

# A Guy's Guy Kind of Guy

*by* Con Chapman

It's been a hard week for me. I'm sure it will turn out to be the toughest of the year—and it's only February.

If somebody asks you whether you watched The Masters, or the Final Four, or God forbid the NBA All-Star Game and you say “No,” no inference is drawn about your manhood or your character.

*Ollie Matson of the Chicago Cardinals, stiff-arming an incoming pigeon.*

If, on the other hand, you admit that you didn't watch the Super Bowl, the question arises in the mind of your interlocutor (the person who asked you the question, silly): “What kind of Twinkie *is* he?”

I'll tell you. I'm not a guy's guy kind of guy.

It's not that I don't like football. I played it in high school, and I did check the score of the Super Bowl in the third quarter, but I realized the other day: I've been paying attention to football since before the Chicago Cardinals became the St. Louis Cardinals

became the Arizona Cardinals—over a half century. I used to have an Ollie Matson football card, fer Christ sake.

As the author of the Book of Ecclesiastes might say, if Hannah Storm could find him for an interview, when it comes to football, there's nothing new under the sun.



*Storm: "You're cute. In an Old Testament kinda way."*

But in a larger sense, even if I had a rooting interest in the game I wouldn't have watched. Because I'm not a guy's guy kind of guy.

I'm not a non-guy. Every year on the day before the Super Bowl The Boston Globe goes out and finds non-guys who say of course they're not going to watch the Super Bowl, they're going to a dance recital or an "installation" at an art gallery; which is not the same thing as an installation of a new Craftsman power tool bench.



*Johnny Roland: "Tires? What tires?"*

So I'm pretty sure I'm at least a guy. I used to try and build model cars and *not* to sniff the glue. I had a BB gun. I wanted to be Cardinals' non-Hall of Fame third baseman Ken Boyer when I grew up, then Johnny Roland, the can't-miss All-American for the University of Missouri whose career was . . . uh . . . sidetracked when he stole some tires. Off another guy's car.

But a guy's guy? Sorry, I'm just not a guy's guy kind of guy.

A guy has an opinion on his favorite team's relief pitching. A guy's guy holds views on the relief pitching of teams he doesn't root for, and is ready and willing to share them with you at the drop of a bowling ball. I'm not like that. I like to keep my mind clean and uncluttered for the receipt of truly fresh information, like the fact that T.S. Eliot apparently taught Virginia Woolf the latest dance crazes including the Grizzly Bear and the Chicken Strut. *That's* news you can use.



*Woolf: "I could do the Funky Penguin, but not the Chicken Strut."*

A guy who isn't a guy's guy kind of guy will have realized long ago a reductionist principle applicable to all sports: Watching in person is nasty, brutish and long, especially the lines outside the rest rooms. It's also cold and wet and damp. I was struck by this revelation as a mere lad while I watched Heisman Trophy winner Gale Sayers get stomped by Missouri in his last college game. What should have been the occasion for great rejoicing on my part was spoiled by one minor detail; my nuts were freezing off at the tender age of 13.



*Gale Sayers*

So thanks but no thanks on those December playoff tickets; a guy who's not a guy's guy will pass. He won't even come over to your house to watch the game on your big screen TV, having realized long ago that watching sports surrounded by your best buds will expose you to hours of mindless drivel such as Phil Simms' startling prediction that one team will try to score more points than the other in order to win.

No, the best way to watch the Super Bowl is to go to the gym the next day—and watch the highlights. That way you skip the crunchy carbs, burn some calories, *and* get all the information you need. If you can't stand the suspense, check the ESPN app on your phone first thing in the morning. It didn't go to the game—and yet it knows the score. Technology rocks!

*Simms: "I'm gonna go out on a limb and say the team that scores fewer points will lose."*

Of course, once you cross over into the Promised Land of non-guy's guy kind of guy territory, you become a bit of a spoilsport. "Would you like to go fishing this weekend?" a friend asks. "No," you say thoughtfully, as if preparing to correct the error of his ways on some minor point of federal tax law. "I found out you can buy fish in the grocery store. Makes things *much* simpler."

“Sure,” your friend says, “but you miss out on all the sun and sea and boisterous camaraderie.”

“And the fish guts,” you remind him. “*Love* to get bloody fish guts on my hands when I clean those monsters of the deep.”

“Right,” your friend says as he turns to walk away, trying his darndest not to shake his head in disgust until he's out of sight.

*Gack!*

As for hunting, well, my dad used to, and he took my side when I wanted that BB gun. He gave up the sport when he was nearly the victim of a Dick Cheney-type friendly fire incident during his last pheasant season. A guy's guy kind of guy at the point swung his gun around to fire at a fleeing bird and forgot about his fellow human being walking the wing. I retired my BB gun after shooting a blue jay—noisy birds much despised by my mom for the way they dive-bombed Big Kitty, our orange tabby. I caught him right in the eye—pretty good shot—but as I examined the bird in its death throes I felt pangs of remorse, not a trait one typically finds in full-grown guy's guy kind of guys.

But that's okay. I'm fine with the choice I made even if it means I miss out on business development opportunities and my career has stalled because I'm not interested in yukking it up with my fellow lunkheads in a luxury box whose construction was financed with taxpayer money. Nope, I'll just sit here in front of my computer, night after night—and weekends, too.



Searching for videos of T.S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf doing the Chicken Strut.

