

Caged!

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In Stanley Kubrick's classic film Spartacus we can see the caged area where the gladiators fought. If you fork out Pay Per View fees from \$ 40 to \$ 65 you can watch our modern day gladiators go at it. Oh, they don't fight to the death, but this combination of wrestling, boxing and kick boxing using those tiny gloves the weightlifters use can be painful and physically damaging. And the natives love this shit! They don't see the need to watch traditional boxing, as it's not violent enough for them. Yet, we aficionados of the 'Sweet Science' always felt it was too violent at times. This writer wanted to see boxers wear headgear like the amateurs do. Well, times sure have changed... and not for the better.

Pro football, any football, is a violent sport. Having played the game for four of my college years, things were rough at times. When they began using the head, or *snoot* as they called it, around 1970 or so, to block and tackle, it got really dangerous. I knew then, as I was too *chickenshit* to put my head first as I blocked, that this was not a good idea. Well, everyone disagreed, and the head as a weapon became in vogue. Now, finally, after countless injuries and too many deaths, the masters of football are seeing the light. Perhaps they can see that same light and teach our young folks about the excessive and *primitive* violence in the misclassified 'sport' of *Ultimate Fighting*. One guesses that the caged fighters become, in the minds of many viewers, almost like the characters from the violent video games they all played growing up. 'Violence begets...' and thus many of our now 20 and 30 and even 40 somethings grew up watching our two 'Shock and Awe' campaigns against Iraq in 1991 and 2003. The mainstream media was filled with our carpet bombing the shit out of that nation. The mowing down of retreating Iraqi soldiers from above was right out of a video game. Of course, the 2007 Apache Helicopter slaughter of 19 Iraqi men walking peacefully made Wiki Leaks famous.

So, we have established that Pro Football and UFC are violent. Sadly, many Americans love violence, as long as *they* are not on the receiving end of it. Too many of them even can enjoy dishing it out at times... making the 'Big Dick' theory valid. Yet, not too many out there in these 'Amerikan wastelands' can enjoy seeing or hearing about unarmed black men being gunned down by the police. Even *that* is beyond the pale, except for the few virulent racists among us. So, when 70% of the NFL happens to be black, and the average salary of these guys is well over \$ 2 million per year, cannot they afford to use their power and prestige to set an example? I say 'Power' because just ponder this for a minute: How in the hell can they suspend or release players who refuse to stand and salute during the anthem, if even 50% of players, black and white, refuse to play if retributions occur? Remember Gandhi? When he called for a nationwide strike by native Indian workers, he called it 'A day of prayer', and not a strike or walkout. Well, if the *millionaire* NFL black (

and why not white?) players really cared about sending a message to the nation's masters, they would simply ' Call in sick ' the following week and thus not be able to play... if even one of their guys was reprimanded, suspended or released.

Sometimes the cage is not visible at all. Yet, we are all living in one here at home. We who love our nation truly wish to see all the cages gone. Those who work for exploitive wages under unsafe conditions are in cages. Families paying exorbitant rents to landlords who do as little as possible for them, are in cages. Our phony and manipulated Two Party/ One Party system keeps us in electoral cages without the 'key to freedom of choice' from a viable 3rd Party system. When we continue to occupy Afghanistan, as we did in Iraq, the citizens there are caged to a certain extent. Our use of the International Monetary Fund keeps so many citizens of too many nations caged through massive austerity measures. Our young students are, for the most part, caged for the propaganda that the Pentagon pays for, and the excessive corporate advertising on their school's television station. Funny how I used to love to go to the zoo. No more.

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