

## In decrying ills of football, columnist stops shy of the end zone

At first, I was heartened to read Bob Ryan's column "Game shouldn't be to die for" (Sports, Aug. 6). The perils of playing football, from concussions to permanent brain injury, are well documented, and we need more voices like his, especially in the Sports section, calling attention to this damaging sport.

I was deeply disappointed, however, to read Ryan's following statements: "I'm not going to stop watching football. I can enable as well as the next guy" and "I have said for years that the mothers of America could shut down football tomorrow." These statements undercut the power of his previous arguments and abdicate his own responsibility. They advocate for passive viewership and pass the buck to half the parenting population. (Wouldn't fathers be equally powerful, if not more so, in shutting down football?)

I'd recommend that Ryan read Steve Almond's "Against Football," if he hasn't already, and then write a follow-up column. Or better, perhaps he could abstain from viewing football this season, and put some real weight behind his words.

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