# [***Brass Tacks The gridiron: a breeding ground for girly behavior***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:47KH-XTV0-010F-R1WK-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Byline:** Clint Thomas

**Body**

After inestimable hours of painstaking research, I have reached a pseudo-scientific conclusion that nothing reveals a man's feminine side like - football.

Yes! Don't knuckle the disbelief from your eyes! You read correctly! I said, "Football!"

You have to watch football, preferably of the professional ilk customarily telecast on Sundays, to understand what I mean. Any sports bar or rec room will suffice for this sociological study.

On the surface, football brings out the most animalistic behavior in the typical male. For example, watch Tim Couch heft an interception with 45 seconds on the clock in the fourth quarter, and I can virtually guarantee that you will witness a vivid re-creation of the fighting ape-people in the prologue of "2001: A Space Odyssey."

You also will likely hear a plethora of creative, heartfelt profanity that, if the wind is right, will trigger shelter-in-place sirens throughout the Greater Kanawha Valley.

So how can a manly-man game turn otherwise manly men into Nancy Boys?

Observe.

A good 95 percent of the time, a man doesn't give a whit about his personal appearance. On Game Day, however, he will not leave the house unless the star on his Cowboys cap is perfectly aligned or his Kordell Stewart #10 jersey is fitting just so.

And while women get a bad rap about yakking too much, there is none so verbal as a male football fan. Get two guys, complete strangers, in a bar any time of the day or night. Should one or both be wearing football-oriented apparel, this will automatically initiate a lifelong friendship or an enmity to make the Hatfield-McCoy Feud a barn dance in comparison.

As Charlie Daniels once sang, "You just go and lay your hands on a Pittsburgh Steelers fan, and I think you're gonna find out what I mean."

If I ever laid my hands on a Pittsburgh Steelers fan, I think I'd want to wash my hands right away. But I digress.

Basically, when it comes to football, you can't shut a guy up, unless his team gets gobsmacked on Sunday and he doesn't show his face in public until Friday or Saturday, after a proper mourning period and to avoid well-earned derision, to start running his yap again. It is essential to know vital statistics on every member of every roster in the NFL, because this is knowledge. And knowledge is power, particularly when you have been known on occasion to gamble away a week's pay on the spread or spend half your waking hours tending to your fantasy football team like a bed of rare Asian orchids in a hothouse.

So, although they might not say a dozen words to their wives and children throughout the week, men will talk incessantly about football at the drop of a hat (or a drop of a Tommy Maddox pass). They will talk about the glory days of the past. They will talk about the draft and the promise of the future. They will call each other repeatedly during the game to confirm if they have both seen the exact same play.

There are few things as sad as watching a beer-sotted, Browns-shirted construction worker with male pattern baldness and a gut like the Michelin Man's, only bigger, shrieking like a spider monkey into his ***cellphone*** over a vaguely spectacular play that will probably be overturned by a coach's challenge anyway.

If a man is at home watching football by himself, he is fully absorbed in the game at hand. This is not a good time to discuss issues, ladies, for he must concentrate on strategy and has no time for idle banter such as a fever-laden child, your emotional needs or the fact that the kitchen fire is spreading into the hallway. Spare us your chin music, wenches!

In the company of men during football, however, even Marcel Marceau would yammer away about every play during a game, either how awesome or stupid it was, for there is little middle ground in this clash of modern-day gladiators. Perhaps it is something in the reptilian brain, but a man must express his reaction verbally to virtually every play of the game, be it a grunt or a Shakespearean sonnet of profanity. This makes perfect sense if you're at the stadium, to root for your team or heckle the opponents, but the only ones who hear you around a TV set are a bunch of other half-informed buffoons wearing two days' growth of beard and Packers or Dolphins sweatshirts.

Lack of affection? I daresay that are few other public places where men will hug complete strangers of the same gender without Madonna or a showtune on the jukebox.

As for guys who genuinely cry when their team loses - well, a gentleman never tells. Such things should remain a secret among men behind closed saloon doors.

Although never actually playing football, Metro staff reporter Clint Thomas was a throwback in high school and a drawback in college.

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