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Reader Response 5

The reason why Sports are related to Superpatriotism is because they are an active viewing experience with Americans. Sports are active experiences where we “fight” to win and train hard to do so, to represent the country. For example, the Super Bowl is a game between who will be the best football team in the whole country. This game represents the American culture, and who are the leaders of the certain aspects of this country. For example, the Philadelphia Eagles are the leaders in football, a widely popular game, in the United States. Parenti says “When it comes to international sporting events, the “Number One” syndrome is activated full force.” This means that within our country, a team needs to be the best, but outside the country, the entire country needs to be number one. This “Number One” syndrome is due to the competitive nature or culture of the United States citizens. Parenti also does a comparison with Sports to Religion. He compares the two, because with religion one has a very strong devotion to it, where the same is being applied with Sports. Americans have a very strong devotion to sports and have very strict rules for them. With sports as a type of so called religion, Americans can relate their patriotic love for their country, America, to their ‘religion,’ sports. The relation of American Sports to the country America to religion all translates to a deep devotion of sports, that originates in America. Thus because Americans love for sports is associated with their country, their love is then converted to love for their country. This is how superpatriotism is embedded in sports.

Religion is embedded in Superpatriotism. This is backtracked all the way to the creation of the nation and the growth of Christianity across the states. Religion has always been an important key idea in the making of the United States, and became embedded in Superpatriotism. Parenti states “Religion in America resembles Capitalism in the way that it attaches itself to potent symbols beyond its own sphere: democracy, patriotism, public virtue, and the American Way of Life.” What he means in this quote is that religion is just a part of America and its politics as Capitalism and the economy is to it. Religion is embedded and stated in the Constitution, Presidential quotes, the National Anthem, and many other public American events. This huge public embedding of religion in the American culture is why religion is a huge part of the Superpatriotism. With all the times people hear about Christianity in daily life in America, the correlated link, makes superpatriotism also a huge supporter of the Christian religion.

Sports and religion mix and mingle in Superpatriotism because they are both huge devotions to a specific aspect of American culture. A stronger devotion to religion means stronger devotions to other superpatriotic attributes like sports. They are directly correlated in the sense that if one is a strong devotion, then the other is too, whereas the opposite is true. If one is weak, the other is a weak devotion, leading to a weaker patriotic sense of American spirit in the citizens. The consequences in the mixing of ideological faith-based superpatriotism are that if one’s religion becomes weakened so does their love for their country in the sense that they’re directly related. Same applies to sports. If someone loses interest in sports, their love for their country is weakened. In both senses, American fall on both sides of these extremes and can lead to a very passionate group of individuals. This is where conflicts upon politics arise, between religion and sports. These different extremes fight and create internal conflict within the country.