

# Does pro football have a positive or negative effect on society? essay sample

[Sport & Tourism](#), [Football](#)



The National Football League, without a doubt has a huge impact on American society. This impact however, can have many positive or negative effects on our culture. It can bring people together with a common interest, raise or lower the morale of a city, and influence the economy. However, either the good or the bad aspects must outweigh the other. Most Americans would say that the positive aspects of football are very important to our and the negative effects are much more minimal.

Having a home team to cheer for can bring people together, even people who are very different from each other. Pittsburgh, for example bonds over the love of the Pittsburgh Steelers. The city is brought together through its history and through the excitement of current seasons. Sam Toperoff refers to Pittsburgh as being bound together so tightly that being torn apart is impossible:

If you want to know about the “ Stillers” (as the team is known in local dialect), talk to Pittsburghers about their city. If you want to know about the city, talk about the “ Stillers.” You’ll discover you’ve learned about the bond as well (Toperoff 17).

The connection between the city and the team is understood to be so close that being a Steelers fan, for many, is part of one’s identity.

Even the accent and language used in Pittsburgh stem from the Steelers. Pittsburgh’s famous football announcer, Myron Cope, made the Pittsburgh accent famous and even made up words that are used regularly in the city. It gives a sense of unity and uniqueness to the city.

The New Orleans Saints are another good example of a positive influence on society. After Hurricane Katrina, the morale of the city of New Orleans was at an all time low. They were forced to play all of their home games at other teams’ stadiums in the 2005-06 season, but this year they have their own home

stadium. The new stadium symbolizes that the whole city can start rebuilding and overcoming the hardships they went through. The Saints have taken a leadership role in the healing of the entire region, the Saints had an amazing start to their season and their wins have now become a symbol of the cities hard work and determination to rebuild their city and their lives (Story).

Football has an enormous effect on the economy in America. The Super Bowl alone creates huge amounts of sales. Super Bowl XL made over one hundred million dollars on its official products and other industries such as the electronics industries increase revenues by large margins also. For example, before Super Bowl XL retailers sold over fourteen million big screen TVs (Harper). Charities can also be improved by either charities run by the NFL, or charities improved through the publicity of professional football. With the help of famous football players supporting a cause, the awareness of a cause can be greatly increased (MacCambridge 315-16).

However, the economy can also be affected negatively by football. Hunter S. Thompson argues that football causes a large problem with gambling in our society. He says that because of gambling football is no longer fun. When he talk about people placing bets on Saturdays he says “ If Sunday is the Lord’s day, then Saturday belongs to the devil” (Thompson 54).

Football players themselves are also affected negatively. Playing professional football has been proven to significantly harm a player’s health and shorten their life span. Tiki Barber, New York Giants running back, is currently in the news being criticized for retiring at an early age. However his reasons for leaving were that he wants to be able to play with his kids and get around without experiences physical pain (Gessing). That people criticize him and think that

they should be able to decide how he lives his own life, shows that Americans are losing their respect for others.

Although some players like Tiki set good examples, others do not. A lot of professional football players are role models to kids. Sometimes players can set bad examples for them through violence, profanity, or drug use. The players can also affect society through their actions by representing their city. If a player gives himself a bad reputation, it can also make the city he represents gain a bad image.

Recently, both Michael Vick of the Atlanta Falcons and Jake Plummer of the Denver Broncos gave their fans the middle finger after being booed (Moss). Needless to say both incidents were prominent stories in the news and the players had to make public apologies in order to regain their reputations. Vick made sure to state that he did not mean to tarnish his or his team's reputations:

That's not what I'm about. That's not what the Atlanta Falcons are about. I simply lost my cool in the heat of the moment. I apologize and look forward to putting this incident behind me (NBC).

Another example of this type of situation is Terrell Owens fighting his contract. Owens wanted to renegotiate his contract, causing a controversy when he indicated that he should be making more money by comparing himself to and insulting his teammates. After another controversy with his teammates, Owens was finally suspended for four games without pay and then was deactivated for the rest of the season. This controversy caused a lot of negative attention to be directed on his city of Philadelphia. They were criticized for allowing Owens to behave as he did which was the eventual reason for his dismissal (Wikipedia).

Most people consider the negative

effect to be outweighed by the positive. No matter what happens football fans stay loyal to their teams. It is one thing that remains constant.