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## BACK TO CAMPUS 2004

# GO HUGGYBALLERS!

A VIEW OF DUCK SPORTS FROM ONE WHO FLINCHES.  
by Kera Abraham

I loathe football. It's genetic; I have no depth perception. As a kid, every time we played a ball game in gym class — football, basketball, baseball, whatever — I flinched and ran from the ball. And in eighth grade, I was rejected at cheerleading tryouts. So, football fans, don't take this personally. It's not you; it's me.

That said, football strikes me as a boorish display of macho aggression. Where's the wit? Where's the civility? Where's the skill in a crew of beefed-up numbskulls loping across a field with a pigskin?

Football is as American as corporate welfare. No other country has popularized a sport so oversized and belligerent. Maybe it's because this country is composed of lonely individuals; where we lack cohesive families, communities and rituals, football gives us a sense of belonging. When our favorite team plays, we play — while sitting on our butts, drinking beer. When they win, we win — and celebrate with beer. When they lose, we lose — and drown our shame in beer. In short, we bond.

Here in Eugene, united by football, we are the Ducks. We wear green and yellow. We hate the Beavers and their pansy orange shirts. We sip cans of Budweiser and yell: Go Ducks! We drink another and scream it again: *Go Ducks!!* We pound yet another, elevate our doughy tushes from the stadium bench (or the sofa, barstool, what have you) and bellow: *GO DUCKS!!!!* We rump-slap our brethren. We fall off our seats. Awesome.

I'll admit: Top-heavy hunks bashing helmets only concern me so far as I can capitalize on them. For the past several years,

football games have only meant one thing to me: working home games at an off-campus bar, where I put on a short skirt and serve cheesy bacon fries to loud-mouthed, lecherous, lubberly men.

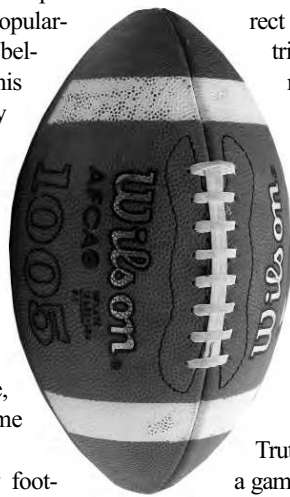
I'm not saying that all football fans are men, or that all men are football fans. But there's a definite correlation between the game and testosterone. Football season is kind of like a male menses, giving men an excuse to place the emotional over the rational. It's a time to divulge vices. Instead of eating chocolate, men gamble, drink, brawl and ogle.

Football isn't even a semantically correct term. In Spanish-speaking countries, *fútbol* means soccer; the foot moves the ball. But in America, football players hug the ball to their chests and run with it. Maybe American football should be called huggyball. Then again, a football isn't even a ball. Balls are spherical, while footballs are oblong and pointy like almonds. In the interest of accuracy, we should call the game huggynut.

But the ignorant shouldn't judge. Truth be told, every time I try to watch a game, I get distracted by the irrelevant details: the cheerleader blowing her nose, the fan barfing in the bleachers, the linebacker picking a wedgie. Lacking depth perception, I know that my view of football is shallow.


And the game has a lot to offer Eugene. It amps up revenue at the university while enhancing student diversity. It brings money to the bars, which I summarily collect. It gives everybody hangovers, boosting business at local greasy spoons.

So play on, beefy players. Drink on, squishy fans. Take a cab home and pop some aspirin in the morning. Go Ducks. **EW**



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