Should dangerous sports such as boxing or motor-racing be banned?

Should dangerous sports be banned? Yes!

Millions of people play sport every day, and, inevitably, some suffer injury or pain. Most players and spectators accept this risk. However, some people would like to see dangerous sports such as boxing banned. This essay will examine some of the reasons for banning certain sports.

Some sports are nothing but an excuse for violence. Boxing is a perfect example. The last thing an increasingly violent world needs is more violence on our television. The sight of two men (or even women) bleeding, with faces ripped open, trying to obliterate each other is barbaric. Other sports, such as American football or rugby, are also barely-concealed violence.

Some people argue that the players can choose to participate. However this is not always the case. Many boxers, for example, come from disadvantaged backgrounds. They are lured by money or by social or peer pressure and then cannot escape. Even in richer social groups, schools force unwilling students to play aggressive team sports, claiming that playing will improve the students' character (or the school's reputation), but in fact increasing the risk of injury.

Even where people can choose, they sometimes need to be protected against themselves. Most people approve of governments' efforts to reduce smoking. In the same way, governments need to act if there are unacceptably high levels of injuries in sports such as football, diving, mountaineering, or motor-racing.

I accept that all sports involve challenge and risk. However violence and aggression should not be permitted in the name of sport. Governments and individuals must act to limit brutality and violence, so that children and adults can enjoy and benefit from sport.

272 words

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Save our Sports!

Today, many sports are becoming increasingly regulated. Boxing, rugby, soccer, and
other games are being targeted by sports bodies and medical organizations in an effort to improve safety standards and to reduce injuries. However, for some people, this is not enough, and they would rather see some dangerous sports banned completely. In this essay, I will examine some arguments against banning dangerous sports.

Sports, competition, and games seem to be natural to humans. Young children learn their own limits and strengths through play with others, but they also learn valuable social lessons about what acceptable behavior and the rights of others. Sport therefore is not just a physical phenomenon, but a mental and social one.

Challenging sport provides a healthy, largely safe, physical outlet for aggression. There is very little evidence to show that people who take part in dangerous sports become violent as a result. In fact it is more likely that apart from the many friendships created in playing, sport acts as a safety valve for a society by reducing stress. Moreover, sport teaches and requires discipline, training, and respect for the rules - valuable lessons in any society.

Almost all sports involve some risk. Young rugby players are paralysed every year in scrums. Scuba-diving accidents can lead to brain damage or death. Even golf or jogging can lead to pain or injury. Without some elements of risk or challenge, sport becomes meaningless. A marathon runner trying to improve his time, basketball players fiercely battling an opposing team, or a sky-diving team defying gravity - all are trying to push themselves to their maximum. There is therefore no sport without danger.

There is also the issue of freedom. Without a wide range of sports, many people would feel trapped or limited. People should be free to participate in activities with others as long as it does not affect the safety of non-participants.

There also should be limits to the power of governments to ban sports. If one sport is banned because of alleged danger, then what sport would be next? Boxing is the most common target of opponents of dangerous sports. But if boxing is banned, would motor racing follow, then rugby, wrestling, or weightlifting? Furthermore, many sports would go underground, leading to increased injury and illegal gambling.

Nobody denies that regulation is needed. Medical bodies have introduced safety rules in boxing, in soccer, and these safety regulations have been welcomed by players. But the role of government should be reduced.

In conclusion, our society would be healthier if more people took part in sports of all kinds. We should continue to try to prevent accidents and injuries. However, we should also ensure that sports are challenging, exciting, and, above all, fun.