

THE CASE FOR FAVORITES

By: Jinoo Kim

In all four of the major North American sports, two teams are pitted against one another in a conquest to see which is the superior team. In almost all games, one team is considered a favorite and one an underdog. This is often decided by the line set by major sports betting sites. In the rare cases where there is no underdog and the Vegas bookies consider the two teams equal, one reaches a beautiful equilibrium where no one team is overmatched, no team is at a disadvantage or has a superior talent level. These rarely produce great games, as they are just not that common. For this to happen, one would have to chance upon two relatively equal teams and then at the same time take into consideration the advantage of a hometown crowd, the schedule previous to that game, injuries and all sorts of other specific individual matchups and nuances. And then, it has to be a great game, which are qualified as great games because of the rarity of them. Often, those that we consider great



games are among the overwhelming favorites and the underdogs or a slight underdog with a few minor factors going for it. The type of game that I will focus on is the former, the game with a big favorite and a big underdog.

A famous and popular example of a game with a big underdog and a big favorite is Super Bowl XLII. The blatantly obvious reason why it's so well-known is that the big favorite lost. The New York Giants toppled the goliath that was (and still is!) the New England Patriots, who were on the verge of completing just the second undefeated season in all of NFL history and the only 19-0 season. However on the back (or the helmet) of David Tyree and his miracle catch, the Giants left the Patriots at 18-1. Many people were rooting for the Giants in this game hoping that they would topple the Patriots, but many people were also hoping that the Patriots would complete their historic run. And this makes sense... right? We all strive for perfection at some degree, there are a myriad of unsatisfying things that trigger some level of OCD that is within many of us, like a balloon that won't pop, no matter how hard you try, it is still elusive and slips away. However, there were many people with allegiances to neither team who were rooting for the Giants and if that aspect of

THE PONDER COLUMN

Why does anybody do anything if we all die in the end?

Why do we use the word utter to say you are an “utter disappointment”

Why does the academic tie look so much like the mowbrays tie?

Why does healthy stuff taste bad but is good for you?

Why are toes called toes and not feet fingers?

Is water wet?

history with the Patriots undefeated season wasn't in play, there would most definitely have been more people rooting for the Giants. Why is this? Why do most people root for the underdog, in almost any situation?

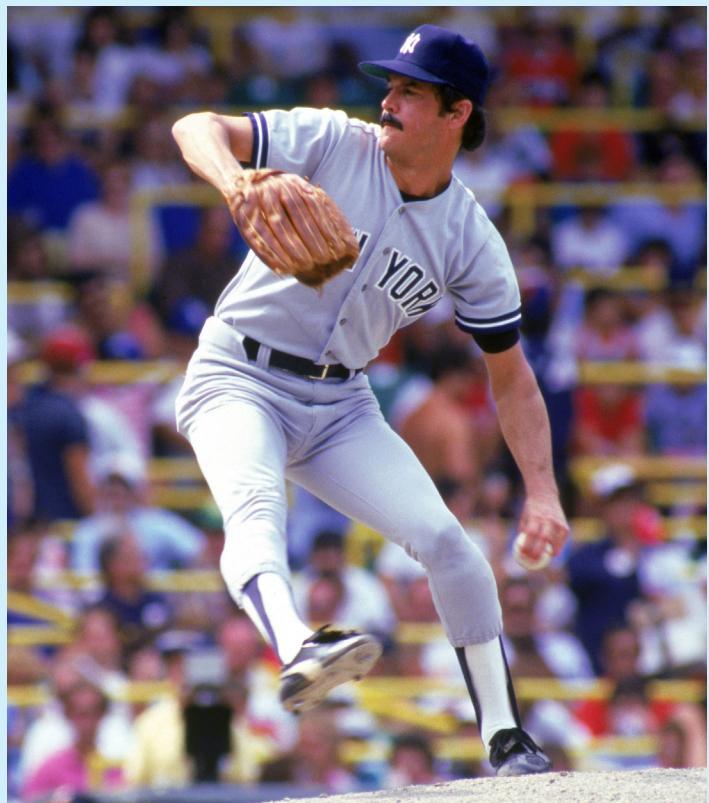
Well, there is no easy answer to this. Vox presents a few theories in an article about this topic. They propose that we like the world to 'be just' and 'fair' and we like to see the misfortune of the rich, wealthy and successful. This may be true, but I often find myself rooting against favorites who are easy to connect to morally and have undergone great hardship to get to the level they are at. Leonardo Dicaprio is a great actor, who had probably been snubbed and deserving of previous Oscars heading into his first win for his work on *The Revenant*. His win was definitely just and fair but he was still an overwhelming favorite and people didn't root for him because of an underdog story. Maybe Leo isn't the best example, because he doesn't exactly project an underdog persona but this shows that there is often a disconnect between the assumed personality of an underdog and who they actually are. On paper, Dicaprio was probably an underdog, but everyone knew who was winning that award, which made him a favorite. In fact, often if I don't have a strong connection to one of the teams, I simply find myself rooting for the team that is losing, hoping for a miracle comeback.

Another example of overwhelming favorites in sports, perhaps more generally is the Golden State Warriors in the NBA, the New York Yankees in the MLB as well as the aforementioned New England Patriots in the NFL. All three of these teams are hated in slightly different ways for slightly different reasons. The Warriors are hated because they are stacked, they are the overwhelming favorites in every game simply because of who they have on their roster and the pure ridiculousness of their superiority over every other team in the league, talent-wise. Their team has several excellent underdog stories and players whose individual journeys and perils in making it to the upper echelon of the sport, makes them easy to root for. Most notably, Stephen Curry, a scrappy, undersized, under-recruited point guard out of Davidson, is a major underdog story, but is not loved as one in the current day and age because he plays with three other all-stars. The Warriors are hated just because they are good, and therefore because they are favorites. The Patriots present something slightly different, they are not stacked to the brim with talent but they have arguably the greatest quarterback of all time and arguably the greatest head coach of all time. The Patriots play a fundamental, machine-like style of football, and are centered around team play and good coaching. This description brings to mind the San Antonio Spurs of the NBA, who are definitely not hated like the Patriots, and are not always overwhelming favorites. The only difference? None really, unless you look at the multitude of 'cheating' controversies surrounding the Patriots.



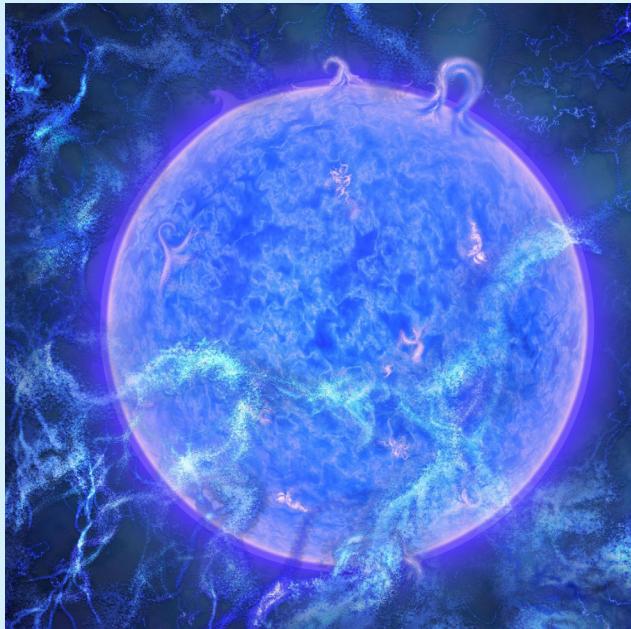
So finally, the Yankees. This one is more complicated, because the Yankees have not been dominant as of late like the Warriors or Patriots. However, there is a degree of dominance to the Yankees, not only because of the arrogance that seems to exude from the pinstripes, the rich and storied history, but because everyone else is playing catch-up to them. The Yankees have 27 World Series victories, St. Louis is second with 11. They have been to the World Series twice as many times as any other team and have more Hall of Fame inductees than any other team.

Looking at these three examples, it seems the hatred surrounding them all stems from their upsetting of the competitive balance or equilibrium, breaking the pattern so to speak. But, wait a second, shouldn't we reward consistency and success? Shouldn't we reward, not just teams, but the athletes on those teams for the sustained success they achieve? So in analyzing what goes into rooting for an underdog versus hating a favorite, I make this proclamation: Favorites are what makes pro sports exciting. Favorites are what create underdogs and what create stories, favorites bring out the impressive part of sports, the reason people pay hundreds of dollars to watch them in person, because these athletes are really good at what they do.



WHERE ARE THE ALIENS?

By: Brian and Sloan Sobie



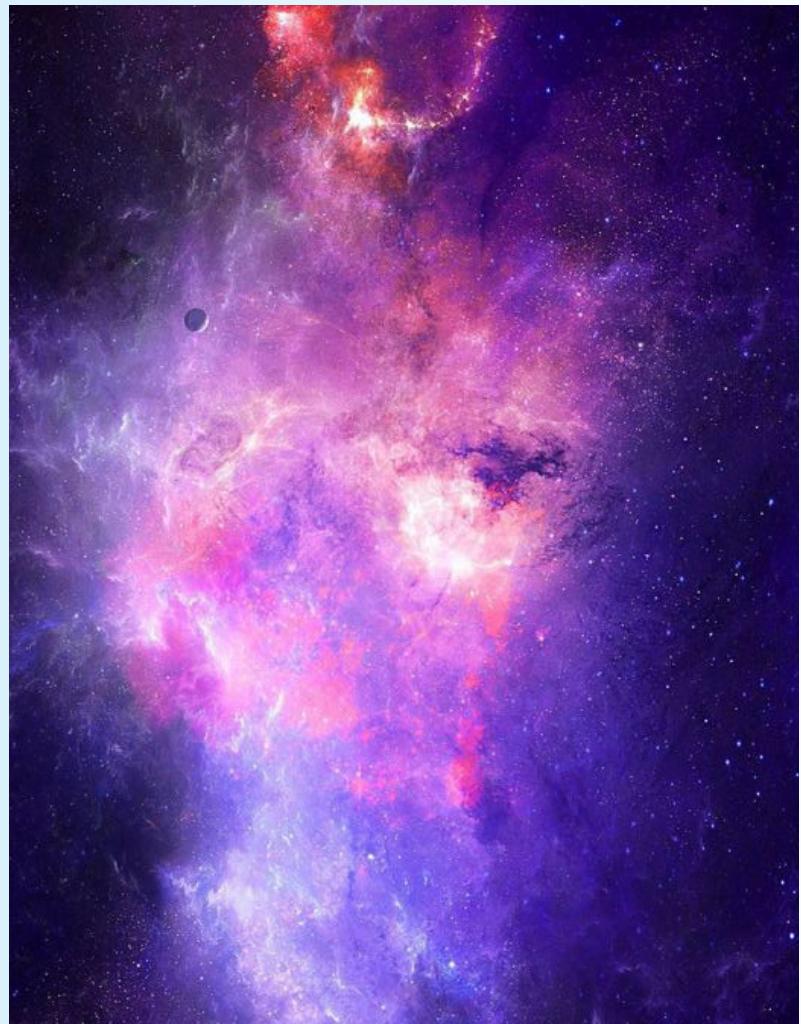
It is because of the huge numbers of planets that we can make the argument that it is hard to believe that life doesn't exist on at least one of them. The Universe is inconceivably big and is constantly expanding so it would take millions or billions of years to travel from one galaxy to the next even if the spaceships are going super fast. In our Galaxy (the Milky Way) there are about 400 billion stars. There are approximately 20 billion stars that are similar to the sun in the Milky Way and of those 20 billion estimates suggest about one fifth of them have a earth sized planet in the "Goldilocks" zone. This is when the planet is not too close to the star and not too far away from the star, it is just in the right place for life to exist. Of the remaining planets if only 1/1000 sustained life, there would still be 1,000,000 planets that had advanced life.

A final factor to consider is the sheer amount of time life has had to grow. The Milky Way is 13 billion years old, but, the first one to two billion years of its existence was much too violent for life to exist as far as we know. So that leaves us with 9 billion years where life could have developed. The earth is four billion years old, and the first hominids were estimated to form the earth only 200,000 years ago. Our 200,000 years to develop is nothing when put into scale. So that leaves us with the question, where is everybody?

The Fermi Paradox answers the question of whether or not we, as humans, are alone in the universe. It does so by not really proving that we are but rather making the case that it is impossible that we are not the only living things in our universe.

The first factor we need to acknowledge is the size of the universe. It is huge but a lot of people don't exactly know how huge. Our universe is 90 billion light years long. To understand how big that is think of it this way - just one light second is longer than the circumference of the earth seven times over!

Besides being immense in size our universe is home to an unimaginable number of planets. In our observable Universe there are 100 billion galaxies. In each of those galaxies there are 100 billion to 1 billion trillion stars. These are numbers almost too large to comprehend.



THE FERMI PARADOX

The Fermi paradox is the lack of evidence to do with highly probable estimates saying that other alien civilizations exist. It was created by Enrico Fermi.

THE KARDASHEV SCALE

Type I - When a civilization is able to use all of the energy on its planet.

We are currently a type 0.73 civilization and are expected to reach type 1 in a couple hundred years.



Type II - When a civilization can use all the energy on it's home star (like the sun)

The most popular idea for this is to build a dyson sphere which is essentially a sphere surrounding a star with solar panels or another technology which collects its energy. (Like the one below)



Type III - When a civilization is capable of using power equal to the entire amount in it's galaxy
A being from a civilization like this would be viewed as essentially gods to us.



WE ARE IN A SIMULATION

There is a quickly arising theory that our existence is simulated. Such figures as Elon Musk strongly believe in this, and for good reason. If a civilization were to become so advanced that it were to simulate a reality it would likely be able to simulate multiple. This means that for every actual reality there could be countless simulated ones, and who could tell the difference? This means that we can not find aliens because they were not programmed into the simulation.



WE ARE ALONE

We believe that if there is water on a planet which is in the “Goldilocks” zone life theoretically, life should develop, and eventually it will become intelligent life capable of abstract thought. So what if this is not true? Earth has been around for four billion years yet intelligent life has only existed for 200,000? What if even that was incredibly lucky? We may not even know how incredibly lucky we are to be humans.

THE GREAT FILTER

This is possibly the most popular possible solution to the Fermi Paradox. It is that civilizations have always been stopped by one event that wipes out the species. It could be by nuclear weapons, disease, global warming, or a famine. One way or another civilizations have always self destructed.



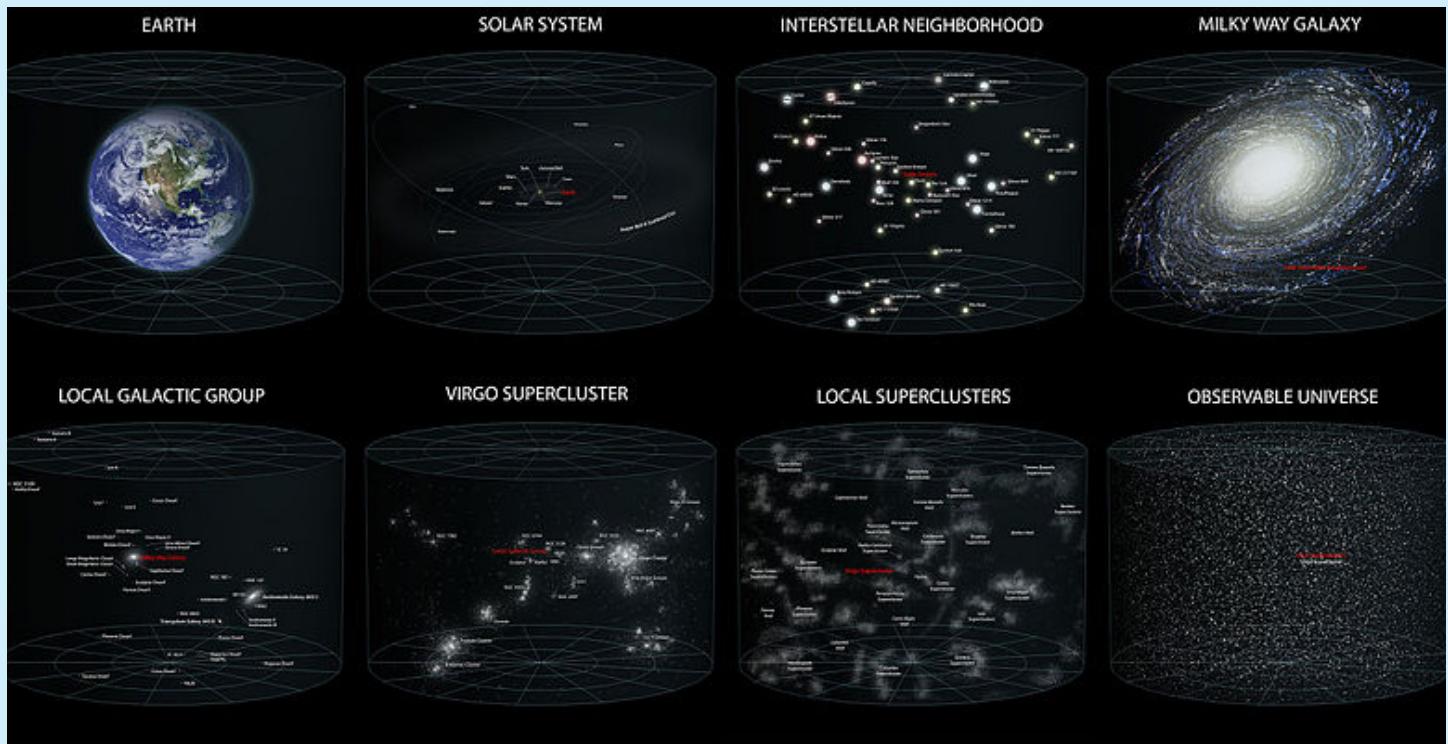
UPLOADED TO 'HEAVEN'

Once a civilization reaches type 2(or possibly before) it would have enough energy to create a computer capable of uploading your consciousness. This would allow each person to live in forever and do whatever. They would essentially be in heaven. If this were to happen there would be no need or want for a civilization to advance further in reality.



WE HAVE BARELY LOOKED

We have only been able to broadcast signals of any kind for fifty years. That is less than a lifetime. There is much more of our galaxy to be discovered and possibly aliens to be found. We have barely touched the tip of the iceberg when it comes to discovering the mysteries of space.

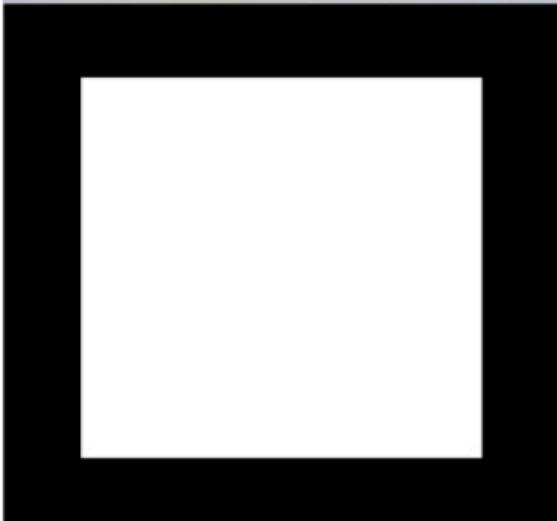


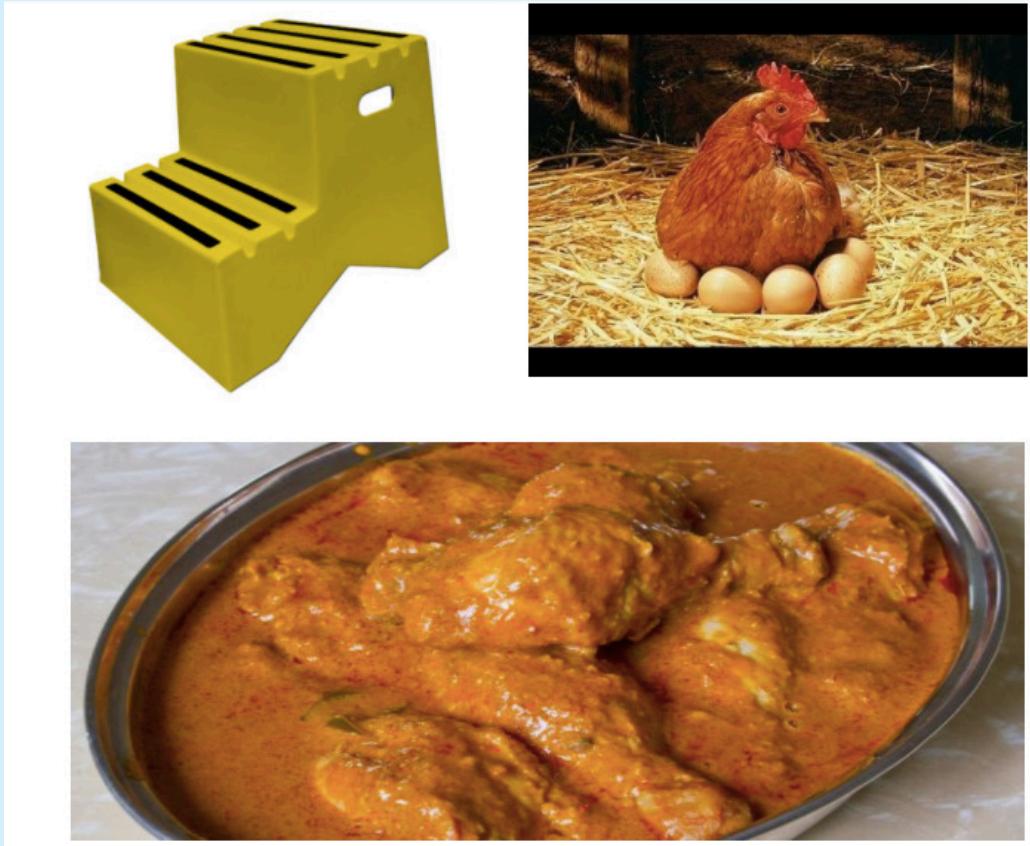
GUESS WHO?



The







ANSWER

1. Bass-Kitt-Ball
2. Ker-Mit-the-Frog
3. Sid-Knee-Crow-Bee
4. Sponge-Bob-Square-Pants
5. Step-Hen-Curry

THE I-DIV TIMES

Editors: Gen Nishiwaki and Jinoo Kim

Articles:

The Case for Favorites: Jinoo Kim

Where Are the Aliens?: Brian and Sloan Sobie

Guess Who?: Dhruv Shurma, Charlie Gage

Layout: Nima Bidari

ISSUE III

MEETINGS FRIDAY AT LUNCH (ROOM 233) THE CASE FOR FAVORITES

By: Jinoo Kim



WHERE ARE THE ALIENS?

By: Brian and Sloan Sobie

