

Weekly Wisdom 2-10-2016

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

My Super Bowl 2016 observations:

Lady Gaga did a good job on the National Anthem. Lots of performers try to do fancy things (well, they're performers) but I thought she did a fine rendition. What she wore (sparkly red pantsuit with matching eye shadow, sparkly blue fingernails, and flag inspired platform shoes) was staid compared to what she's worn in the past. Remember the dress made out of meat in 2010?

The Super Bowl game was nothing to write home about. Both teams combined for only about 500 total yards. Lots of penalties. Turnovers galore. I'm not really a fan of either team but was rooting for Denver, mostly, I guess, rooting against Carolina. I just found the arrogance of Carolina to be over the top, even though I will admit they are a lot like the Seahawks! Cam Newton's got nothing on the arrogance of Richard Sherman.

Post-game was the time I found really interesting. **Peyton Manning** could not have been classier. He thanked his teammates and his family. He expressed how grateful he felt for having had such good coaches throughout his career. I'll even forgive him for shamelessly plugging Budweiser, since I know they didn't pay him to say anything and he does own a couple of Bud distributorships. At 39 years old, I'm glad he could end his career on a high note.

I just felt sorry for **Cam Newton**. He set himself up for being humbled when he wore the gold MVP shoes during warmups. That set him up for a long fall. I found myself thinking about my own children at 26 years old. Someone that age is not equipped to take on the media, the pressure, the failure of that moment. I saw him at his press conference, where he spoke in one word syllables and walked out, and while I think he was childish, I'll give him a break. I actually like him better humble than brash.

I thought about how our **CWU students** deal with triumph and defeat. Some respond to defeat by quitting; some go home to see their families; some gather their friends around; but none have to speak about that failing grade or the breakup of a relationship in front of nationwide television cameras. And I'm glad.

I'm writing about the Super Bowl because it has become one of our cultural markers. Although I didn't celebrate in any significant way (just home with my husband and the cat), I envision families, friends, coworkers far and wide, gathering in living rooms to experience the ritual that IS the Super Bowl. Are there better things to celebrate? Sure. Are there less violent, or sexist, or important events than the Super Bowl? Yes. But the spectacle has made its way into the fabric of America. The older I get, the more I'll take any reason to celebrate!

P.S. Twitter has it that **Marshawn Lynch** is retiring from football. I gotta give the guy credit. The picture of the cleats hanging on the wire was a great shot. I think it was shady to do it during the Super Bowl though. Lynch did a lot for the Seattle Seahawks. He made me think more than once about the wisdom of being your own person. I'm glad he's leaving on his terms.

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