

Fall 2013

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Carlton Koonce

Fordham University, aaas49@fordham.edu

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The Exploitation of College Athletes: Education and Money

BY

Carlton Koonce

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

AFRICAN AMERICAN & AFRICAN STUDIES

At

FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

2013

A football program that has historically struggled to win games, is now winning conference championships year in and year out. The only thing that appears to be able to stop them is themselves. As a result, the university has received record donations from alumni all over the country. The university is expanding with new buildings and facilities that seem to pop up out of nowhere. Ticket prices are through the roof, and games are being sold out in a couple days' time. Not only that, but the applications for incoming freshman have more than quadrupled since the last losing season. With all of this expansion and money coming in the players have nothing to show for it, with the possible exception of a college degree and often not even that. Is all of this just a huge coincidence, or is it a result of the recent success of the football team. Maybe the university is that great of an institution, or maybe having a great football team is the direct cause of the school's gained popularity. This is a story that has repeated itself many times, all over the country.

This is generally the case when dealing with major D-1A football across the country. Schools like Texas, Ohio State, USC, Florida State, Alabama, and Michigan all fall under that category. Their athletes are not being properly rewarded for their services during their time at these institutions. The exploitation of collegiate football athletes has been a hot button topic for years now, and for good reason. Times have changed and society has grown more restless with the NCAA in each passing year. Every year, a new scandal arises and the NCAA is forced to act, but by doing so they look bad. People are starting to ask questions, especially former athletes, so school has made is dollars when they are on the field. There have been a plethora of examples through the years that really illustrate the main issue, and that is the pure greed, that covers big time college sports, and the NCAA has to get as much money as they possibly can.

Like every debated topic, there are two sides to this story. The other side of this argument is vital because it is what makes this issue so complex, and compelling to discuss. The NCAA's model is set up in a way that allows these scholarship athletes to attend schools for free. This is a luxury that not everyone has, but if you are fortunate enough to take advantage of it, it can be very helpful. Some believe the trade off for a free education is enough to compensate for all the sold merchandise and donated money. Not to mention the television deals and extra press. Some believe in the true definition of an amateur athlete and that they should not be paid until they graduate to the next level of professionalism. This is a fine stance on the matter, however there are missing pieces to the puzzle which compensates this idealistic position. Namely that major D-1A football players are being taken advantage of in a major way.

An important factor in this whole problem is that this only applies to D-1A football and some D-1AA schools. The exploitation and corruption that is talked about refers to this level of competition. In division two and division three level does not apply, nonetheless they are not the athletes playing on national television. D-1A football is where the big money is made annually. Billions of dollars are made (profited) due to the marketability of these players and their skill set. D-1 players' merchandise is being sold, television networks are being created, and companies are benefiting through the bowl game season. These are all factors that lower level competition can not relate to. So when I refer to NCAA, I am referring to their actions regarding D-1A football and not the entire system.

There have been plenty of examples through the years of players taking money under the table and receiving improper benefits because they are "amateur" athletes. There is the Reggie Bush scandal, SMU scandal, Ohio State scandal, A.J. Green, and most recently Cam Newton and Johnny Manziel. All of these unique situations have a life of their own, but the one component

that connects them is the fact that these allegations came about all because they are not allowed to be compensated for their likeness. It is absurd for me to try and comprehend the thought process behind it all because to this day I cannot understand it.

There was an eight-month Yahoo! Sports investigation that uncovered Reggie Bush and his family appear to have accepted financial benefits worth more than \$100,000 from marketing agents while Bush was playing at the University of Southern California. The benefits were supplied by two groups attempting to convince Reggie Bush to join them as a client. (Yahoo! Sports *Cash and Carry* Robinson, Charles/Cole, Jason)

Those benefits included \$595.20 in round-trip airfare from San Diego to Oakland in November 2005 for Bush's stepfather, LaMar Griffin, his mother, Denise Griffin and younger brother to attend the USC-California game at Berkeley. It also included \$250.65 for limousine transportation from the Oakland airport to the Ritz-Carlton in San Francisco that November weekend for the Bush family. In addition, things that were provided by his current marketing agent Michael Ornstein were suits for Bush's stepfather and brother to wear during the Dec. 10th, 2005 Heisman ceremony in New York, a makeover for his mother for the event and limousine transportation. Weekly payments were also made of at least \$1,500 to the Bush family. (Yahoo! Sports *Cash and Carry* Robinson, Charles/Cole, Jason)

Reggie Bush was also reportedly receiving benefits from New Era, a well established clothing business. These other benefits included \$623.63 for a hotel stay by Bush at the Venetian Resort & Casino in Las Vegas from March 11th to the 13th, 2005 and \$1,574.86 for a stay by Bush at the Manchester Hyatt in San Diego from March 4th-6th, 2005. New Era made a payment of approximately \$13,000 to Bush so he was able to purchase and modify a car. Bush and his family also received thousands of dollars in spending money and they paid for his

family's pre-existing debt. Beyond the house and other payments, New Era Sports paid for a black-on-black 1996 Chevrolet Impala SS for Bush. (Yahoo! Sports *Cash and Carry* Robinson, Charles/Cole, Jason)

Now this is everything I alluded to earlier in a nut shell. This is a lot happening for one player, even for a player of Reggie Bush's magnitude. That is a large sum of money being invested into one player and his family. Now the real issue at hand is not him taking the money, because truth be told I would do the same thing Reggie Bush did and not think twice about it. This is real life he is dealing with and his family needed some aid with debt and little help in the financial department. All because he is labeled as an amateur athlete under NCAA regulations, he cannot legally accept benefits. He has God given ability and should be able to benefit however he sees fit. Unfortunately for Bush benefiting for yourself without giving the NCAA a piece is not playing by the rules, so he was forced to return his Heisman Trophy he won fair and square. (Yahoo! Sports *Cash and Carry* Robinson, Charles/Cole, Jason)

The Ohio State tattoo scandal was a fairly recent one that really shook up the college football world. There were six players involved Terrell Pryor, Daniel Herron, Damier Posey, Mike Adams, Solomon Thomas, and Jordan Whiting all of whom for most part started at their respectful positions. Again as shown before, this particular situation involves collegiate athletes looking to benefit from their own likeness. These players simply wanted to purchase tattoos, but they do not have the funds to do so, like most college football players. Their solution was to exchange their Ohio State merchandise for tattoos. Technically those items they were trading in belonged to them, but you are not allowed to profit off of them in any way.

The tattoo artist Edward Rife, is the individual who was giving the tattoos to Pryor and his teammates in exchange for the memorabilia. Rife has had previous issues with the law and

had been investigated for drug trafficking. During a raid on Rife's home and tattoo parlor, some Ohio State memorabilia had been discovered. The list of dozens of items released after the fact estimates the value of the merchandise at \$12,000 to \$15,000. This is a lot of money when you put into the context of athletes and their materials. One can only imagine how it would be in society if every collegiate football player were to receive proper benefits. That is a large sum of money for just six players, so for every player in the country it would result in lost revenue for the NCAA. The total value of that memorabilia further proves that these athletes are being exploited, which is why those athletes did what they did because they did not have the funds to do it on their own. (The Associated Press *Chronology of Ohio State Scandal*)

A.J. Green was another case of the NCAA just being hypocritical in their practice of the "amateur" athlete and "protecting" them. Here you have an athlete who maybe needs a little more money because what he has cannot support his current lifestyle at the moment, or maybe he just wants a little extra food at his disposal. In order to compensate for the NCAA's lack of fairness, A.J. Green decided to sell his Independence Bowl jersey to an agent. Of course he was penalized and suspended for the first four games of his last season. The story was not whether or not A.J. Green did the right thing, but rather if the rules in place are fair to athletes. Yes he was given that jersey for free in order to compete in a bowl game, but does he not have the right to sell it if he so chooses? The main issue people have with this is the fact that the NCAA was selling numerous different kinds of number eight Georgia football jerseys online, which happens to be Green's number. Most people would like to think that it is not a coincidence the jersey for sale happens to be the same as A.J. Green's number. The bottom line is that the NCAA is abusing their definition of the amateur athlete for profit. (Bleacher Report *A.J. Green of Bulldogs Suspended: Agents Must Also Be Held Responsible* Matcovich, Chris)

The NCAA by-law 12.3.1.2 states that an athlete shall be deemed ineligible if he or she accepts benefits from agents or marketing representatives. The rule goes on to say that student-athletes, their family or friends cannot receive benefits or loans from agents. To add to that ruling, NCAA by-law 12.1.2.1.6 states that athletes cannot receive preferential treatment, benefits or services because of the individual's athletics reputation or skill or pay-back potential as a professional athlete, unless such treatment, benefits or services are specifically permitted under NCAA legislation. (Yahoo! Sports *Cash and Carry* Robinson, Charles/Cole, Jason)

These rules and regulations are a mockery of justice. They seem to be inconvenient for everyone involved other than the NCAA. Everything an individual does to gain benefits or extra compensation is okay, as long as the NCAA is benefiting in some fashion. If any of these rules are broken then that athlete is subject to whatever punishment the NCAA sees fit, which in extreme cases seems like they are pimping out college athletes and manipulating them for all of their worth. Athletes cannot benefit under any circumstance unless Big Brother, or in this case the NCAA approves the action. Their rules have changed the entire economic scale because it is the perfect business model. The perfect business model is owning a multibillion dollar establishment without paying your employees. This is essentially what the NCAA is doing with the athletes acting as the unpaid employees. The NCAA is not the only one benefiting, as the institutions involved have garnered record numbers in revenue over the past several years. They are equally responsible in this matter.

The money gained by the different schools across the country has been discussed numerous times. Athletics departments continue to build state of the art practice facilities and stadiums. Different conferences continue to change partners and create new bowl games, and yet the players are still not being properly compensated. There is no denying that the top programs

in the country have no problem making the big money while operating in the green. They make a whole lot more money than what they are spending. The following is a chart of the top football programs and their expenses compared to their revenues from the year 2011 to 2012.

	Total Football Expenses	Total Football Revenue
Alabama	\$36,918,963	\$81,993,762
Ohio State	\$34,026,871	\$58,112,270
Oregon	\$20,240,213	\$51,921,731
Stanford	\$18,738,731	\$25,564,646
Georgia	\$22,710,140	\$74,989,418
Texas A&M	\$17,929,882	\$44,420,762
South Carolina	\$22,063,216	\$48,065,096
Clemson	\$23,652,472	\$39,207,780
Louisville	\$18,769,539	\$23,756,955
Florida	\$23,045,846	\$74,117,435
Notre Dame	\$25,757,968	\$68,986,659
Florida State	\$22,052,228	\$34,484,786
LSU	\$24,049,282	\$68,804,309
Oklahoma State	\$26,238,172	\$41,138,312
Texas	\$25,896,203	\$103,813,684
Oklahoma	\$24,097,643	\$59,630,425
Michigan	\$23,640,337	\$85,209,247
Nebraska	\$18,649,947	\$55,063,437
Boise State	\$8,537,612	\$15,345,308

TCU	\$25,984,011	\$25,984,011
UCLA	\$19,193,346	\$25,168,004
Northwestern	\$20,148,403	\$27,547,684
Wisconsin	\$24,231,297	\$48,416,449
USC	\$23,123,733	\$34,410,822

(Forbes *Economics of College Football: A Look at the Top 25 Teams' Revenues and Expenses* Jessop, Alicia)

It should come as no surprise as Texas and Alabama make the most money out of all the schools. Texas managed to make over an astounding \$103,813,684 and the athletes see none of that money. It appears that Alabama has caught on quick to how this business model works because it spends the most on its football program out of any other school. Its dedication has paid tremendous dividends, with the team winning the last two BCS National Championships, which makes that three out of the last four years. Every factor you can possibly think of more than likely contributes to these eye popping statistics. Merchandise sold, tickets, conference re alignment, and the wild card of today's era the television networks. (Forbes *Economics of College Football: A Look at the Top 25 Teams' Revenues and Expenses* Jessop, Alicia)

It is no secret that Alabama has enjoyed great success in its football program over the past several years, with the arrival of Nick Saban. His football team and its players have changed the financial makeup of the University for years to come. Money and admissions have sky rocketed through the roof along with their success. The Alabama Crimson Tide have recorded an impressive record of 68 wins and 13 loses since the year 2007 along with 3 national titles. The athletic department money has followed the same pattern along with the many wins. In the year 2012, Alabama produced revenue of \$124.5 million and a profit of \$19.4 million.

These numbers are up from \$67.7 million in revenue and \$7.1 million in profit in 2007.

Alabama's football team is responsible for about two-thirds of all revenue and \$45 million in profit, while the school's other sports teams have collectively lose money. The bottom line is just one aspect of how these institutions take advantage of student athletes and the NCAA as well. (Forbes *The Magic of Nick Saban: Everyone Wants to go to Alabama* Van Riper, Tom)

Student admissions into a college is another beneficial effect that a good football program has on a school. Since the year 2007, Tuscaloosa has seen a tremendous increase in its undergraduate standings by 33% to over 28,000 students. The student growth has been accompanied by faculty growth as well. The number of faculty members has gone up by 400 since 2007 to over 1,700. It is more than just the growth in University, but where the growth is coming from. Less than a third of the 2007 freshman class of 4,538 students originated from out of state. By the fall of 2012, 52% of a freshman class of 6,397 students did originate from out of state. During this period, the school's out-of-state tuition cost rose from \$18,000 to \$22,950 a year. This number is nearly three times higher than the rate for in state students. (Forbes *The Magic of Nick Saban: Everyone Wants to go to Alabama* Van Riper, Tom)

This means that more students from outside Alabama are willing to pay steady increasing tuition bills to watch a championship caliber football team. The school collected \$50 million more in out-of-state tuition revenue for last fall's incoming class, than it did for the same class in 2007. In the year 2007 the total out of state revenue was \$26 million, but in 2012 it rose to \$76 million. Also add the \$8.5 million in in-state tuition, which rose to \$9,200 a year from \$6,400 over the same time period. Over that course of time overall tuition revenue rose to \$104 million from \$46 million for the 2012 and 2007 freshman classes. In addition to the football team's success, Alabama has received donations from Alumni of about \$600 million total for

scholarships and facilities, which is the most they have ever seen. This rise in money and attention does not happen without the players going out and winning games. (Forbes *The Magic of Nick Saban: Everyone Wants to go to Alabama* Van Riper, Tom)

Not only that, but the demand for applications means it will be more a competitive school to get into. Having a more competitive process results in the best students getting in, which raises the level of academics at the institution. This is the success of the football team having an effect on the academic prestige, as well as the bank. Six years ago, 64% of students applying to the University of Alabama were accepted. By the year 2012, the acceptance rate had dropped to 53%. About one in four students from the 2012 freshman class carried a 4.0 high school GPA. The class also includes 241 National Merit Scholars, which is more than any other public university in the U.S. (Forbes *The Magic of Nick Saban: Everyone Wants to go to Alabama* Van Riper, Tom)

Expansion of the campus is also another positive affect that successful football programs have on institutions. Every school is looking to build new exciting structures around campus in order to add to the appeal of the campus. This is not possible without the funds the football programs bring in year in and year out. Since Alabama's recent success in football, the school has built and renovated buildings around its campus. The final phase of a four-building Science & Engineering complex, which first began a decade ago, was finally completed this past summer. In the year 2010, the school opened the Capstone College of Nursing building, which features classrooms, labs and an auditorium. Campus housing has also seen a significant upgrade in its structures and features as well. A new facility called Presidential Village, which holds nearly 1,000 students, just opened in the summer of 2012. A second phase of the housing project includes a recreation center that is scheduled to open in 2014. Having a successful and

marketable football team pays dividends for a school, especially if that school struggles to attract students. Improvement for the school is seen across the board from campus expansion, to more students applying to the school. Unfortunately for the players involved, they will not receive the money they so rightfully deserve. (Forbes *The Magic of Nick Saban: Everyone Wants to go to Alabama* Van Riper, Tom)

Schools have continued to benefit from the hard work and talent of college players, but aside from their own expansion of the school the conferences as a whole have made a tremendous amount of money. The NCAA has managed funnel billions of dollars through television deals these conferences make with networks. This is just another prime example of the major exploitation that is taking place. The following is a list of the television deals made for the upcoming years. These contracts are subject to change with the conference realignments with the additions of some teams.



ACC

15 years, \$3.6 billion, ESPN (through 2027)

Annual: \$240 million

Average Annual per School: \$17.1 million

Notes: ACC also expected to take it's own share, bringing the average per school annual payout to \$16 million per year



Big East

6 years, \$200 million, ABC/ESPN [CBS contributes \$9 million of total] (through 2013)

Annual: \$40 million

Average Annual per School: \$3.18 million for football schools, \$1.56 million for non-football schools

Notes: Big East is next conference up for renewal. Total is expected to be far below the \$1.4 billion they turned down.

BIG

Big Ten

10 years, \$1 billion, ABC/ESPN (through 2016)
25 years, +\$2.8 billion, Big Ten Network (through 2032)
6 years, \$145 million, Fox (BIG championship game through 2016)
Annual: \$236 million
Average Annual per School: \$19.7-\$22 million



Big 12

13 years, \$1.2 billion, Fox (through 2025)
13 years, \$1.4 billion, ABC/ESPN (through 2025)
Annual: \$200 million
Average Annual per School: \$20 million

Notes: Schools control Tier 3 rights, so each school can gain even more annual revenue on it's own. Also worth noting, that the 10 schools are expected to extend their rights waiver for the additional years, 13 in total. So no members would be leaving the Big 12 knowing that they would risk losing so much revenue. Expansion is on the table for the Big 12, especially given the large revenue bump. So if the right 2 schools were available, the Big 12 would expand and renegotiate it's television fees beforehand. Florida St., Notre Dame and Clemson remain at the top of the wish list while Louisville remains the more likely initial candidate.



Pac-12

12 years, \$2.7 billion, Fox/ABC/ESPN (through 2024)
Annual: \$225 million (* \$505 million potential)
Average Annual per School: \$20.2 million (\$18.8 million from Fox/ABC/ESPN with \$30-\$50 million projected with Pac-12 Network)

* Pac-12 Network: the network will launch in 2012 with a primary network and 6 regional networks. Revenue projections combined are expected to be in the same range if not more than the Big Ten Network, which produces \$280 million per year at \$11 million per school.

Notes: New members Utah and Colorado receive 50% share in 2012, 75% share in 2013, 100% share in 2014



15 years, \$2.25 billion, ESPN (through 2024)

15 years, \$825 million, CBS (through 2024)

Annual: \$205 million

Average Annual per School: \$17.1 million

Notes: contract is expected to be renegotiated in time with the additions of Texas A&M and Missouri, likely before the 2024 expiration. The SEC may be on it's way to starting it's own network that depending on future additions, could gain the conference and additional \$10-\$20 million per school per year). While the SEC currently ranks below 4 other conferences in revenue, that is expected to change sooner than later.

(College Sports Info 2012 NCAA Television Revenue By Conference Peloquin, Matt)

The television contracts and network contracts with numerous universities have added an extra element to the NCAA's money train. These numbers are staggering, but should come as no surprise with the growing popularity of college football across the country. Throughout the BCS conferences all you see are deals with ESPN, CBS, ABC, Fox, and some conferences even have their own network, which adds to the revenue they receive throughout the year. These television networks are all nationally televised, so the marketability of the athletes grows along with the many television appearances. Big college football games are racking up millions of dollars in viewing.

Bowl games are at the front end of this because companies pay huge money to the NCAA in order to get their name front and center for a bowl game. The major BCS bowls like the Sugar Bowl, Orange Bowl, Rose Bowl, and Tostitos Fiesta Bowl are the fat money makers out of all of the bowl games. The pressure to make a bowl game is so great because it means more money

towards your school and this only adds to the corruption in college football, because everyone wants to be a winner. In the bowl era you are considered a winner no matter what the outcome of the game. As long as your institution qualified for a bowl game, financially the school is in a great spot.

In the year 2007, 64 teams accepted bids to play in bowl games that year. 32 bowl games were played at the time, which was a record number. Not only that, but it went International for the first time, with the addition of the International Bowl in Toronto. The economic affect is not only felt in the states, but now it has spread internationally. Payouts are big in the bowl game era because win or lose, your school walks away with guaranteed profit. In the Motor City Bowl that year, each team received a payout of \$750,000 each. In the BCS Bowls pay outs ranged between \$14 million to \$17 million per team. Conferences of the participating schools profit as well. In 2006, the Rose Bowl paid \$17 million to each conference that participated. These payouts are a direct benefit to all universities within the two conferences whether the teams play in the game or not. Each school receives more than \$1 million dollars each year whether it plays in the Rose Bowl, or not. The Rose Bowl Game also pays \$1.6 million to the Bowl Championship Series, which supports 100 other universities. The following is a list of bowl games with the amount of payout money each team received in the 2007 season. (The Signal *The Big Business of College Bowls: Schools, Teams, Even Cities Cash in on these High Profile Games* Rohit, M. Parimal)

Alamo Bowl, San Antonio, TX: \$2.2 Million

Allstate Sugar Bowl, New Orleans, LA: \$14-\$17 Million

AT&T Cotton Bowl, Dallas, TX: \$3 Million

AutoZone Liberty Bowl, Memphis, TN: \$1.7 Million

Armed Services Bowl, Fort Worth, TX: \$750,000

Brut Sun Bowl, El Paso, TX: \$1.9 Million

Capital One Bowl, Orlando, FL: \$4.25 Million

Chick-Fil-A Bowl, Atlanta, GA: \$2.4-\$3.25 Million

Champs Sports Bowl, Orlando, FL: \$2.25 Million

Emerald Bowl, San Francisco, CA: \$750,000

Orange Bowl, Miami, FL: \$14-\$17 Million

Gator Bowl, Jacksonville, FL: \$2.5 Million

GMAC Bowl, Mobile, AL: \$750,000

Hawaii Bowl, Honolulu, HI: Declined to Provide

Insight Bowl, Tempe, AZ: \$1.2 Million

Gaylord Music City Bowl, Nashville, TN: \$1.5 Million

International Bowl, Toronto, Canada: \$750,000

Las Vegas Bowl, Las Vegas, NV: \$1 Million

MPC Computers Bowl, Boise, ID: \$750,000

Meineke Car Care Bowl, Charlotte, NC: \$750,000

Motor City Bowl, Detroit: \$750,000

New Mexico Bowl, Albuquerque, NM: Declined to Provide

New Orleans Bowl, New Orleans, LA: \$325,000

Outback Bowl, Tampa, FL: \$3 Million

Pacific Life Holiday Bowl, San Diego, CA: \$2.2 Million

Papajohns.com Bowl, Birmingham, AL: Declined to Provide

PetroSun Ind Bowl, Shreveport, LA: \$1.1 Million

Poinsettia Bowl, San Diego, CA: \$750,000

Rose Bowl, Pasadena, CA: \$14-\$17 Million

Texas Bowl, Houston, TX: \$500,000 to \$750,000

BCS Championship Game, Glendale, AZ: \$14-\$17 Million

Tostitos Fiesta Bowl, Glendale, AZ: \$14-\$17 Million

(The Signal The Big Business of College Bowls: Schools, Teams, Even Cities Cash in on these High Profile Games Rohit, M. Parimal)

The Orange Bowl is another BCS bowl game sponsored by FedEx. This game has evolved into something more than football. Now it is about making money and expanding the customer foundation across the country. There is a month-long calendar of events called the Orange Bowl Festival, which offers a top notch college football game, as well as other sports, entertainment and community events. The FedEx Orange Bowl festival attracts more than 150,000 visitors to the Miami area annually. In the year 2005, when the FedEx Orange Bowl was host to the Bowl National Championship between University of Southern California and Oklahoma, the game generated approximately \$200 million for the Miami area. The Fiesta Bowl, which began in 1971, has contributed more than \$2 billion to Arizona's economy and paid more than \$370 million to universities and colleges. In addition, 22 of the past 23 Fiesta Bowl games have sold out. The Las Vegas Bowl was organized to boost tourism dollars in the slowest week of the year, which is generally right before Christmas. Since the beginning of the bowl game it has drawn more than 314,000 fans and revenue not affiliated with the game has topped \$107 million since its birth. The same goes for San Diego, which hosts the Pacific Life Holiday Bowl and the San Diego County Credit Union Poinsettia Bowl. Together, both bowls topped \$40 million in direct revenue in San Diego County. So not only do the players help boost the revenue for their

respective schools, but they also help boost the economy for struggling cities like New Orleans or Phoenix. This adds further evidence as to why college football players should be compensated accordingly. (The Signal *The Big Business of College Bowls: Schools, Teams, Even Cities Cash in on these High Profile Games* Rohit, M. Parimal)

There are three types of Division I levels in the NCAA. There is the D-IA level where you see college football played on a national scale and where the big money is made. There is the D-IAA level where solid college football is played, which is the level that Fordham University competes at. Then there are the schools who are Division I, but do not have a football program. This level was formerly known as D-IAAA. The exploitation that we see typically involves the athletes people watch compete on television. I spoke with Dr. Allen Sack, who is now a professor at the University of New Haven, and I was able to get his perspective on some of the actions of the NCAA. Dr. Allen Sack was a Notre Dame Football player, who played on the 1966 National Championship team. He is well aware of the exploitation that has taken place over the years, as he has written a book called *Counterfeit Amateurs*. The book is about the NCAA taking advantage of the title "amateur athlete", while they get away with pocketing billions of dollars.

I asked Dr. Allen Sack if he thought the NCAA was being greedy, and his response was quite intriguing. He said that, "the NCAA is protecting themselves from two things. They are reluctant to compensate the athletes, in light of the amount of money they are bringing in. It is more complicated because they call these kids amateurs". Dr. Sack says that this is a blatant lie, and that they are not amateurs. He stated that, "If you receive any kind of financial endowment you are a professional according to the NCAA". (Dr. Allen Sack. *Personal Interview*. 24 October 2013)

He told me that in 1906, the NCAA said that the athletic scholarships are a violation of amateurism. It is an undeniable fact that these football players are not amateurs, but the NCAA is denying it. They have been able to use the fiction of amateurism to deny that today's college athletes are employees. Technically speaking, employment is different from being an actual professional. Employment means contract for hire, which is what the NCAA says that athletes are not. Dr. Sack said that, "in 1973 they did away with 4 yr scholarships and created the 1 yr scholarship. 4 year gave them too much power and 1 year allows them to be fired". The football players should have salary and workers compensation, because the NCAA made these kids into employees. Since the NCAA has transformed them into employees, they should pay them like employees. (Dr. Allen Sack. *Personal Interview*. 24 October 2013)

Dr. Sack says although this is the ideal thing to do, they don't have enough money to do that. Even though they may not have the funds to pull that off, they should still compensate them like employees because of 1 yr scholarships. The old model of 4 year scholarships is perfectly within the boundaries of the current model. If they allow players to make money outside the school then this is known as the Olympic model. Dr. Sack believes the NCAA should look into the Olympic model and utilize it. The Olympic model is the idea that they can make a profit without taking away money from the school. An example of this would be money for endorsement, which shows just the athlete with no mention of the university that person attends. (Dr. Allen Sack. *Personal Interview*. 24 October 2013)

50% of FBS schools make profit from football and only 23 schools in FBS make profit for all sports for athletics. Football money is not just utilized for the football budget. This money is spread out throughout all athletic programs. Unfortunately for the NCAA, some institutions have been unhappy with the way they have been managing and leading. There have

been rumors about them breaking away from the NCAA completely, creating their own professional league. The bottom line is that the whole belief of amateurism in major division I football is a scam. The only exception is need based scholarships which are given out in the Ivy League, and lower division schools. Not having to pay for room and board, tuition, and meals is technically not amateurism according to Dr. Allen Sack. (Dr. Allen Sack. *Personal Interview*. 24 October 2013)

Dr. Sack also informed me that the NCAA has another trick up their sleeve no one really knows about. This trick is the ability to operate without having to pay taxes. The NCAA equals tax free money, which leads to record numbers in the earning column. Millions of dollars are being made and are literally untouchable because most of the revenue made is tax free. Bowl games are big reason why the NCAA earns so much tax free money. (Dr. Allen Sack. *Personal Interview*. 24 October 2013)

The BCS games especially, are the big winners in the revenue department. This is because all four BCS bowl games, including the championship game, are classified as tax-exempt nonprofit charities, set up with missions to do public good with the money they earn and spend. This statement can be said with validity, as I have shown how these bowl games impact the surrounding economies. In 2007 the Sugar Bowl, which was also the BCS title game that year, generated \$34.1 million in revenue. \$11.6 million of that \$34.1 million earned was tax-free profit. (Think Progress *How College Football Bowls Earn Millions in Profits But Pay Almost Nothing in Taxes* Waldron, Travis)

The BCS has been in existence since 1998, and manages the five biggest bowl games. The five biggest bowl games are the Rose Bowl, Orange Bowl, Fiesta Bowl, and Sugar Bowl. The BCS National Championship is the fifth game, where the sites alternate every year. The

revenue generated by the BCS games and other nonprofit bowls were \$261 million in 2009. Rather than spend this money for good and beneficial things, the money made is used in other ways that take advantage of the system. Instead of this money being distributed to the players or other people in need, it is spent on the greed of the individuals in charge. Expensive and luxurious trips are planned for the executives, compensations packages are created for their CEO's and illegal donations are made to politics. These suspect actions have raised questions about why the bowl games are classified as nonprofit charities and whether they should continue to be recognized as non profit in the future. (*Think Progress How College Football Bowls Earn Millions in Profits But Pay Almost Nothing in Taxes* Waldron, Travis)

Since the BCS first began, the average pay for the CEO in charge for each bowl has more than doubled, and now exceeds \$500,000 a year. The Sugar Bowl has cash reserves that tops \$34 million, and pays its CEO more than \$593,000. In 2007 when the Sugar Bowl also hosted the BCS championship, it paid its CEO more than \$645,000. The average executive pay at BCS bowls ranks in the top 2 percent of pay among nonprofits with similar budgets. The salary also ranks in the top 9 percent among nonprofits with budgets twice their size. This proves the greed of the NCAA and its partners is a reality. There is no excuse, especially with all of the extra funds, as to why players are not properly compensated for their services. (*Think Progress How College Football Bowls Earn Millions in Profits But Pay Almost Nothing in Taxes* Waldron, Travis)

Executives at the Fiesta Bowl spent more than \$100,000 on a corporate golf trip, and former CEO John Junker spent more than \$1,200 at a strip club. The Fiesta Bowl spent \$3.3 million on The Fiesta Frolic, which is an annual trip for sponsors, executives, and others involved in the game. During the same time the Orange Bowl hosted a similar trip, called The

Summer Splash, at an average annual cost of more than \$111,000. The men in these upper positions are abusing their power and ability to make extra cash on the side. (Think Progress *How College Football Bowls Earn Millions in Profits But Pay Almost Nothing in Taxes* Waldron, Travis)

Another intriguing dynamic in the pay for play argument, is the video game aspect of college football. Here we have one of the more popular games in the whole country, yet none of the collegiate football athletes are receiving rewards for its sales. Their likeness is being utilized in every aspect of the game, but they are compensated with zero benefits financially. Without the players there is no game, and without the game no money is made. I know for a fact who does get a slice of the pie for using the brand and that slice goes to the NCAA. The NCAA has *their hand in the cookie jar again, yet players still have nothing to show for it. This is just one of many examples of why players are being taken advantage of.*

Complaints have been made throughout the years with people speaking out against the NCAA saying that this is not right. The NCAA was feeling the pressure, as more and more started to question their motives behind what they were doing. The regulations and the rules do not match up with their so called number one priority, which is "protecting the student athlete" because they are "amateurs". This is just an excuse and everyone sees that.

All of these components have resulted in Electron Arts, a very popular video game producer, to stop the making of NCAA college football. Although this will not affect EA Sports in any way economically, it is the principal of the matter. The NCAA is starting to realize this as they progress toward a new normal. The NCAA ended its contract with EA Sports, and the video game NCAA Football 14 will be the last game to use the organization's name and logo. The timing of this comes as no surprise to those people in favor of athletes being compensated.

The NCAA is currently being sued by a group of former players led by Ed O'Bannon. One of the group's primary claims is that the organization used former players' likeness in video games like NCAA Football without compensating them. (Business Insider *The NCAA Ends its Contract with EA Sports, Blames Cost of Potentially Catastrophic Lawsuit* Manfred, Tony)

Some people think the lawsuit could, in fact bankrupt and ultimately end the NCAA as we know, if Ed O'Bannon ends up victorious. In a statement given by the NCAA, they recognized that the total costs of litigation as one of the primary reasons for the decision to end the game. However, this does not mean the NCAA Football video game franchise is dead. The NCAA reminded everyone that individual schools and leagues license their own logos and names to the game. With that aspect still in effect, these different institutions are still free to exercise that right. The full press release from the NCAA reads as follows:

The NCAA has made the decision not to enter a new contract for the license of its name and logo for the EA Sports NCAA Football video game. The current contract expires in June 2014, but our timing is based on the need to provide EA notice for future planning. As a result, the NCAA Football 2014 video game will be the last to include the NCAA's name and logo. We are confident in our legal position regarding the use of our trademarks in video games. But given the current business climate and costs of litigation, we determined participating in this game is not in the best interests of the NCAA.

The NCAA has never licensed the use of current student-athlete names, images or likenesses to EA. The NCAA has no involvement in licenses between EA and former student-athletes. Member colleges and universities license their own trademarks and other intellectual property for the video game. They will have to independently decide whether to continue those

business arrangements in the future. (Business Insider The NCAA Ends its Contract with EA Sports, Blames Cost of Potentially Catastrophic Lawsuit Manfred, Tony)

Dr. Allen Sack gave me a little background information of the class action lawsuit O'Bannon has filed against the NCAA and who exactly Ed O'Bannon is. O'Bannon was a UCLA college basketball player in the 90's, who then went on to play in the NBA. A couple years ago he went to buy a college sports game for his kids and when he went home his children said dad that's you on the game. He was bothered by what he saw because like everyone else in the game, he was not getting a share of the profit. (Dr. Allen Sack. *Personal Interview*. 24 October 2013)

The NCAA is on the ropes and they are definitely feeling the pressure with this pending case. O'Bannon is the lead plaintiff in the antitrust class action against the NCAA. The suit argued that upon graduation, a former student athlete should become entitled to financial compensation for future commercial uses of his or her image by the NCAA. In January 2011 Oscar Robertson, considered one of the greatest basketball players of all-time, joined O'Bannon in the class action suit. The class participants have also filed a class suit against Electronic Arts, and the Collegiate Licensing Company. EA Sports and Collegiate Licensing Company have already settled for \$40 million dollars with the other defendants in the O'Bannon lawsuit. Things are starting to pick up very quickly and the longer it lasts, the more pressure the NCAA feels. (Sports Illustrated *NCAA is suing EA Sports and CLC in wake of \$40 million Ed O'Bannon settlement* Rickman, Martin)

Although the NCAA may feel more pressure than ever before, they still feel that they have done no wrong doing up to this point. The letters of intent that the athletes sign annually, and free education that they receive from these four year institutions are good enough from the

NCAA's perspective. This part of the argument makes this whole dynamic a more complex issue to deal with. The issue of education and admissions into these colleges makes for a very intriguing debate between the two sides. What is so problematic with this whole issue, is that how can it be exploitation when these young men are given something that few can claim to have received, which is free education among other things due to their athletic ability. This may be so, but others argue just because they are granted a financial benefit does not mean they should be fully taken advantage of and short changed. They deserve a fair share of the pie, and the pie ranks well into the billions. The education and admissions issue is directly connected to the exploitation taking place, because a majority of the athletes are black. The NCAA has the perfect business model because they are taking less privileged young men, and putting them in school for free because they would not make it by any other means. Then while they are in college the NCAA makes billions off of them, while they settle for a degree that means nothing more times than not. All of these factors are starting to come to light and I am bringing this issue front and center.

I spoke with Frank Taylor, the head of student athlete academic advising, about this very thing. He told me that the problem of athletes not getting the proper education is more common than people may think. It mainly occurs in the power conferences of college football like the ACC, SEC, PAC 12, and the Big 12. Other lesser known D-1A schools are no strangers to this sort of thing happening. It seems as though this has taken college football by storm, but this has been going on for decades now. All of the shortcuts are done in order to compete at the highest level possible, which will result in big money being made for the university and ultimately the NCAA. The contradiction and connection between the two are very clear. Frank Taylor said that these athletes are not being pushed academically to the standard of regular students. They

do not do their own work and in the most extreme cases, tutors are paid to their work for them. The athletes do not go to class, so therefore they are not benefiting upon graduation. This only adds to the exploitation because the administration is short changing the athletes out of a legitimate education, so after football they have nowhere to turn to. If they truly cared about the well being of these student athletes, then they would not only challenge them athletically, but academically as well. (Taylor, Frank. *Personal Interview*. 26 September 2013)

As a Division I football player in my own right, I have experience with this type of dynamic taking place. My perspective is even more unique because I transferred from an institution whose academic prestige was okay, into a school where the academics are well known and well respected throughout the tri-state area. I went to Hofstra in the fall of my freshman, and following that I have attended Fordham since the spring semester of 2010. I instantly saw the difference, in the academic approach toward athletes, between the two Universities. Hofstra followed the more traditional version of operation followed by many major college football schools across the nation. The freshman athletes were placed in all of the same classes to start out. I had all of my teammates in class with me, along with some lacrosse players. Lacrosse is big at Hofstra University, so it makes sense as to why they are in the same place as football players. Another interesting note, is the fact that there were a sprinkle of other students in the freshman program who were non athletes. These students were special exceptions, because they either had high enough grades and did not score high enough on the SAT, or they did not have the grades and they had the money, or knew the right people to get in. I was intrigued by this because here I thought this special program was exclusively for incoming athletes, but it was evident that it was available for all students.

It was very clear that the people at Hofstra wanted the incoming players to do well and not have to be thrown into the academic fire quite yet. It was a little sad really, because I can recall some of my teammates telling me about people who had trouble reading at a very moderate level. This information opened my eyes to what really was the goal overall, for everyone involved. The class atmosphere was not that of a typical class at Hofstra. There were up to two professors in the class, and sometimes even three depending on the lesson. The communication was constant and it felt like the professors were very hands on and interactive. I loved it because it was an easy grade for me, but there was no denying that it lacked a challenging component. In one class I can recall a term project, where we had to create a booklet based on experiences in life and future goals. It was really like an arts and crafts type of deal, and I thought to myself wow I can really get used to this sort of thing. Luke Bonus, an old teammate of mine at Hofstra, said it best in a recent interview with the Daily News. He said that, "The administrators wanted to tell you that Hofstra's going to be this great academic institution. I can sit here and tell you it's not. I hardly opened a book". This quote alone shows how athletes fared academically at a school like Hofstra. (Daily News. *When the Pride is Gone: Four Years Ago, Hofstra left the football field for the last time.* Armstrong, Kevin)

Fordham had a different way of dealing with athletes and it showed in every way possible. When I first arrived at Fordham for my first semester I struggled. It was an academic culture shock coming from Hofstra, because it was simply harder. I was placed in classes with the regular population of students, athlete or no athlete. There were no special programs, created specifically for students who struggled academically. They were going to challenge you, so you either had to step your game up, or run the risk of being expelled. I had to work twice as hard to receive lesser of a grade, here at Fordham as opposed to Hofstra. It was very noticeable from the

amount of reading that I had to do, and the amount of written work that was assigned. Athletes were considered academically capable, just like anyone else on campus. A student athlete could not afford to slack off, or else they would not last. Fordham challenges you to the fullest, and the demanding academic criteria pushed you to levels you did not think were possible. When I was looking for a new school I did not want attend Fordham, because I heard the rumors of how hard it was academically. *My main focus was football and football only, nothing else mattered in my eyes.* Fortunately I have great people in my corner, especially my parents who understood what it meant for a student athlete to attend a fine school like Fordham. I can say with confidence that there are no shortcuts for athletes and no easy way out. Fordham prepares each person for the future and the real world because in the real world applying yourself builds success.

I have interviewed some of my teammates and they have had similar experiences in the class room. Each athlete I interviewed spent time playing at a larger institution. I interviewed Michael Nebrich and Khamrone Kolb. Michael Nebrich spent his time at UCONN, while Khamrone spent his time playing at Penn State. These two play in the BCS power conferences, and they are also well known for their athletic programs within the state. I asked them both a series of questions, regarding the treatment they received at the schools academically speaking. The answers they gave me were very intriguing. I asked Khamrone Kolb if he felt exploited while he was there playing at Penn State. He responded, "Yes I did feel kind of taken advantage of because I know there is money being made that we [athletes] will never see". I asked Michael Nebrich if his professors treated him differently than other students. Michael replied, "Yes it's exactly what you would think it would be unfortunately. That's D-I for ya". He also hinted toward the coaches not genuinely caring about what his grades were, just as long as he was eligible to play. This can be said for many programs across the country, but this is just an inside

example of some of the things that go on under the radar. (Khamrone Kolb and Michael Nebrich. *Personal Interview*. 20 October, 2013)

Clustering, or clumping is a hot new term used for what has been going in the college football academic world. This involves student athletes being put in the same majors because of its lack of complexity, instead of being placed in majors where they can succeed. The administrators have made it, so that it is as less challenging as humanly possible. Once the athletes graduate with their majors it is back to square one for a majority of them.

An advisor may tell you that you may be better off taking this major, or these specific courses. They will tell you that a number of your teammates are doing the same thing you are, so they feel that since of security almost as if that is what everyone should be doing. It is unfortunate because in reality, these majors are not respected as much as others. Also professors may alter a grade or two, because even they cannot resist the power and influence the major football teams have. They will take care of you because the pressure is too great, and they are fans of the team, or they simply do not want to be that individual to fail away a championship. Not only that, but you can receive a study course with that same professor, along with your teammates, who ironically have the exact same study time as you. (Lawrence Journal-World. *Athletes tendencies to cluster in certain academic fields problematic, some say*. Hittle, Shaun)

These of course are extreme examples, however these cases do occur. Clustering can be defined as when a large percentage of players on a sports team share a major. It is also defined by researchers as 25 percent of a team sharing one major in men's basketball and football programs. The following are 3 examples of clustering in the Big XII, from a research study done by Journal-World study.

- 1) Baylor football team: 51 percent of players major in general studies, compared with just 1 percent of all other undergraduates. According to Baylor's website, the program is designed for the "general career areas of health, fitness, recreation, and sports."
- 2) Texas A&M: 37 percent of the men's basketball players and football players major in agricultural leadership and development, compared with less than 1 percent of nonathletes.
- 3) Iowa State: Seven of 11 men's basketball players majored in liberal studies.

(Lawrence Journal-World. *Athletes tendencies to cluster in certain academic fields problematic, some say.* Hittle, Shaun)

The study also overviewed the majors of all Kansas University athletic teams. In the last season, student athletes' majors appear fairly distributed throughout the school, however a closer look at the KU men's basketball team through the years tells a different story. Between the years 2004 and 2012, 43 players who have had their majors viewable in media guides have passed through the KU men's program. Out of those 43 players, 61 percent have majored in communications, African and African-American studies, or American studies. When you think back as to who were the best players to come through Kansas University over that span of time, there's a good chance they majored in one of those three fields. Mario Chalmers, TyShawn Taylor, and Sherron Collins were all African and African-American studies majors. Brandon Rush, Cole Aldrich, and Julian Wright were all Communications majors. Thomas Robinson and the Morris twins were both American studies majors. Out of the 17 Kansas players since 2004 who have been drafted or signed by an NBA team, 13 players have majored in those same three majors. Everyone of those majors were disproportionately high among basketball players

compared with the total undergraduate student body, even among the other athletes. Clustering, or clumping is not a violation of any rule, but it is a major cause for concern. (Lawrence Journal-World. *Athletes tendencies to cluster in certain academic fields problematic, some say.* Hittle, Shaun)

According to Peter Finley, a professor at Nova Southeastern University, clustering opens the door for potential problems. It is his belief that the athlete will become a pawn. He feels that they will be only there to play the sport and major in "eligibility". For specific popular majors in college athletics Finley said that, "sometimes you'll find that students in those programs can have lower GPAs, take fewer high-level courses and 'create' their own program, which allows them to target more professors who are 'friends of the program'". (Lawrence Journal-World. *Athletes tendencies to cluster in certain academic fields problematic, some say.* Hittle, Shaun)

Jason Lanter, a psychology professor said that, "The focus when big-time athletic prospects come to campus is simply to keep them on the field". Lanter is also the president of the Drake Group, which helps faculty and staff defend academic integrity in the face of the burgeoning college sport industry. Lanter added, "The coach says, 'I don't care, make them eligible'". These are some of the attitudes toward academics, that the NCAA is dealing with. The end result is that players spend their time on campus, and maybe get a degree in a field that doesn't interest them and that presents little future opportunity. It is simply a wasted degree. On the Kansas football team, 17 out of 64 players who had declared a major on the online roster, majored in one of the business school's top academic majors, like finance and accounting. Here is a clear indication that the academic diversity within these powerhouse programs, are not present. There needs to be more of an attempt to challenge student athletes academically, and

not giving them an easy way out which is the useless degree. (Lawrence Journal-World. *Athletes tendencies to cluster in certain academic fields problematic, some say*. Hittle, Shaun)

Although this may be seen as bad on Kansas's part, they are not the only ones from the Big XII to have questionable statistics. At Oklahoma State, 34 percent of the football team majors in education. At OSU, 10 percent of undergraduates are education majors, which make the numbers still disproportionate. At Texas A&M, 37 percent of football and basketball players major in agricultural leadership and development. There is a real concern here, and that concern is questioning whether or not athletes have true academic freedom. (Lawrence Journal-World. *Athletes tendencies to cluster in certain academic fields problematic, some say*. Hittle, Shaun)

What may be even more alarming, is the fact that this picture is mapped out all over the country. From graduation rates, to what really makes up the student body academically and socially. There are some mind blowing statistics that really say it all, in terms of what is going on behind the spotlight. A study was done a few years back to try and get more concrete data to see the academic makeup of the six power conferences. Those conferences being the SEC, PAC 12, Big East, Big 10, Big XII, and the ACC. According to a study done by UPENN, between 2007 and 2010, Black men were 2.8% of full-time degree-seeking undergraduate students. The football teams are 57.1% black and the basketball teams are 64.3%. Across four cohorts, 50.2% of Black male student-athletes graduated within six years, as opposed to 66.9% of student-athletes overall. There are 72.8% of undergraduate students overall, and 55.5% of Black undergraduate men overall. 96.1% of these NCAA Division I colleges and universities graduated black male student-athletes at rates lower than student-athletes overall. 97.4% of colleges graduated black male student-athletes at rates lower than undergraduate students overall.

At an unnamed university, black male student-athletes graduated at a comparable rate to black undergraduate men overall. On 72.4% of the other campuses, graduation rates for Black male student-athletes were lower than rates for Black undergraduate men overall. These statistics alone say that there is an issue here that is not being discussed nearly as much as it should be. It is also disturbing facts because it seems that football and basketball are in this thing together. (Penn GSE. *Black Male Student-Athletes and Racial Inequities in NCAA Division I College Sports*. Harper, Shaun/Williams Jr., Collin/Blackman, Horatio)

While black male athletes make up only 2.8% of full-time undergraduate students, together they are 58.4% of the football and men's basketball teams in the power conferences. The racial difference and imbalance is astounding when the numbers are broken down. This pattern is evident throughout the whole country, and I doubt this is something new that has just taken shape over the past couple of years. Ever since the black population was allowed to attend these institutions of full scholarship, the college make up shifted. Here are some statistics that better illustrate this racial landslide. (Penn GSE. *Black Male Student-Athletes and Racial Inequities in NCAA Division I College Sports*. Harper, Shaun/Williams Jr., Collin/Blackman, Horatio)

25 Universities at which Black Male Student-Athletes are Most Overrepresented

Numbers represent percent differences between Black men's representation in the undergraduate student body versus their representation on revenue-generating sports teams. For example, Black men were 5.1% of undergraduates at the University of Mississippi, but comprised 78.1% of football and men's basketball teams (thus, the percent difference is 73.0).

2= these three institutions do not have NCAA Division I intercollegiate football teams

Marquette University-2	77.0%
University of Mississippi	73.0%
University of Miami	72.4%
Florida State University	71.5%
Providence College-2	70.6%
Mississippi State University	70.3%
University of Georgia	69.6%
University of Illinois	67.6%
University of South Carolina	67.4%
University of Alabama	67.1%
University of Tennessee	66.9%
University of North Carolina	66.4%
Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University	66.2%
University of Texas	66.0%
Georgia Institute of Technology	66.0%
Oklahoma State University	65.1%
University of Louisville	64.7%
University of Kentucky	64.3%
University of South Florida	64.1%
Seton Hall University-2	64.0%
	21
Texas A&M University	63.7%
Louisiana State University	

63.4%
Auburn University
63.4%
Rutgers, State University of New Jersey
63.3%
University of Maryland
63.1%

(Penn GSE. *Black Male Student-Athletes and Racial Inequities in NCAA Division I College Sports*. Harper, Shaun/Williams Jr., Collin/Blackman, Horatio)

The following is a list of the ten schools with the highest black male student athlete graduation rate.

- 1 Northwestern University 83%
- 2 University of Notre Dame 81%
- 3 Villanova University 78%
- 3 Pennsylvania State University 78%
- 5 Vanderbilt University 74%
- 6 Duke University 73%
- 7 Wake Forest University 70%
- 7 Georgetown University 70%
- 9 Boston College 68%
- 9 Stanford University 68%

(Penn GSE. *Black Male Student-Athletes and Racial Inequities in NCAA Division I College Sports*. Harper, Shaun/Williams Jr., Collin/Blackman, Horatio)

The following is a list of ten schools with the lowest black male student athlete graduation rate

- 1 Iowa State University 30%
- 2 University of South Florida 31%
- 2 University of Arizona 31%
- 2 University of Arkansas 31%
- 5 Florida State University 34%
- 5 University of Florida 34%
- 7 Indiana University 36%
- 7 Arizona State University 36%
- 7 Mississippi State University 36%
- 10 University of Minnesota 37%

(Penn GSE, *Black Male Student-Athletes and Racial Inequities in NCAA Division I College Sports*. Harper, Shaun/Williams Jr., Collin/Blackman, Horatio)

All these statistics recorded are staggering and mind-blowing. Being a black male college athlete myself, these numbers relate to me in ways I never thought possible. Coming out of high school I am sure I had the same mindset as all of the other black football players around the country. I was going to the NFL no matter what anyone said, and I was going to whatever it took to get there. I knew that in order to do that I would need to go to a four year school, which is not a bad thing at all. Receiving a free education, while playing the sport you love is not a bad deal at all. I believe what we all fail to realize is that nothing in life is guaranteed, and college is

the perfect example of that. Being black and an athlete makes it that much more difficult to try and fight through the adversity you might encounter during your time there.

The issue gets more complex the more in depth one thinks about it. Naturally all of the institutions in the country are going to have more whites than blacks because of the percentages in the regular population, with the exception of Historical Black Colleges of course. Black people make up only 13% of the population, so it would be unrealistic to think that black students should equal the same amount as white students. What becomes problematic is the low number of black students who are not athletes. It gives off the notion that black students are not worthy of attending these institutions, unless you have an athletic ability of some sort. This of course is not the perception any school wants to be affiliated with, so this is why school admissions and athletics work hand and hand. This data also proves that based on the admissions process, the system is designed to use these student athletes for their profit potential.

Every school's admissions office has a specific criteria they follow in order to select these students for their schools. Schools realize that without this element, they would lack the socially acceptable mix of diversity within the institution. Although this may be true, students who get thrown into this pot are mostly student athletes. No matter where a student athlete comes from, they are accepted with the excuse of a scholarship in sports. I refer to it as an excuse because they make exceptions athletically, which is the same thing as renting the player. The schools earn billions of dollars and give the student a free education, without them being paid for the money they earn the schools. That free education is also given in a manner, where it is not beneficial so the individual can succeed in the future. The problem is that these students are not the same type of students that are being accepted due to race. The student athletes are being accepted because they earn the administrators tons of money, while the other

underrepresented students are being accepted because they are in a special program. These special program kids however do not come from the same place as the athletes. More than a few black student athletes come from a challenging background, where circumstances may have not been in their favor. It is very difficult to try and adapt to an entirely new way of life. It is illustrated in the graduation rates of black student athletes. The highest rate should be over 90%, and the lowest rate should be over a reasonable margin rather than 30%. In a perfect world this would be true, but that simply is not the case.

The graduation rate directly affects the job market, and what potential job one may receive when they graduate college. This is a huge issue for the NCAA, because black student athletes are not graduating at an acceptable level. As a result of not graduating from the school, the job you get may not be the one you envisioned when you first got to college. This makes the NCAA look very bad, because it looks like they do not care if young black men graduate from these schools. With all the sanctions they are so quick to put on a player for accepting money for their jersey, like A.J. Green, then they would come down even heavier on schools that do not graduate a certain percentage of their football players. The NCAA is interested in money, and using these kids for 4 years of their life. One may say well they are getting a free education, or not everyone gets a scholarship so it evens out.

The issue is that they are not being paid what they are rightfully owed, and when they graduate, if at all they end up going back to where they came from which is not an ideal situation. They go to school for four years not able to make a profit. They do not major in an adequate field, and when they graduate if they are not drafted, then it is back to wherever they came from. This is a vicious cycle that appears will never be broken. These young men can change their economic situation tremendously if the NCAA would do what was right, but instead

young black men are used for sport profitability. If they were used for their academic purposes, then this study would be based on the lack of athletic contribution instead of the lack of academics. For some of them football is their only savior, and the NCAA can help and change that at the same time.

Maurice Clarett is the perfect example of how the system is designed to take advantage of young black athletes, and keep them trapped. Clarett was a running back at Ohio State, and was the first true ^{freshman} to ever start a game at that position. He came Youngstown, Ohio which is considered one the toughest cities in the whole country. His upbringing was not easiest because he did not have a father in his life, as he was raised by his mom. Maurice comes from a rough background, but he is still able to attend Ohio State because of his football scholarship. If it were for academics, then I do not believe Ohio State would be a thought at that time in his life. (30 for 30. *Youngstown Boys*. Jeff Zimbalist and Mike Zimbalist)

Clarett took America by storm his freshman year, with the crowd chanting his name and his jersey number being worn all over the stadium. They made it all the way to the championship game against Miami, where things took a negative turn since he spoke against the athletic director indirectly. The director did not like that very much, as in the near future he suspended Clarett for the entire next season based on a sketchy investigation that he took illegal money. The information was undisclosed, so no one knew what exactly happened. It was unfortunate too because Clarett ultimately did not graduate, and did not make it to the NFL. He ended up back in his hometown, getting in trouble because he did not graduate. Football was the only thing that was keeping him up with school, but it was taken from him so he decided to declare early for the draft. (30 for 30. *Youngstown Boys*. Jeff Zimbalist and Mike Zimbalist)

Here is Maurice Clarett, a young man who helped earn Ohio State millions that year with fans purchasing his memorabilia and buying tickets. The athletic director has the nerve to flex his power over him because he wanted to go home to see a dead friend, but was denied because they did not want to be distracted during the national championship. If they truly cared for Clarett's well being then they would have sent him home no problem. All they cared about was protecting the Ohio State brand, and earning money. Even so, Clarett is looked at as the bad guy all because he was suspected of taking a little extra. Excuse him for wanting what is ethically his, and for him believing he deserves \$100 more while the university profits millions. The director's behavior is comparable to that of a racist boss, because he is using his power over the athlete knowing the athlete cannot help himself. The director controls your eligibility, and they especially do not like being spoke out against like they are their masters. They are not allowed to receive benefits from anyone else unless it is approved, which is suspect in itself. The NCAA can basically be referred to as Big Brother, only they exploit people too so they are twice as worse.

The bottom line is that the whole system is flawed, and there needs to be some changes from the administration in order to progressively improve it. Black football players and most black athletes outnumber their teammates by large percentages, as opposed to the black undergraduate percentage. This differential is very disturbing and it should be addressed, so that everyone is being accepted and evaluated fairly. This is in connection with athletes being paid what they are rightfully owed, instead being used up for four years in hopes of going to the next level in sports. They should be compensated so that in case they do not go, then they have something to show for the billions and millions they bring in. Also something needs to be done about the clustering of majors and challenging them the right way. People involved should have

the same love and care for these student athletes as if they were their own kids. Unfortunately it will take time and patience because there are so many rules and regulations that go into the scholarship and eligibility deal. I fear that black collegiate football players are seen as just another dollar sign, rather than caring for the person and their well being. Until then the NCAA will continue to rule, in the economically unethical fashion they have been.

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