

Is UFC Fighting Ethical?

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Contextual Background

- The Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) is an American promotional company for mixed martial arts that shows matches pay-per-view or by watching in the stadium seats (max. Approximately 17,500 seats).
- The four most common injuries sustained by UFC athletes are: Fractures/broken bones, hand injuries, knee injuries, and concussions (Gleiber 2015).
- In 2016, the UFC had 13 pay-per-view events with an estimated 8.12 million buys (an average of 632,000 buys per show) (Meltzer 2018).
- In 2017, the UFC had 12 pay-per-view events with an estimated 3.71 million buys (an average of 309,000 buys per show) (Meltzer 2018).

Is the UFC justified?

Assumptions

- Only one match takes place, with 2 fighters and 5 rounds (Strickland, 2007)
- The fighters involved are 170-185 lb, the weight class least prone to injury (Middleweight) (Hutchinson, 2017)
- The fighters, by the end of the match, are not fatally injured or need surgery to heal
- There is one winner
- No laws or UFC rules were broken
- The amount of people watching at home (pay-per-view) is 275,000
- The amount of people in the stadium is 15,000

Argument: Virtue-Based Argument

P1: UFC athletes hurt other UFC athletes for fame and fortune and those who watch UFC matches enjoy watching people get hurt.

P2: Hurting other people for fame and fortune shows selfishness and greed, while enjoying watching people get hurt shows sadism.

P3: Selfishness, greed, and sadism are vices.

P4: One should not act viciously.

C: One should not participate in or support UFC matches.

Alternative Argument: Consequentialist

P1: UFC matches provide entertainment for hundreds of thousands of people per match and allows UFC athletes to be paid.

P2: Not showing UFC matches would not provide hundreds of thousands of people with entertainment and UFC athletes would not earn any money.

P3: The entertainment of hundreds of thousands of people and supporting UFC fighters is better than not entertaining hundreds of thousands of people and not paying UFC athletes.

P4: If an action has better consequences than the alternatives, you should do that action.

C: UFC matches should continue in order to provide entertainment for hundreds of thousands of people per match and to allow UFC athletes to be paid.

Sources

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