

My View

A new plan of attack for watching the game

By MARY FAGAN



It's the age-old struggle - the roar of testosterone on the one side and the voices of the rest of the family on the other."

Well, that's what Ralph Waldo Emerson would have said if he had experienced a Super Bowl at home. (His original quote was about

courage. That's what I'm talking about.)

Watching the game is an enjoyable family event. Who doesn't like the perpetual flow of goodies, new end zone dances and the anticipation at halftime to see if we need to cover our children's eyes? But there might be something that could enhance the Super Bowl experience if we would reconsider certain practices of yesteryear.

Back in the day, men and women retired to different rooms after a meal. We assume that men instituted this custom, but it might have been women. I think that ritual, while not appreciated in this liberated age, has a present-day application that I call "alternate sideline viewing." This means watching parts of the big game from two separate, but appropriate, locations in your home.

Alternate sideline viewing is a defensive tactic, safeguarding spectator comforts like smells, sounds, consistent seating and general ambience factors such as space, pillow/blanket availability and a crumb-free environment.

Let's look at how this practice might score extra points on Super Bowl Sunday. For men, belching and other escaping noises would be legal. And seated in another separate, but appropriate room, the women and children can take powder room breaks when necessary. No harm, no foul.

After too much snacking, the sound of pant buttons being undone wouldn't get called - no complaints when tummies go out of bounds. The ladies could enjoy an

unnoticed uniform change into comfortable sweats in the privacy of their own quarters.

"Man yelling" can occur without warning and can be frightening, especially to young children. Shocked by its tone and intensity, family members have been known to drop their dip and duck for cover, anticipating flying pillows.

For females, it means time out to paint toenails, which is inspired by how well-kept the cheerleaders look, and freedom to comment on the commentators' matching hats and scarves without interference.

The children have options as free agents: watch TV or play games on the sideline of their choice. This allows the younger ones to avoid the hard hitting, "be quiet" male sports demand.

Kick off, half time and the last two minutes of play are times for happy reunions. Your family gets together in front of one TV set - hearts fonder from the absence - and you're ready for some football! You can laugh over favorite commercials and compare notes without being shushed.

It's important to execute all plays with confidence. Rally the family separate viewing like offensive and defensive lines of a team that need each other to win. You're one team with your own positions. (And if you buy that, I have some swampland in Florida to sell you.)

Concerned that the Madden crowd will like alternate sideline viewing too much? Just remember that your poor huddled masses will need snacks and beverages refilled eventually.

My family is giving it the good old college try. If strategic viewing is a bad call, no sweat. We're Bills fans and used to disappointment. Around here, you can't say "Scott Norwood" and not hear a roar.

Mary Fagan, a football fan, will be comfortably watching the Super Bowl with her family in Middleport.

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