the Bleacher Creatures. Shortly thereafter, Milano became the leader of this prominent fan base. “When I started making the t-shirts for the guys, more and more people wanted them…as it grew, I had a reason to create a business and to be there everyday. I became a constant presence, so it was a natural choice for me to lead the roll call.”

Milano’s t-shirts became so popular that he did in fact start a business. While he was not officially affiliated with the New York Yankees organization, Milano got a license as a street vendor and sold his specialty t-shirts outside of Yankee Stadium before every home game. He became such a popular fixture around the stadium, that he was chosen as a cast member for a reality television series surrounding four “diehard” New York Yankees fans called The Ultimate Road Trip, sponsored by the YES network (Yankees Entertainment and Sports Network). The premise of the show was to follow four “ultimate” Yankees fans as they traveled around the country to see every single game of the season (all 162 games). Along the way, the cast members competed in contests to win prizes and also received opportunities that any Yankee fan would covet:

---

66 Ibid.
67 Excerpt from Milano interview.
68 For more information on Milano’s business, see http://section203.com/custom-apparel (accessed March 30, 2013).
they got to meet several New York Yankees players and attend team functions.\(^{69}\) Truly, Milano is a prime example of a loyal fan who feels the immediate effects of living in such close proximity to his favorite team and their loyal fan base, as he has literally made a career out of being a New York Yankees fan.

Due to the widespread popularity of sports in today’s culture, some fans likely feel as though they are as well-informed of their team’s happenings as the players themselves. Sports fans have myriad outlets from which they can choose to stay informed about their favorite teams and players. The radio, newspapers, Internet websites, and a variety of television channels are all means of entertainment and information sources for fans. Once fans are hooked onto a particular sports team, they can purchase regalia and a plethora of items to show their support and allegiance to their team at all times. For serious fans, the best way to show such support is at a live game. Tickets to sporting events (along with purchasing food and game day paraphernalia) have become increasingly expensive over the years. As such, sports have become a multimillion-dollar enterprise, with no end in sight. To a true fan, their allegiance to their team is more than just an expensive hobby: it is a way of life.

In turn, the sports entertainment industry is well aware of the fact that their empire has been built largely by dedicated fans who will quite likely remain loyal to their teams for years to come. Sports psychologist Jeffrey James has contributed much to the discussion about what constitutes the idea of the “loyal fan.” James defines loyal fans as

\(^{69}\) Information on the YES Network Ultimate Road Trip
those who, “…have a psychological commitment to a team.” As such, their importance to a particular sports organization is paramount, due to the fact that they will continue to purchase season tickets and other team products that create a good deal of revenue. On this point, James suggests that, “In addition to demonstrating consistent and persistent support for a team, loyal fans are also resistant to attempts to reduce their attachment to a chosen team. In a society where there has been a proliferation of professional sports and a strong challenge to attract and maintain loyal fans, an important concern for sports organizations is understanding when loyalty may develop and also understanding what factors may influence the development of loyalty.” A full discussion of the psychological development of fan loyalty is beyond the scope of this paper, but it is an important point of consideration for this study.

In examining the social and psychological aspects of affiliating with a sports team (and especially with a local team), we can see that there are many positive effects of having an affiliation of this kind. Baseball fans, perhaps more than any other sport fans, embody this sentiment. As seen through my interview with Vinny Milano, the leader of the Bleacher Creatures from Yankee Stadium, belonging to a strong fan base is extremely important to many baseball fans. Through these fan bases, local fans are able to come together often to celebrate and cheer on their beloved team. Due to the very long season, fan rivalries in baseball can be especially prominent. When fans begin to get rowdy and use their voices to agitate rival fans, security guards will often remove these fans from the

---

71 Ibid., 15.
stadium, as it has become all too common for acts of verbal aggression to lead directly to acts of physical aggression.
III. Soccer

A Seven Nation Army Couldn’t Hold Me Back

In the intensely competitive world of soccer, we see many of the same uses of music and the human voice as we saw in sections I and II. However, given the increased fanaticism of this sport, the resulting violence is much greater. At soccer matches throughout the world, it is extremely common to have vocal accompaniment provided by fans during acts of physical violence. By understanding the culture of fanaticism in soccer, we can begin to understand the strong role that music continues to play.

Music is a most important element within a soccer fan base. Each club has a series of songs that they use to cheer on their team, and to celebrate big moments such as goals scored during a game and team wins. Songs and chants are also used to taunt or blatantly disrespect an opposing team. Take, for example, a song used by fans of the English club Newcastle United. When fans travel to watch their team compete against the local rival club Sunderland, they are known to sing a song called “Sunderland’s a shithole, I wanna go home.” In this short song, the fans make use of the chorus section of “Sloop John B” by the Beach Boys. A video online shows Newcastle United fans facing Sunderland fans during a match and singing: “I wanna go home/I wanna go home/Sunderland’s a shithole/I wanna go home.”

In another match between these rival teams from January 16, 2011, members of the security team literally form a barrier between the fans of these two clubs as Newcastle United fans belt this song into the faces of Sunderland fans sitting nearby. Upon further

---

72 Newcastle United fans singing, example 1
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jT5IOPP9wTA (accessed April 1, 2013).

73 Newcastle United fans singing, example 2
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_tOPCOi02o (accessed April 1, 2013).
research, I found that other fan bases have adopted this song to fit their own rivalries. In an online forum for Newcastle United fans, there was a debate regarding the issue of ownership with “I wanna go home.” Some fans seemed bothered by the fact that this song has become prevalent throughout various soccer leagues while others say that it belongs to no one.\(^7_4\)

The idea of one song being personalized by many fan bases is quite common throughout the world of sports. One of the most common forms of this practice is with stadium anthems. As I mentioned earlier, a stadium anthem is a popular song that has no official association with a college or university. Students often adopt a school-specific rendition of a particular anthem that they perform during home games. Two stadium anthems that have proven to be quite popular and effective in promoting fan unity and distraction to the other team are “Seven Nation Army” by the White Stripes and “KernKraft 400” by Zombie Nation. Both of these songs are in minor, which is appropriate considering the intended intimidation factor. The section used for chanting in both songs is ostinato-like and quite easy to sing; the range of both songs is within a minor sixth.

Further, these chants have been turned into melodies using vocalizations such as “Oh” or “Po,” as the original melody they are repeating is purely instrumental. The song “Kernkraft 400” is an electronic dance hit by the German group Zombie Nation. The song was released in 1999 on the group’s debut album, *Leichenschmaus*, and was first

---

\(^7_4\) Newcastle United fan forum
popular in European dance clubs.\footnote{“Kernkraft 400”: http://www.kernkraft-400.zombie-nation.com/ (accessed December 1, 2012). The album’s title translates into ‘funeral meal’ and the album’s cover is extremely similar to Nirvana’s infamous Nevermind album cover.} The song’s title translates to “Atomic Energy 400,” a title that is quite apropos in this setting. Due to its popularity at sports games all over the world, Zombie Nation released a remix of their original hit, called “Sport Chant Stadium Remix.” The only lyrics sung in “Kernkraft 400” are “Zombie Nation,” making the melody of the song all the more significant, as there are no lyrics to directly motivate sports fans to continue using it as a source of motivation or pride for their team.

The song “Seven Nation Army,” written by singer/guitarist Jack White, was released in 2003 on the White Stripes’ album Elephant. The popular seven-note opening riff is played by White on an electric guitar, whose sound is fed through an effects pedal to achieve its thumping bass effect. When asked if the riff came together as one piece, White responded that, “It did…I didn’t have lyrics for it until later on and I was just calling it “Seven Nation Army”—that’s what I called the Salvation Army when I was a kid. So that was just a way for me to remember which one I was talking about, but it took on a new meaning with the lyrics.”\footnote{“Seven Nation Army”: http://deadspin.com/5875933/how-the-song-seven-nation-army-conquered-the-sports-world (accessed October 29, 2012). According to an interview White had with Rolling Stone Magazine in 2010, the mass popularity that the song has achieved worldwide was not anticipated, especially since White had quickly composed the riff during a sound check. White noted: “…the labels in America and in the U.K, neither of them wanted to put that out as the first single. It just shows that you really never know.”} I find it quite fitting that a song with the word “army” in the title has become one of the most popular stadium anthems. It is chanted at sports games all over the world, and crosses the spectrum of all of the different areas of professional and college sports teams.

The first documented use of “Seven Nation Army” as a stadium anthem was in 2003, when the Blue Army, a prominent fan base for the Belgian soccer team Club
Brugge, used it at a match against A.C. Milan in Italy.\(^\text{77}\) The Blue Army fan base has become known throughout the highly competitive world of European soccer for their singing of this famous riff. Throughout the videos observed on YouTube, it appears that the Blue Army fans typically choose to vocalize the riff of “Seven Nation Army using “Po.” Another video found online seems particularly significant, given the extremely competitive nature of soccer fans.\(^\text{78}\) This particular match took place on February 15, 2006 in Belgium, and was between Club Brugge and AS Roma of Italy. In the video, it is noted that Club Brugge was down by a goal, but came back to tie the game at 1-1. After this goal was scored, the singing of “Seven Nation Army” is clearly heard in a strong, celebratory manner. What is significant, though, is the way the riff is chanted the second time in the video. Later on in the match, AS Roma came back to score the winning goal, and the visitor’s section at the stadium erupted with joy. Moments later, AS Roma fans began chanting the riff—“Po Po Poo Poo”—as it is spelled in the video. It can be inferred that this chanting from the visiting team was meant to taunt the fans of Club Brugge; as if to say that their team beat the home team, and then celebrated by singing the stadium anthem for which their rivals are known. I contend that this taunting gesture is significant in that it suggests that AS Roma fans knew that this particular piece of music would have an emotional affect on members of Club Brugge’s fan base.


\(^{78}\) Soccer match between Club Brugge and Belgium http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8cInJeeKFBg (accessed December 10, 2012).
Upon referring to Figure 1.2, one may surmise that several of sociologist Clark McPhail’s Forms of Collective Behavior can be applied to fan behavior at any number of sporting events. With its intense rivalries and passionate fans, I suggest that soccer can best be used as a model for McPhail’s behavior theory. Sociologist Jerry M. Lewis recounts that, “Although McPhail describes his behavior categories as separate entities, he emphasizes that these elementary forms of collective behavior rarely happen alone. Typically they occur in some system of combination... Understanding this behavior is important because fans who riot before, during, or after a sporting event typically draw

---

on a repertoire of behaviors that are used in a normal sporting event.” In other words, the behaviors exhibited by fans who riot at sporting events can also be seen by fans who choose not to participate in a riot, but may or may not exhibit such behaviors while attending the games as spectators. If one is skeptical about the role of music or vocalization in sports riots, one need only consider the following anecdote from Lewis: “One can observe, at a minimum, a combination chanting, gesturing, and pedestrian clustering as fans begin to move through the streets expressing their excitement and joy over the winning of the championship by their team. This, in itself, does not constitute a sports riot, but can lead to one.” The power of the voice is overwhelming at soccer events. The powerful chanting and singing voices that reverberate through the stands at soccer stadiums across the world come from the passion aroused by true fanatics.

**Who Do You Love More: Your Team, or Your Wife?**

Before I continue to discuss the specific role of music within the world of soccer rivalries, I must mention the element of fanaticism that is undeniably prominent throughout the sport. This fanaticism is so engrained within particular communities that the behavior exhibited by members of soccer fan bases has become commonplace, and in some cases, expected. This has formed a subculture of sorts, which was granted some validity through a groundbreaking study that was conducted in 2012 in a joint effort from Puma and The University of Bristol. These groups were commissioned by advertising agency Droga5 to come up with quantifiable evidence to answer the age-old question: who do you love more: your soccer team, or your wife? Research was conducted by

---

questioning fans of the English soccer team, Newcastle United Football Club. According to information about the project on Puma’s website, twenty fans (all male) of this particular football club were tested by having their stress levels measured in various ways: scientists stuck needles into voodoo dolls or tore up pictures of their favorite players or their partners. “To uncover fans’ ‘true’ feelings, the scientists used a skin conductance response machine to figure out what the test subjects were really thinking. Before the tests, the fans had told researchers that they loved both their wives and their teams equally. The sample group was chosen on the basis that each had been in a committed relationship for at least five years, and had also been a season ticket holder for at least the same amount of time.”

The results of this study will soon be published in the form of an academic paper by experimental psychology professors Marcus Munafo and Bruce Hood, both from the University of Bristol. Until the paper is accessible, the professors have compiled a short film which features interviews with the subjects of the study. While information on the website points to the fans’ wives being the true subjects of their affection, that answer seems uncertain throughout the duration of the film. The love that these fanatics feel for their team and favorite players is expressed abundantly throughout the short film. Statements from fans included: “She knows football comes first,” and “I do let football get in the way a little bit, but football was there before my wife, and it’s always going to be there; so it’s always going to be a problem.” Other testaments of love for soccer included: “Football is probably a religion here…I’ve been in love with it longer than I

82 Puma: Love or Football
83 Love or Football video
have been with my wife,” and “I wouldn’t give my season ticket up for no one.” In the video, there is footage of research being conducted where fans are hooked up to electrodes. They are then asked to cut pictures of their wife along with pictures of the Newcastle United team. Their physical responses and anxiety levels are measured and compared for each act. One particular test subject was shown looking longingly at a picture of Newcastle United; he then informed the researcher that he was unable to cut the picture, and would not do it. That same man was then shown cutting the picture of his wife, albeit across the chin rather than directly in half.

The next task given to the men involved them having to make a choice between sticking a pin in a voodoo doll that represented his wife or his favorite player. If the men chose their favorite player, its implications were such that this player would not participate in the next soccer match. However, if he chose his wife, it meant that she would be bedridden with an illness for a week. There was footage of men who chose their wives and also of men who chose their favorite player in this test. One particular fan immediately stuck the pin into the doll that represented his wife. He shrugged, and gave the researcher a look that seemed to imply that this was not even a choice; he would never choose to injure his favorite player over his wife. When the test subjects learned that the results of the test pointed to their affection for their wives being stronger than their affection for Newcastle United, some seemed genuinely shocked.

It would be a misunderstanding of this experiment to assume that the researchers intended to prove that these fans loved Newcastle United more than their wives. What should be taken from this example is that these scientists felt that they had enough of a reason to conduct this experiment in the first place. The social effects of fanaticism in
soccer are felt throughout Europe and South America, where the love of the sport may overshadow what is felt for American football and baseball within the United States.\(^4\)

Another interesting element to the study involving the Newcastle United fans is that these fans were actually willing to admit to their fanaticism. Cultural Studies scholar Lawrence Grossberg asserts that, “Fanatics live their investments as the totality of their identity, which is always consistent and stable because it is defined only by the absoluteness of the commitment...fanatics rarely are able to admit their fanaticism.”\(^5\) Grossberg accounts for this lack of admission by the fact that fanaticism is usually perceived as a negative trait; when acts of terror are committed, the word “fanatic” is often used to describe the guilty party. Fanatics are perceived as being concerned only with the object(s) of their own fanaticism, therefore separating them from a larger culture or society. Due to the growing amount of violent incidents associated with sports fans, it appears as though the label of sports fanatic has negative implications of its own.

The study of music and how it affects our emotions is extremely complex. To gain a true understanding of this subject matter, one should be familiar with how different areas of the brain respond when stimulated by music. For the purpose of this study, an in-depth lesson on such regions of the brain is not necessary.\(^6\) There are several variables to

\(^4\) Another fascinating example of the cultural prominence that has become increasingly common with sports is through a commercial campaign on ESPN called “It’s not crazy, it’s sports.” These commercials feature a series of examples of how important sports are to the most dedicated of fans. One particular segment deals with the issue of how some sports fans wish to extend their support for their team even after their death. A short documentary can be seen at: http://creativity-online.com/work/espn-team-spirit/28694 (accessed March 29, 2013). Some examples of lifetime devotion include: being buried in team regalia, being buried in a team-specific casket, and a fan instructing family and friends before his death to wear team-related apparel to his funeral. A shortened version of this documentary aired as a commercial on ESPN: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oa3B6QfAglc (accessed March 29, 2013).


\(^6\) For a detailed discussion on how different areas of the brain are specifically affected by music and emotion, see This is Your Brain on Music, by Daniel Levitin (2006). Levitin, a former musician-turned-neuroscientist, takes the time to explain how the complex relationship between music and emotion works.
consider when thinking about how music affects our emotions. Particular types of music are known to evoke particular sets of feelings; “happy” songs are often thought of as having traits such as being in a major key, having positive lyrics, and having an upbeat tempo. Conversely, a “sad” song is considered as such when it is in a minor key, has depressing lyrics, and a slower tempo. According to an article by musicologist Gunter Kreutz, et al., there is more to consider than just the music itself when considering its effects on one’s emotions: “…[e]ven when the music materials alone are considered, psychophysical and cultural cues need to be distinguished. The implication is that beyond the physical characteristics of music stimuli, emotional responses to music listening are significantly influenced by variables indicating cultural learning.”

In other words, it is not enough to consider the effects of a particular song on one’s emotions; the song “Seven Nation Army” was not chosen by AS Roma fans to sing to Club Brugge fans because the song is merely in a minor key or because it is a popular stadium anthem. Rather, we must consider the cultural effects in play here. The fact that the fans of Club Brugge have become so greatly associated with “Seven Nation Army” is a source of pride for the fan base. The culture of soccer rivalries has grown to include music as a source of fan identity (by having a series of songs for which the group is known) and a means of taunting. In this particular instance, AS Roma fans chose a song that was near and dear to the hearts of their rival team’s fan base to express their joy when their team got a goal during a big game. Because of the emotional affect that music can have, this act may very well have hurt the fans of Club Brugge more than typical name-calling or threats of physical violence.

---

The Blue Army, the official fan base of Club Brugge, has an extensive website which includes a section containing their songs and chants.88 There are several pages of lyrics and sound clips throughout the Blue Army website. One particular song of interest is called “Oh FC Bruges.” The song is short, but the lyrics offer an interesting glimpse into the cultural prominence that this soccer team has in the mind of its fans:

“Oh FC Bruges/Super Bruges/We’re wonderful they say our days are numbered we’re not famous anymore but Bruges rules the country like they’ve always done before.”89

I suggest that having lyrics stated in this particular context—that the team “rules the country”—implies that these fans feel that their team holds a position of power, that this is more than using the colloquial phrase “we/they rule,” which is often used in a boastful manner. The pride that this fan base maintains for their team is evident in the songs and chants that they continue to use while attending team games. Another popular team song is called “We Love You,” which uses the melody from the pop song “I Will Follow Him.” The lyrics for this song of dedication are:

“We love you, we love you, we love you
And where you play we follow, we follow, we follow
’Cause we support Club Bruges, Club Bruges, Club Bruges
For always and forever, forever, forever.”90

This is an example of a song that a fan base can use to spread joy throughout the fan base and show their support and admiration for their team. Conversely, the club has short songs that they use to taunt a rival team. An example of this type of song is called “Cheer Up:”

89 Ibid.
90 Ibid.
“Cheer up/How hard can it be
To be a sad sporting bastard
With a shit football team.”

This song simultaneously insults a rival team while implying that Club Bruges does not, in fact, have a “shit football team.” Using music in this way is clearly a preferred method of provoking a rival team while promoting unity amongst a fan base.

The extremely passionate nature of soccer fans has led to many instances of violence at games. It is well known that the most devout of soccer fans are referred to as “hooligans.” The Oxford Dictionary defines this word as meaning: “A violent young troublemaker, typically one of a gang: a football hooligan.” According to Geoffrey Pearson, author of the chapter “Victorian Boys, We are Here!” in *Criminology: A Reader*, the word hooligan became popular in the 1890s, and was first featured in a Music Hall song by Irish comedians O’Connor and Brady:

Oh, the Hooligans! Oh, the Hooligans!
Always on the riot,
Cannot keep them quiet,
Oh, the Hooligans! Oh, the Hooligans!
They are the boys
To make a noise
In our backyard.

Pearson continues,

…When the new word was picked up by the newspapers in 1898 it was quickly transformed into a term of more general notoriety, so that ‘Hooligan’ and ‘Hooliganism’ became the controlling words to describe troublesome youths who had previously been known more loosely as ‘street arabs’, ‘ruffians’ or ‘roughs’…the Hooligans were understood as an entirely unprecedented and ‘un-British’ phenomenon: indeed, we must allow that it was most ingenious of late

---

91 The Blue Army website
92 “Hooligan”
Victorian England to disown the British Hooligan by giving him an ‘Irish’ name.\footnote{94}{Ibid.}

Today, one who is thought of as being a hooligan is known to be a most passionate soccer fan who can often be found fighting with rival fans in an effort to cheer on his or her team. As more and more instances of violence occurred at soccer events, laws were created in Britain to punish these “hooligans.” In 1986, the Public Order Act allowed fans to be barred from the grounds of a sporting event, while the Football Spectators Act of 1989 banned convicted hooligans from attending international matches.\footnote{95}{Football Hooliganism http://www.politics.co.uk/reference/football-hooliganism (accessed April 14, 2013).}

Aside from not wanting spectators to get hurt at a match, there is another interesting notion to consider in the government creating rules for spectators. According to author Thomas Strychacz, there is a larger picture to consider: “The control and self-control of fans at sporting arenas is a vital metaphor for social order in Western cultures. Experiences and descriptions of sport spectating encode the social significances of orderly and disorderly conduct; they express, organize, and make comprehensible a society’s disciplinary practices.”\footnote{96}{Thomas Strychacz. “American Sports Writers and “Unruly Rooters”, The Significance of Orderly Spectating,” in \textit{Journal of American Studies}, Vol. 28, No. 1 (April 1994), 84. http://www.jstor.org/stable/27555786 (accessed April 4, 2013).} In other words, with the whole world watching sporting events like the World Cup, it is important for a nation to have a plan in place when dealing with disorderly conduct. When fans sing songs to taunt an opposing team, they continue to perpetuate behavior that their government has tried to eradicate. It may not be possible to stop every act of violence at soccer matches, but perhaps there can be solutions offered to diminish the number of acts during a season.
To soccer fans, their sport is more than a hobby; it is truly a way of life. Because the level of fanaticism is so intense, the emotional response to music at soccer games is much greater than what is typically experienced at college football games or at baseball games. Various fan bases take pride in creating their own stadium anthems and fight songs to cheer on their team while also using them to taunt members or fans of a rival club. These songs are so prevalent, in fact, that they often provide a background accompaniment to acts of physical violence, which have become quite common at soccer games throughout the world.
IV. Solutions

There have been a variety of ideas offered by industry professionals in an attempt to quell the rising level of violence that has been so present at sporting events. Dr. Lynn Jamieson created the Center for Sport Policy and Conduct (CSPC) at Indiana University after teaching a course on sports and violence after the September 11 attacks in 2001. Lynn shared that she wanted to gain a global perspective on this topic, “along with what creates a violent society, and how [sports violence] manifests itself in other countries.”

After creating her course and resource center at Indiana University, Jamieson feels even stronger about informing others about this topic. Students are not mandated to visit the CSPC if they are disciplined at a University-sponsored sporting event, but Jamieson insists that the collection of articles, blogs, and research materials available through the center are a helpful resource for those who wish to learn more about this topic, or who choose to take continuing education credits in a sports discipline. In sharing her plans of getting ready to conduct a national study, Jamieson mentioned an interesting point of consideration: “After many years of looking at this, there is a lot to me that contributes to the fandom of [sports rivalry and violence]; different stimuli…[there are] lots of different things that influence a group. We normally don’t accept these behaviors [violent acts seen at sports games] on a day-to-day basis but they are accepted here [in the stadium]. People have been harmed in the last year; this makes it a public cultural issue.”

I resoundingly agree with Jamieson’s assertion that behaviors that have long been accepted at sporting events would not be accepted outside of the stadium.

Throughout this thesis, I have shared several examples of verbal and physical

---

97 Excerpt from Jamieson interview.
98 Excerpt from Jamieson interview.
violence that have occurred at games throughout the world between rival fans. While there are usually repercussions for physical violence in a public place, the repercussions for verbal abuse vary depending on its context. As I mentioned earlier, our nation has cracked down on bullying in the last several years. In the state of New Jersey, there are laws in place to specifically deal with incidents of verbal abuse. In order to ensure that these policies are followed, teachers, students, and parents must give their due diligence with reporting issues to administrators. The hope for this policy is to cut down on the dangerous issues that come with bullying, which can include physical abuse or suicide.

Sports stadiums across the world have policies in place prohibiting certain behaviors at games. According to the website for Yankee Stadium, there is a code of conduct in place that prohibits the following actions: “Using foul/abusive language or making obscene gestures/Fighting, taunting or making obscene gestures/Acting in a manner that is unruly, disruptive or illegal.” The website further states that the Yankees maintain a zero tolerance policy regarding these actions, and that spectators who are found in violation of this code of conduct will the removed from the stadium and/or punished. In a stadium that seats over fifty-thousand people, it is extremely difficult to manage the behavior of every spectator. There are certainly plenty of people who are caught breaking the rules, but many go unnoticed due to the amount of people at a given game and a general lack of security. What has happened, though, is an effort to reach those fans who are caught violating codes of conduct at sports games.

99 Yankee Stadium Code of Conduct

100 I contacted the head of security at Yankee Stadium to inquire about statistics regarding fans who were kicked out of the stadium due to physical and verbal acts of aggression. I was told that this information was not for public dissemination, and that I should refer to the Yankee Stadium website for information.
In recent years, a trend that has become popular has been to refer fans to anger management classes. There are groups of therapists who are contracted through stadiums to administer such classes to fans. One such example is with Dr. AJ Novick, who is a licensed marriage and family therapist, along with being certified in anger management. Novick now runs an online program which offers educational resources, anger management counseling, and training.\textsuperscript{101} A specialty program run by Novick is his Fan Conduct Class. The description of this program can be found on Novick’s website: “The AJ Novick Group, Inc. is the authority on fan education safety programs for professional sports. We provide online classes that address issues related to disruptive fan behavior which violates a stadium's Code of Conduct policy. Our courses are most commonly recommended by stadium security to fans who have violated the stadium’s code of conduct policy due to public intoxication or inappropriate or unsafe behavior.”\textsuperscript{102} According to the website, this is a four-hour program that is tailored for fans of either soccer or football.

Fans who are reprimanded at particular stadiums throughout the country are referred to Novick directly, and the fan is responsible for paying for his or her own online class. I contacted Novick directly for an interview, to which he initially agreed; however, upon following up on two separate occasions, he never responded to my inquiries. In an interview given in \textit{USA Today}, Novick shared the following anecdote about his program: “It's not about taking a test...It's about educating the fan on alcohol awareness, about disruptive behavior and the effect it has on other fans, and it teaches them coping skills

\textsuperscript{101} AJ Novick website
\textsuperscript{102} Fan Conduct Class information
for handling themselves more appropriately at the stadium. It's educational in nature. It's not therapy. "

The idea to send fans to “Fan Conduct Class” is quite interesting. By mandating these programs for fans who violate a stadium’s code of conduct, the leadership of the National Football League and of Major League Soccer have acknowledged that such behavior is unacceptable and have made strides in protecting the spectators who frequent games in their stadiums. Presently, there are no statistics which can prove that these classes have greatly improved fan behavior at stadiums. However, this acknowledgement can hopefully help to continue to improve safety at stadiums across the world.

Conclusion

It has been my goal throughout this thesis to show the ways in which music is prominently featured in various sports rivalries. In the world of college football, marching bands provide a most important role. They accompany the singing of a school’s fight songs, which hold significant meaning to greater community of a particular college or university. The collegiate marching band holds strong ties to the marching bands of the Civil War era, from which they originate. It is common for schools to sing fight songs whose lyrics harken back directly to times of war. These lyrics often personify the athlete as soldier, thus likening the game of football to an active battlefield. At college football games, fans often take their aggression out on fans from their rival school, as shown through my interviews with marching band members from the University of Michigan.

In discussing the sport of baseball, we can see that group bonding is an extremely

---

103 USA Today article on AJ Novick http://content.usatoday.com/communities/thehuddle/post/2012/04/ejected-nfl-fans-may-have-to-pay-for-online-course/1#.UW7UEql3uSo (accessed February 5, 2013). Emphasis his.
important aspect of the sport. The “we” element of fan bases allows fans to feel an affiliation with their favorite team or players, greatly increasing their connection to the sport as a whole. With this increase in support often comes increased aggression in the stands, as fans feel it is their duty to distract players from the other team, or taunt their rival teams’ fans. These fans use their voices as tools of power and, as such, often prompt acts of physical violence through acts of verbal aggression. Groups such as the Bleacher Creatures of Yankee Stadium personify this notion, and their leader, Vinny Milano, has made his career out of being the “ultimate” Yankees fan.

The fanaticism seen throughout the sport of soccer is overwhelming. Soccer fans have become known as hooligans due to their passionate and often violent nature. Music has been used as a means to intensify the fights that occur so frequently at soccer matches, as seen throughout my examples where music acted as the accompaniment to acts of physical violence. As seen in baseball, fan bases such as the Blue Army use their voices to taunt rival fans through songs and chants. Fans of soccer do not treat their affection for the sport as a hobby, but rather, as a part of their identity. The songs and chants that represent their team thus provide a continued soundtrack their everyday lives.

To cheer on or root for one’s team has been a part of sports history since the beginning of organized sports. However, to fight for one’s team has led to numerous riots, arrests, and even deaths. The topic of music and stadium violence is one that demands further research and discussion. Ideas for future research include interviewing more sports fans across the country, especially those who have been in altercations at games that were brought on through acts of verbal aggression. It would also be beneficial to my research to become better versed in the psychological connection between music
and emotion. Finally, I am interested in working with local stadiums to create ways for fans to be more involved with their local teams. I propose that, if given a way to use their voice in a constructive manner, fans would feel more validated in their connection to their team, thus relieving some of the tension felt during the game itself. Perhaps through awareness and education, music can provide an accompaniment only for the joys of watching a sporting event, rather than serving as an accompaniment to the violent incidents that occur at stadiums throughout the world.
Bibliography

Interviews


Student 1. Interviewed by the author via email. March 10, 2013.


Other Sources

AJ Novick website:

Bleacherreport.com, “The Victors”:

Blue Army website:

Bullying Statistics:


Drum Corps International website:


Fan Conduct Class information:

Football Hooliganism:


Indiana Hoosiers official website:


Jail at Lincoln Financial Field:

“Kernkraft 400” information:


Love or Football video:

Michigan Athletics website, lyrics for “The Victors.”

Newcastle United fan forum:


Puma: Love or Football


Songs of Ohio State University website:

State of New Jersey Department of Education policy on bullying:

“Take Me Out to the Ballgame” History:

“Temptation” Information:

The Atlantic issue from February, 1862:

“The Battle Hymn of the Republic”:

The Military History of Marching Bands

The University of Michigan’s marching band website:

USA Today article on AJ Novick:
  http://content.usatoday.com/communities/thehuddle/post/2012/04/ejected-nfl-fans-may-have-to-pay-for-online-course/1#.UW7UEqI3uSo (accessed February 5, 2013).


Yankee Stadium Code of Conduct:

YES Network Ultimate Road Trip:
YouTube Videos


ESPN commercial for Ohio State/Michigan rivalry:

Indiana University’s Marching Hundred:

It’s Not Crazy, It’s Sports commercial:

It’s Not Crazy, It’s Sports documentary:

Newcastle United fans singing, example 1:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jT5IOPP9wTA (accessed April 1, 2013).

Newcastle United fans singing, example 2:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_tOPCOi02o (accessed April 1, 2013).

Ohio State University’s marching band:

Soccer match between Club Brugge and AS Roma from February 15, 2006:

Soccer match between Club Brugge and Borussia Dortmund from July 14, 2012:

Soccer match between Glentoran and Linfield from March 28, 2011:

Soccer match between River Plate and Boca Juniors from November 16, 2010:

The University of Michigan Marching band performing “Temptation”:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5dERccWsc5Y (accessed February 22, 2013)

The University of Michigan students sing “The Victors.”