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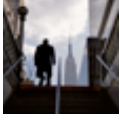
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The Shame of College Sports

A litany of scandals in recent years have made the corruption of college sports constant front-page news. We profess outrage each time we learn that yet another student-athlete has been taking money under the table. But the real scandal is the very structure of college sports, wherein student-athletes generate billions of dollars for universities and private companies while earning nothing for themselves. Here, a leading civil-rights historian makes the case for paying college athletes—and reveals how a spate of lawsuits working their way through the courts could destroy the NCAA.

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73

By [Taylor Branch](#)



Evan Kafka

“I’M NOT HIDING,” Sonny Vaccaro told a closed hearing at the Willard Hotel in Washington, D.C., in 2001. “We want to put our materials on the bodies of your athletes, and the best way to do that is buy your school. Or buy your coach.”

Vaccaro’s audience, the members of the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, bristled. These were eminent reformers—among them the president of the National Collegiate Athletic Association, two former heads of the U.S. Olympic Committee, and several university presidents and chancellors. The Knight Foundation, a nonprofit that takes an interest in college athletics as part of its concern with civic life, had tasked them with saving college sports from runaway commercialism as embodied by the likes of Vaccaro, who, since signing his pioneering shoe contract with Michael Jordan in 1984, had built sponsorship empires successively at Nike, Adidas, and Reebok. Not all the members could hide their scorn for the “sneaker pimp” of schoolyard hustle, who boasted of writing checks for millions to everybody in higher education.



“Why,” asked Bryce Jordan, the president emeritus of Penn State, “should a university be an advertising medium for your industry?”

Vaccaro did not blink. “They shouldn’t, sir,” he replied. “You sold your souls, and you’re going to continue selling them. You can be very moral and righteous in asking me that question, sir,” Vaccaro added with irrepressible good cheer, “but there’s not one of you in this room that’s going to turn down any of our money. You’re going to take it. I can only offer it.”

William Friday, a former president of North Carolina’s university system, still winces at the memory. “Boy, the silence that fell in that room,” he recalled recently. “I never will forget it.” Friday, who founded and co-chaired two of the three Knight Foundation sports initiatives over the past 20 years, called Vaccaro “the worst of all” the witnesses ever to come before the panel.

But what Vaccaro said in 2001 was true then, and it’s true now: corporations offer money so they can profit from the glory of college athletes, and the universities grab it. In 2010, despite the faltering economy, a

single college athletic league, the football-crazed Southeastern Conference (SEC), became the first to crack the billion-dollar barrier in athletic receipts. The Big Ten pursued closely at \$905 million. That money comes from a combination of ticket sales, concession sales, merchandise, licensing fees, and other sources—but the great bulk of it comes from television contracts.

VIDEO: Taylor Branch describes how his research for this piece woke him up to the NCAA’s injustice (part 1 of 3)

Educators are in thrall to their athletic departments because of these television riches and because they respect the political furies that can burst from a locker room. “There’s fear,” Friday told me when I visited him on the University of North Carolina campus in Chapel Hill last fall. As we spoke, two giant construction cranes towered nearby over the university’s Kenan Stadium, working on the latest \$77 million renovation. (The University of Michigan spent almost four times that much to expand its Big House.) Friday insisted that for the networks, paying huge sums to universities was a bargain. “We do every little thing for them,” he said. “We furnish the theater, the actors, the lights, the music, and the audience for a drama measured neatly in time slots. They bring the camera and turn it on.” Friday, a weathered idealist at 91, laments the control universities have ceded in pursuit of this money. If television wants to broadcast football from here on a Thursday night, he said, “we shut down the university at 3 o’clock to accommodate the crowds.” He longed for a campus identity more centered in an academic mission.

The United States is the only country in the world that hosts big-time sports at institutions of higher learning. This should not, in and of itself, be controversial. College athletics are rooted in the classical ideal of *Mens sana in corpore sano*—a sound mind in a sound body—and who would argue with that? College sports are deeply inscribed in the culture of our nation. Half a million young men and women play

competitive intercollegiate sports each year. Millions of spectators flock into football stadiums each Saturday in the fall, and tens of millions more watch on television. The March Madness basketball tournament each spring has become a major national event, with upwards of 80 million watching it on television and talking about the games around the office water cooler. ESPN has spawned ESPNU, a channel dedicated to college sports, and Fox Sports and other cable outlets are developing channels exclusively to cover sports from specific regions or divisions.

With so many people paying for tickets and watching on television, college sports has become Very Big Business. According to various reports, the football teams at Texas, Florida, Georgia, Michigan, and Penn State—to name just a few big-revenue football schools—each earn between \$40 million and \$80 million in profits a year, even after paying coaches multimillion-dollar salaries. When you combine so much money with such high, almost tribal, stakes—football boosters are famously rabid in their zeal to have their alma mater win—corruption is likely to follow.

Scandal after scandal has rocked college sports. In 2010, the NCAA sanctioned the University of Southern California after determining that star running back Reggie Bush and his family had received “improper benefits” while he played for the Trojans. (Among other charges, Bush and members of his family were alleged to have received free airfare and limousine rides, a car, and a rent-free home in San Diego, from sports agents who wanted Bush as a client.) The Bowl Championship Series stripped USC of its 2004 national title, and Bush returned the Heisman Trophy he had won in 2005. Last fall, as Auburn University football stormed its way to an undefeated season and a national championship, the team’s star quarterback, Cam Newton, was dogged by allegations that his father had used a recruiter to solicit up to \$180,000 from Mississippi State in exchange for his son’s matriculation there after junior college in 2010. Jim Tressel, the highly successful head football coach of the Ohio State Buckeyes, resigned last spring after the NCAA alleged he had feigned ignorance of rules violations by players on his team. At least 28 players over the course of the previous nine seasons, according to *Sports Illustrated*, had traded autographs, jerseys, and other team memorabilia in exchange for tattoos or cash at a tattoo parlor in Columbus, in violation of NCAA rules. Late this summer, Yahoo Sports reported that the NCAA was investigating allegations that a University of Miami booster had given millions of dollars in illicit cash and services to more than 70 Hurricanes football players over eight years.

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The image shows the cover of a report titled "AN ATLANTIC SPECIAL REPORT TECH 2020". The cover has a green background with a grid pattern and some technical-looking elements. Below the title, it says "Mobile Devices, Social Networks, Cloud Computing" with a right-pointing arrow. To the right of the cover, there is a white box containing the text "SPONSORED BY" followed by three logos: a circular logo with a shield, the Cleveland Clinic logo, and the Hitachi logo with the tagline "Inspire the Next".

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Jeff 2 weeks ago

Comparing the athletes to slaves is just ridiculous. **THEY CAN WALK ANY TIME THEY WANT**. No one is forcing them to play.

Until you figure out a way to evenly compensate **EVERY SINGLE ATHLETE IN THE NCAA**, you will never appropriately be able to pay these students. The big schools will always attract the best players and the most revenues, leaving the hundreds of other smaller, less talented schools in the dust. It will eventually get to the point where the corruption, as you call it, will be worse than what it is now, just on the student athlete side (but that's ok in your book right???)

I know rules vary between different sports, but a lot of these kids have the option of going directly pro (I think the NFL is the only league that doesn't allow this). If you think you are good enough at that age, then have at it! Lebron did!!! The NCAA is a steeping stone and learning experience to give these kids the chance to have a professional career. The others that do not have the skill to continue to the pros, get their degrees and find jobs. Just like everyone else that goes to school has to do (only with a hell of a lot less debt than everyone else).

The majority of these student athletes are given opportunities that they would never be able to have if they couldn't run fast or catch a ball; so stop with the holier-than-thou attitude like these kids would be executives of successful companies if it wasn't for the big bad colleges and their sponsors holding them back and making it difficult for them to live.

If you want to talk about equality, then ban all unpaid internships for the lawyers, doctors, accountants, engineers, etc (with the majority of these students being non-black if you want to keep bringing up the race card like you do in the article). It's only fair right???

The intelligent, book driven students bring reputation and honor to these schools. Not to mention multi-million dollar grants and revenues from research, patents, and hospitals. Isn't that the same? Actually, it isn't... These students devote their lives to studying and class them same amount of time, if not more, than the student athletes. The only difference is these students are put out into the world with \$100k in student loan debt.

76 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



willallen2 2 weeks ago [in reply to Jeff](#)

The NCAA is a cartel which is fixing compensation in an illegal manner, and your statement regarding the opportunity to get a degree, if the athlete does not have the ability to turn professional, is shown to be false by the fact that the NCAA does not allow schools to make more than a 1 year commitment in it's tuition offers. Having the University of Florida and the University of Alabama agree that they will only offer a 18 year old football player a 1 year tuition commitment isn't any more legal than having the two schools agree on the limit on what should be paid coaches, or having Target and Wal-Mart agree on what the limit should be on cashier compensation. Read very, very, carefully; your opinion or my opinion on what is "fair" is irrelevant. What matters is that the entities who are selling tickets to sporting events, and auctioning t.v. rights, are acting illegally and immorally when they enter into agreements about what economic limits should not be exceeded, when attempting to attract the athlete/entertainers who make the ticket sales and t.v. rights auctions possible.

Yes, it probably is illegal to compensate athletes differently, based upon their sport or skill. Gee whiz, maybe running a sports entertainment business is fundamentally incompatible with running an educational institution, especially one that is taxpayer subsidized!

179 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



9_9 1 week ago [in reply to willallen2](#)

Honestly, we got it all wrong: Why even bother having such prominent and intense athletics programs in the first place, if the sole purpose of these "scholarship" athletes is to eventually enter professional sports? I mean, all college sports tends to look like is a development league for the majors. Given how athletics programs have been known to bend over backwards to give their players a passing grade, it's a joke that they even appear on campus. So why should the colleges be burdened with doing the dirty work of raising talented professional athletes?

Developing talent should remain the responsibility of the professional leagues, not the colleges, and the actions of the NBA and NFL (both of whose sports represent the biggest revenue draws in collegiate athletics) represent an utter laziness that they seem to get away with. A far better idea would be to have the pro leagues recruit athletes at a far younger level on a regular basis, particularly the high school levels. The NBA already does this and needs to step it up, and the NFL just needs to do it and screw any false morals they have. From there, given that most athletes won't be ready, either create a farm system (like in the MLB or NHL) or pro-level u18 or u20 teams (like in European soccer leagues). While the salary cap probably prevents the latter development from occurring, they can certainly develop the former at a league level.

I mean, really, if these colleges were really earning revenue (which they aren't) from athletics, then why isn't that money going towards stabilizing regular students' tuition? Or towards the development of different departments on campus? I don't hear some president saying that their uni's new biotech lab was supported from athletics revenue. The only part of college that benefits from a strong athletics program is the athletics program.

50 people liked this.

Like

Reply



Pam McElwee 3 days ago [in reply to 9 9](#)

I most definitely hear colleges talking about the athletic programs supporting the academic ones. Ohio State built a HUGE new library with the support of money from the athletic department and touted that fact widely.

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



J.J. Zucal 1 week ago [in reply to willallen2](#)

How is it a cartel? Schools have different tuition rates and fees; programs don't set the amount of scholarship, it depends on what the schools set for all of its students. In addition, the scholarship is one year, renewable, to ensure athletes are students first. There are plenty of football and basketball players who have done very well in their studies.

Further, I hear the crap about the NCAA being a monopoly. Not so — NAIA, one organization of Christian schools, NJCAA.

2 people liked this.

Like

Reply



connorwilson 1 week ago [in reply to J.J. Zucal](#)

schools set a one year cap on scholarship offers. That means no school can offer a player a 2, 3, or 4 year scholarship. Since the athletes are basically paid in scholarships (as some argue), this is salary fixing. If most of the companies in the country got together and said we will NOT pay our workers more than \$8/hour it would be a cartel and people would freak out.

I mean they actually go into a room together and SET LIMITS on how much benefit a "student-athlete" can receive. How is that free market in any sense whatsoever?

Also, COACHES decide who gets scholarship money, yet you say the student aspect comes first? These guys are paid

MILLIONS to win games, not graduate kids. Yours is a laughable contention.

The NCAA holds a large majority of the college sports MARKETPLACE. That makes it a monopoly. Other organizations merely existing doesn't dispute this fact. The NAIA is so small in comparison, and their revenues are even smaller. And Juco are Jucos, not 4 year colleges, but it was cute that you tried to include them.

34 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



JUM1 6 days ago [in reply to connorwilson](#)

Let's be frank: the sanctimony of Colleges claiming they provide a free education to their scholarship athletes is an embarrassment to honesty: since there is no certainty that a scholarship will be renewed, and since many of these scholarship athletes have very limited resources, colleges should rephrase their claims: if the athlete is good enough the receive scholarships for 5 (yes red-shirted players are on scholarships) years ion a row, only then will he/she receive a free education. If their athletic talents do not measure up, that claim is nothing but a scam!

10 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Cheryl Caskey 3 days ago [in reply to JUM1](#)

An academic scholarship can be yanked if you do not live up the academic potential that you promised by accepting that scholarship. Why should an athletic commitment not be held to the same standard? If they don't do well athletically the first year why should they be rewarded for a second year? Not to mention, many schools do not offer full year scholarships or 4 year scholarships. You are still expecting people to treat athletes differently than those who attend college on academic merits rather than athletic ones. The fact that this article specifically points out the fact that some football players can't even afford to get home; well cry me a fucking river. Welcome to the real world. Even people on academic scholarship can't afford to get home. That scholarship football player or basketball player is just as capable as applying for federal financial aid as the rest of the world in order to pay for things like food or gas to get home.

3 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Terry Campbell 3 days ago [in reply to Cheryl Caskey](#)

Only the student benefits from Academic Scholarships. People do not stand in line to watch academic scholars take final exams. --This is a fundamental and simple difference.

5 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



willallen2 1 week ago [in reply to J.J. Zucal](#)

You have the incorrect notion that a cartel means that each cartel member has agreed to provide the exact same offer or price. This is wrong. A cartel simply means that the members have agreed to what the offers or prices will NOT include, like agreeing that no school will make a tuition commitment beyond one year.

7 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



David Bentley 1 week ago [in reply to willallen2](#)

In addition, if a player wants to accept a "1 year commitment" from another school, he/she must sit out a full season before playing at the new school. The rules make it impossible for kids to go from one "1 year commitment" at one school to another if they want without penalty. In essence the player is "stuck," for lack of a better term, at the school they original choose without an out. The whole NCAA rulebook is about controlling the "student-athlete." It's payback for college presidents taking tv rights away from the NCAA with the CFA in the 80s.

16 people liked this.

Like

Reply



UrbanRedneck2 2 weeks ago [in reply to Jeff](#)

What if we dropped the atheletic scholarships and just had academic ones? After all if you consider a football team with is 50 scholarships, plus the equal 50 that have to go to females because of title 9, and you'd get 100 scholarships.

16 people liked this.

Like

Reply



go2goal 1 week ago [in reply to UrbanRedneck2](#)

You mean like the D-III "undocumented" athletic scholarships hidden under the cloak of "academic scholarships"?

Look at D-III Bowdoin College soccer...in the hallowed and holier than though NESCAC league. Their head coach, Fran O'Leary, gets 4 slots each year for kids that don't pass the academic muster of getting into Bowdoin....and those kids get either full rides or big financial aid packages (not loans). If that isn't "undocumented" athletic scholarships at D-III, then I don't know what is. Not to just pick on soccer....or Bowdoin....it's just an example that I know in detail. Many-many other D-III schools are doing this and across every major sport....

22 people liked this.

Like

Reply



Unemployed_Northeastern 1 week ago [in reply to go2goal](#)

The number of absolute idiots who get into (particularly) Williams solely because of athletic skills, and then get job interviews and offers at places like McKinsey and Goldman simply because they are Williams students, is absolutely disgusting, speaking as one who went to a non Williams/Amherst NESCAC school whose grads would never, EVER, be considered for an interview at such firms.

I don't mean to pick on Williams per se - it is a fabulous school with some of the best academics in the country (indeed, it is the Harvard/Yale/Princeton equivalent of liberal arts colleges, along with Amherst and Wellesley) - but it takes a LOT of otherwise unqualified applicants who are great at lacrosse or crew or underwater basket weaving or whatever. Their goal is to be the D-III version of Stanford: great academics and superior teams in every sport that has ever existed. Unfortunately, the recruitment schedule at liberal arts colleges is a LOT shallower than at national universities. Non-STEM job opportunities at Williams/Amherst/Wellesley aren't too different than their counterparts at Harvard/Yale/Princeton: most Wall Street firms, managment consulting outfits, and elite public interest employers recruit at all of those institutions. However, if you "only" get into to the #12 or #21 national university (Northwestern and Berkeley, respectively), you will still have lots of recruiters on campus and pretty good outlooks. If you "only" get into the #12 or #21 national liberal arts college (Wesleyan and Bates, respectively), though, you would be very, very lucky to find a job that requires a college degree, and will almost certainly have to go to grad school to make yourself more employable. Such is life.


10 people liked this.

Like

Reply



connorwilson 1 week ago [in reply to Unemployed_Northeastern](#)

 Wellesley? Try again.

2 people liked this.

Like

Reply



sansculottes 1 week ago [in reply to go2goal](#)

Yes. Adding another layer of hypocrisy is exactly the wrong way to solve the problem. College sports are huge moneymakers, and college athletes are the only students forbidden to sell their own personal effects. The more honest and open player compensation is, the better it will be.

11 people liked this.

Like

Reply



Paul Hogue 1 week ago [in reply to sansculottes](#)

This ban on selling personal effects statement is smoke. The students who got in trouble for selling jerseys (which they would not have had if they were not admitted to the school, btw) were working with alumni on a money-laundering operation. The alumni can't give the money to the students outright (although it goes on all the time in every division), so they get the students to list a personal item and then buy them for ridiculous amounts, like \$1000 for a jersey.

2 people liked this.

Like

Reply



Kyle Jahner 1 week ago [in reply to Jeff](#)

1. You don't have to pay every single athlete in the NCAA to at least begin to address the issue. You don't have to pay any of them though in revenue sports it'd be just. You DO have to stop criminally banning them from benefiting in any way from their work, and tyrannically telling them whether they can talk to an agent or challenge the system with a free mind (that thing an education is supposed to enable). Why CAN'T a player profit from the sale of his own jersey while the University is free to sell thousands of replicas that the player himself made valuable? And why does a player have to be voiceless in this process?

2. The big schools already attract the best players and the most revenue. Wake up.

3. If you think the corruption can get much worse, you are insane. Everyone knows the NCAA selectively applies rules. And even with that hardly a major program stands untarnished. Also, it's not corruption if its allowed. And effectively, it already is.

4. Most importantly, no, the players in major revenue sports can't walk, particularly football. Explain to me, if you were a born football player, one who's largest immediate concern is getting to the NFL, where would you go where you can be compensated? There is no semi-professional structure. The NFL won't let you come 'til 3 years out of school. Hence: CARTEL. That's an explicit monopoly on 18-21 year-old football players with zero labor costs. Slavery isn't fair, but not THAT big of a stretch either. Patronizing them with an education that many don't use or really want (or in some cases, lack the intellect to even be able to use) doesn't make shredding up their rights to their own image and labor in the instance it directly produces revenue less wrong. They have no choice but to sign all rights to anything they produce away as an 18 year old, and anything you do that happens to generate millions not only won't earn you a cut, but you will be banned from the association if you do so much as sell an autographed picture or talk to a baseball agent about an alternative career. Can't even profit from it (while the NCAA does) as an adult?

Please. Stop defending this because "an education is invaluable" (in this economy a lot of people have more college debt than prospective income) or because "fixing it is hard."

Did you read any of the article?

165 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**sansculottes** 1 week ago [in reply to Kyle Jahner](#)

Aside from whether they want the education, it is extremely difficult for "student athletes" to take any sort of rigorous course in college, while still maintaining the schedule required for a D1 player. When they schedule games around the students' labs, then they'll be "student athletes."

35 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**[Kyle Jahner](#)** 1 week ago [in reply to sansculottes](#)

Exactly. It's not just that mot of them get into schools they wouldn't otherwise, it's that when they get there, they have an insanely demanding schedule completely outside of academics. Many kids who got academic scholarships would struggle with that workload combined with a legitimate major.

16 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**anonymous8436** 4 days ago [in reply to Kyle Jahner](#)

I completely disagree with your last statement. Personally, I am a D-I athlete and also a double major (neither of them are communications). Why most students struggle is because most of the students you ever hear of are basketball and football players many of whom come from poor fiscal and educational backgrounds. What these schools do is use scholarships as a carrot to get the athlete to give up their abilities for the school's financial and athletic gain. All while risking potentially life threatening injuries--with no chance of workers compensation. Then the schools get to do the same thing again when the season is over when its time to renew the student's scholarship. For a lot of these kids, it's the only way they can get an education. It can all go down the drain if they get hurt though. If an athlete actually gets hurt and can no longer play there are very few colleges that will continue to give the student the scholarship. Its all about making money off of desperate athletes. It happens to a lesser extent in sports outside the major ones, but I still have absolutely no rights and no other way to play at such a competitive level.

6 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**[Barbara-Ellen Gaffney](#)** 1 week ago [in reply to Jeff](#)

Baseball is the only sport to allow HS players to go straight into the draft (which is likely why baseball alone among major American sports has a robust minor / developmental league system). Even basketball players are required to contribute one year of free marketing and services to the NCAA. Football at least two with a substantial risk of serious injury.

25 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**saignonsammy** 1 week ago [in reply to Barbara-Ellen Gaffney](#)

Hockey does as well, particularly in Canada. Otherwise I agree. The NFL and the NBA needs to step up and provide alternatives to athletes who don't want or need college.

14 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Paul Thomas 1 week ago [in reply to Barbara-Ellen Gaffney](#)

To be fair, though, the rule prohibiting college freshmen from entering the NBA was a purely NBA-driven decision. The league just arbitrarily decided that it would no longer employ American 18-year-olds.

If the courts interpreted the age discrimination laws in accordance with the plain text of the laws, this would be illegal, since the ADEA bans discrimination "because of [an] individual's age." However, the courts have somehow construed this rather direct prohibition to only cover discrimination against people for being old-- discrimination against people for being young is, by judicial fiat, completely legal (and highly prevalent).

7 people liked this.



Rob Nichols 2 days ago [in reply to Paul Thomas](#)

No. All federal protections on discrimination due to age apply to the protected class of those over 40, there are no protections for those under that age. If the ADEA were interpreted the way you interpret it, 14-year-olds could claim age discrimination.



Zachary Robertson 1 week ago [in reply to Jeff](#)

The whole "nobody is forcing them to play" argument is absolute garbage. Nobody is forcing me to go to work to support my family, yet here I go every day. Nobody is forcing you to do that either, yet given the alternatives of doing so or sleeping in the streets I think I know the choice you'll make.

Most of these kids don't have a choice. They either take their shot in college for a chance at the pros, or they end up like a lot of their peers- working permanent minimum wage jobs if they end up working at all. They couldn't walk straight into the pros even if they wanted to anyway- only baseball let's you "walk" in, which usually means spending a few years earning close to minimum wage in the minor leagues before you even sniff the big time.

The internship argument is also bunk. We're not talking about private firms- many of these athletes play for publicly funded institutions. Considering the amount of revenue they generate, you'd think there'd be some kind of compensation system set up. Think about it this way- if an intern was generating the same level of cash for a private firm, they wouldn't be an intern very long. Yet in college sports you remain an intern, oh wait student athlete, until your eligibility expires.

Also, what do the so called "intelligent, book driven" students have anything to do with this conversation? Last time I checked, the television networks aren't ponying up hundreds of millions to watch some psychology major give a presentation. If they were, that person would be getting a cut- I guarantee it.

Edit

Let me also propose a constructive solution: stop allowing the university to make money off the players names and let the players make money off their names. The schools can sell the team logos and not the players, while the players can sell themselves but would not be allowed to use the school brand when they market themselves. As a concession the schools may also adorn their players in whatever brand will pay the the most.

You might be wondering if this would lead to schools/alumns buying players...and you would be wrong. They already are. Get over it and let the players get what the market will offer them.

85 people liked this.

Like

Reply

**[danielklotz](#)** 1 week ago [in reply to Zachary Robertson](#)

It should also be noted that even in an unpaid internship, workers compensation regulations apply. That's clearly not the case with college athletics.

20 people liked this.

Like

Reply

**[Dan Counts](#)** 1 week ago [in reply to Jeff](#)

I'm going to start by saying I'm using Florida State University as an example, I do not have any connection (positive or negative) with the school.

Jeff, you are making all the wrong arguments. Let's start with the "THEY CAN WALK AT ANY TIME" Argument. Yes, they can walk at any time. However, Player X is going to school at Florida State as a freshman and doesn't perform up to expectations, Florida State does not renew his scholarship for his sophomore year, so Player X receives an offer from Maryland, Player X still has to sit out for a year before being able to play for Maryland, so Player X is bound to a school, furthermore if Florida State decides that they do not want to release Player X's academic transcripts to Maryland Player X is not able to ply his trade where he wants to in the manner that he wants to, and the NCAA supports this contention.

Also you do not need to compensate every single athlete, compensation is based on relative worth. A Football Player at Florida State is worth more than a tennis player at Florida State. The QB at Florida State is worth more than the Left Offensive Tackle at Florida State. This is just basic free market economics at work which is driving the compensation.

Banning all unpaid internships. Here is another area you are not seeing the forest from the trees. Internships in Medicine, Law, Engineering, etc. will extend beyond the college experience of the student and will serve them in their professional endeavor. For the greatest majority of collegiate athletes, their "internship" will not net them any useful experience that they can carry forward in their life after collegiate sports.

As for draft entry requirements, another area where you are incorrect, the only major sport in America where a kid can go directly from HS to a professional league is MLB. The following restrictions apply to the other 3 major sports in the US.

NFL: Player must be 3 years removed from his graduation from High School.

NBA: Player to be drafted must be 1 year removed from his graduation from High School AND at least 19 years old.

NHL: Player to be drafted must turn 18 before September 15th the year they are drafted.

As much as you would like to hold on to the romantic notion of the "student-athlete" it really is a fallacy and is nothing more than a system of indentured servitude that should be exposed and abolished for what it is.

52 people liked this.

Like

Reply

**[Robert Lent](#)** 1 week ago [in reply to Dan Counts](#)

If Player X's scholarship is not renewed at Miami, doesn't have to sit out a year if he drops down to the FCS or Division II level. Thus the player can still have a college scholarship, the only thing that has changed is the level of football competition that he can play at.

An unpaid internship is unpaid work that people actually compete for, because they perceive that it is beneficial. An athletic scholarship is unpaid work (at least in cash, the athletic scholarship is significant compensation) that the athlete perceives to be

beneficial. Why should one form of unpaid work be fine and the other bad? The benefits of having a college degree versus a high school degree are as great as are those provided by an unpaid internship. Also, not all unpaid internships are for careers that will be highly lucrative.

6 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



James Norris 1 week ago [in reply to Robert Lent](#)

Is there a national monopoly that mandates that all internships must be unpaid? Are students who take paid internships banned from ever taking an unpaid internship in the future? Are colleges deprived of their research findings if it turns out they were paying their students? Didn't think so.

16 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Graeme Edgeler 1 week ago [in reply to Robert Lent](#)

No-one is saying college athletes shouldn't be able to agree to be college athletes without payment.

The debate is over whether the only college athletes should be those who don't get paid.

The real scholarship/internship analogy involves a circumstance where you're not allowed to get a paid job straight out of high school. Instead, once you graduate high school, you have to work three years as an intern, and only once you've done that can you get paid employment.

3 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Paul Thomas 5 days ago [in reply to Graeme Edgeler](#)

This basically describes the job market for recently graduated doctors (mandated internship, then residency) to a "T".

Not coincidentally, recently graduated doctors are among the most abused and overworked groups of employees in America.

3 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



David Mebane 2 days ago [in reply to Paul Thomas](#)

Except medical residents make much, much more than college athletes.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Paul Thomas 1 week ago [in reply to Robert Lent](#)

As someone who finds the proliferation of so-called "unpaid internships" to evade labor laws wildly exploitative and cynical, appealing to that system fails to persuade me that athletes are doing anything different from anyone else who takes an unpaid internship-- which is usually to say, agreeing to work for free because you don't have the bargaining power to force the company to pay you.

5 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**Stefano de Stefano** 1 week ago [in reply to Paul Thomas](#)

unpaid internships as, say, a paralegal occurs because there is a large supply of workers (almost anyone on earth can do that job with a little bit of effort) and a small demand (companies only need a couple people). Thus, the employees have little bargaining power. On the other hand, a superstar football or basketball player is by definition one of a kind or one of a handful. He is the supply, and the demand is infinite (well up to probably \$100M or thereabouts). He could dictate to schools. I saw a snippet of the post below this one. "Paying unevenly will make recruiting impossible! [WAAAH]." That is the problem. the college athletes have bargaining power, so this cartel/monopoly was devised to prevent them from using the bargaining power they have.

Also, it inflames me when people are like, only 1% of people ever go pro! Implying that they didn't have bargaining power because they weren't good enough. Well, maybe they weren't good enough to be the top .01% of athletes. But plenty of money is made on their backs during the 4 years they are in school. Why should their inability to skip straight into the top 1% mean that they shouldn't be paid for the work they do before then?

That is like saying well, not all lawyers can be Johnny Cochran! Implying that the rest should be forced into a 4 year unpaid internship program, dangling the hope that they might become Johnny Cochran if they try hard enough, but if for whatever reason they get a job from someone at a law firm on the side to help pay for FOOD, then they are kicked out of the internship program and the world is told that this person is a dishonest scumbag.

7 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**Paul Thomas** 5 days ago [in reply to Stefano de Stefano](#)

Perhaps my snark was not sufficiently clear. I am completely in the camp advocating paying players.

You are, of course, correct that the reason for athletes lacking bargaining power is different than the reason for paralegal interns lacking bargaining power. I've been talking more about the effects of the lack of bargaining power (however that situation comes about).

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**Danny Bowen** 1 week ago [in reply to Dan Counts](#)

The problem with paying people unevenly is that it will make recruiting impossible for teams that are in smaller schools. We would quickly develop a "Super school" even more than we have now. The SEC already does take a lot of the talent, but can you imagine if they were allowed to compensate their players more? Who would want to go play somewhere else? And I'm an ALABAMA fan. :) You pay them all evenly, shared revenue based on play of everyone. Its not perfect, but its more fair than it is now. You may be able to separate the sports themselves in this shared revenue, to make it more fair for the more profitable sports, like football.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)**brian91174** 1 week ago [in reply to Danny Bowen](#)

So tell me how this is different from what is already in place? Yes, open compensation will mean that the Alabamas,

Oklahomas, Michigans, Ohio States, USC's, Notre Dames, and Miamis of the college football world would outspend (and therefore outperform) the other, poorer teams in their conference, but isn't that is what is basically happening anyway? Only the open compensation is in the form of nicer facilities, swanker accomodations, better perks on campus, "introductions" to influential boosters and alumni, and so on. As this article amply points out, the whole idea of amateur athletics in a sport that is so awash in money is patently ridiculous.

17 people liked this.

Like

Reply

**Mondfledermaus** 1 week ago [in reply to Danny Bowen](#)

That's ridiculous... as it is now who in his right mind would go to play football at Plymouth State when offered the opportunity to play for Alabama? Paying the players would change nothing at all.

2 people liked this.

Like

Reply

**aaron schnier** 1 week ago [in reply to Dan Counts](#)

In your analysis of restrictions on going professional you fail to note that none of these restrictions actually requires attending a university. The NBA and NHL in particular have other avenues available from playing overseas to the junior leagues. There are also several semi-pro and indoor football leagues that have no college requirements.

Of course, the only one of those options that is actually a plausible source for professional players is hockey's junior leagues and none of the non-college options pay particularly well. The Stars semi-pro team, for example, only pays \$500 per game and requires players to fund their own way to road games. Compared to that, the NCAA's free education and various other benefits compare quite nicely.

Which is really rather the point that people seem to be missing. As much as people would like to think otherwise, the players are not really the draw of the various NCAA sports. If people actually wanted to see young unskilled players gain enough proficiency to be a viable professional athlete there would be any number of robust professional development leagues out there. But that's not what people want to see....as the author of the article notes, it is almost a tribal loyalty to universities that drives the TV contracts and all the other revenue. The players on the University of Texas football team or Duke University's basketball team don't actually drive revenues. The schools drive the revenues largely independent of the players and the players are largely along for the ride. There aren't fewer Auburn fans out there because their Heisman winning quarterback graduated. They are Auburn fans independent of Cam Newton and aren't going to suddenly become 'Bama fans because he's gone.

At the end of the day the players really are nothing more than unpaid interns who are showcasing their abilities for pro scouts. There isn't any more reason to assign a different value to them because of perceived injustice because the universities are making money for reasons completely unrelated to them, and there certainly isn't any right to play for a university that requires due process.

The notion that it's some sort or slavery is even more preposterous, as the players can leave at any time to ply their trade outside the NCAA. The Blue Bombers of one of the various indoor football leagues are having tryouts on Oct. 8. Bring your own pads, shoes, helmet, jersey, and \$40 and you too can start down the road towards professional football. Or you can enjoy the privilege of a university education and shut up about not having enough money to buy a pizza, which, incidentally, many other college students can't do and players for the Blue Bombers can't do on the league salary either. Your choice.

6 people liked this.

Like

Reply

**nvaughnb** 1 week ago [in reply to aaron schnier](#)

First, if your argument is valid, then the universities would have no reason to sell jerseys with current player's numbers on them. Furthermore, all jerseys, regardless of the number would sell equally well. This is not the case.

Second, of course it isn't slavery, but its just as ridiculous to pretend that the agreements between the NCAA and the NFL, NBA, MLB (a player who plays in the NCAA is ineligible for the MLB draft until after his 3rd year or 21 years of age and apparently cannot receive legal assistance in negotiating the terms of his contract if drafted) etc., aren't unconstitutional restrictions on free trade and personal liberties. And, as stated in the article, if there are no rights at stake in the opportunity to play college sports, then why must the student athletes waive their rights to the NCAA each season?

Finally, no other college student is restricted from selling his or her services to pay for pizza (or the shirt they wear). Again of course it isn't slavery, but when your argument boils down to "they (regular students) don't have it any better than you (student-athletes) so shut up," you start to sound like you don't want to lose your free labor.

12 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



[David Bentley](#) 1 week ago [in reply to nvaughnb](#)

Exactly. Mike Tirico was anchoring at WTVH-5 in Syracuse while he was still attending. This did not prevent him from working with the University's TV Station. But any athlete at Syracuse CANNOT get ANY job, period. That is the problem. "Student-athletes" are supposed to be treated like all other students, but in many ways, are treated much worse.

4 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



[Stefano de Stefano](#) 1 week ago [in reply to aaron schnier](#)

You are using this logic wrongly. The question isn't whether the University of Pittsburgh football program would have existed without Dan Marino (of course it would have). The question is how much would the University of Pittsburgh have paid him for 4 years of his life (some). How much EA sports would have paid him for the rights to his likeness (a lot). For some players in some sports a yearly scholarship is plenty payment. For some it is too much. But they point is that a cartel has been limiting the ability of people to bargain for their services without any justification!

4 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



[David Mebane](#) 2 days ago [in reply to aaron schnier](#)

It is disingenuous in the extreme to posit that a university's following is independent of the quality of play on the field. Ask the Syracuse football team.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



[David Bentley](#) 1 week ago [in reply to Dan Counts](#)

"Student-athlete" is a legal term to get out of worker's compensation laws. Period.

4 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



[Ruben Marquez](#) 1 week ago [in reply to Jeff](#)

your wrong, the end

Like Reply



Nick Bencivenga 1 week ago [in reply to Ruben Marquez](#)

Your grammar is wrong. The end.

13 people liked this. Like Reply



[Sanford Sklansky](#) 1 week ago [in reply to Jeff](#)

I do agree with some of what you have to say. Of course a true student athlete is even doing more than the normal student. Not only do they have to study but they have to put time in practicing and playing their sport. Most kids playing college sports would normally not have the grades to get in to these big schools to play sports. While it is nice that they get scholarships, they can easily be taken away. What if an athlete has an injury that incapacitates him for life. That scholarship will not help him pay his medical bills.

7 people liked this. Like Reply



Melissa Wittmayer 1 week ago [in reply to Jeff](#)

Most of us are playing because we wouldn't have the chance to go to college if we didn't. Call that a "choice" if you want. But playing is the only choice that I had if I wanted to have a future.

You say that "book driven students" work hard studying the same amount of time, if not more than the athletes, but you fail to recognize that not only did I go to practice, weights, conditioning, games, and various athletic meetings, but I was also working hard on my degree and two minors that I accomplished at a leading academic university.

All of my "book driven" friends saw what I did and the time and effort I put into everything. Not one of them was envious of my full-ride. You forget that playing on the collegiate level is not just a physical game like it typically is in high school. Any collegiate sport demands things from you physically and mentally, until you're walking from weights/conditioning/practice to class like a zombie without any life left in you.

The difference is that I was worked physically and mentally to the bone, with the same expectations from my professors to succeed academically like my non-athlete peers. I would take the debt, over the pain my body still goes through and the surgeries I will have to undergo in 5-10 years as a result of my "free" education.

17 people liked this. Like Reply



James Coley 1 week ago [in reply to Jeff](#)

This the best chance for some of these guys. It is the only real outlet for moving on to the NFL and the only way most of those guys are going to get "free" college. They ARE subject to the college similar to a slave, and the prospect of becoming a player in the NFL, scholarships, and an ability to leave at anytime doesn't change the fact. You're ignoring the rock and a hard place that the students are in between when you say they can just leave.

You are right, however, in your other points, though. You broadly displayed many issues in the system, all of which are pretty accurate. But come on? Multi-million dollar grants compared to a billion dollars in the SEC alone? You're comparing apples to

planets.

I don't think the athletes should be paid hundreds of thousands of dollars, but let's look at what medical residents make in relation to doctors (as an arbitrary system put in place in response to your comment) and then pay college players proportionally to what the average NFL rookie makes (bonuses excluded), while taking into account the overall amount of money the college brings in from its football program. That average could be the cap, and how the players could reach that cap would be merit based and compared to numbers from the past and current years. Even if this is just this payment system is nothing but rambling, it isn't like there isn't a more fair system.

USA, USA, USA! Capitalism RULES!

Like Reply



Mike Juntunen 1 week ago [in reply to Jeff](#)

Just as a FYI, in another example of gross ignoring of the law ..

Unpaid internships are illegal. The US Department of Labor says so, specifically!

For an unpaid internship to be legal, even an academic one, per the Dept of Labor, the work engaged in by the intern must have 'zero commercial value' to the providing party, whatsoever. An example from their handout:

An unpaid intern at a rail yard who is learning to organize and manage the incoming engines would be legal if they moved the trains about an empty yard as practice and then returned them to their original positions.

An unpaid intern who learns to manage the yard by organizing the trains into their proper places provides a commercial value to the employer (they no longer have to pay an employee to do this necessary task), and therefore the position cannot be unpaid.

Certain medical internships are legal because by the time doctors are 'interns' they are actually paid, and prior to that they are students who are completely overseen at all times (usually at what would be a net operating loss to the hospital in question).

5 people liked this. Like Reply



Naulston 1 week ago [in reply to Jeff](#)

Jeff, being tracked into chemistry is the same as being tracked into football. The difference is that the chemist at an institution of higher education can make money on their findings in and out of the classroom, while the football player cannot. The NCAA has no legal right to prevent them. Your comments only prove that your perspective lacks an understanding what "student-athletes" go through in big time programs.

4 people liked this. Like Reply



Stefano de Stefano 1 week ago [in reply to Naulston](#)

ACTUALLY, IP often belongs to the university, unless the student/professor is so famous that he can negotiate other terms and conditions... waaaaaiittt a minute...

1 person liked this. Like Reply



David Mebane 2 days ago [in reply to Stefano de Stefano](#)

IP created at the university typically belongs 50% to the university and 50% to the creators of the IP, irrespective of the fame of said creators.

Like Reply



J.P. 6 days ago [in reply to Jeff](#)

Another idiot.

Like Reply



beard77 3 days ago [in reply to Jeff](#)

i don't think it is students who are doing ground breaking research or getting patents for these colleges or universities and if they are name some of those students who are responsible for for these grants and patents and performing all the radical surgeries in hospitals in these colleges and universities. screw the race card. so what if they were not playing athletics, they would have to pay to go to school like everybody else, granted. there also would be no bobby bowdens, bear bryants, joe paternos, nick sabans and all the other big time coaches who make money off these athletes black or white. who gives a damn what color they are. there would be no need for any 1200 member ncaa instiution raking in millions of dollars on the tax exempt status. what a joke. so all the coaches, all the athletic directors and ncaa employees would be looking for jobs as well. so don't mention that athletes have so much to lose, those who run this mess have a lot more to lose then these kids. this student athlete stuff is a joke its the greatest scam going in america. where else can an organization have a tax free status to make hundreds of millions of dollars and don't have to pay the people who make it for them a damn dime. the answer is always that the student athlete is getting a free education as their payment for getting into college. the price of their education pales in comparison to the hundreds of millions of dollars the ncaa is getting in return. oh and by the way the SEC became the first conference to make 1 billion dollars last year. WHO'S GETTING THAT MONEY? HUH?

lastly to your point that they probably put in more time at their craft then the so called student athlete.. i doubt it. ex. football players start their season a month before school opens. their day typically starts early in the morning and ends late at night. this continues throughout the seasons along with traveling to games during the season. i am not taking anything away from the normal matriculating students at all. the difference is, if a student misses a few classes he or she can recoup what they missed by getting with someone in class and catch up on what they missed. they don't have to explain to the professor why he or she missed class. in the major universities professors don't care as long as you get the work done enough to pass the class. athletes miss three days of practice can and will lose their scholarship and be sent home. its crazy because they may be making all of the classes and miss practice and could be on the verge of being thrown off the team and losing the ability to pay for college. you cannot compare the two. elite students of a college or university is just as important as the so called student athlete. both need to be compensated. unfortunately no one cares about research, patents, grants and hospitals. touchdowns and three point plays is what people care about because it generates hundreds of millions of dollars for lots of people.

Like Reply



UrbanRedneck2 2 weeks ago

I totally agree that it is soooo stupid that on a basketball court every person down there is being paid including the refs, scorekeepers, trainers, coaches, even the people who sell popcorn - yet the players, the ones who are putting in 8 hours a day on this, receive nothing for it.

As for other non-revenue NCAA sports most athletes would gladly give it up for a better chance at an academic scholarship.

PS. In college tennis their is another scandal. Over half of tennis scholarships are given to foreign players so American families are not even

being helped.

6 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



R. G. Price 2 weeks ago [in reply to UrbanRedneck2](#)

They don't receive "nothing" for it. They receive a college education either at a reduced cost or in many cases totally free. I agree that the revenue generated is being stolen by a bunch of undeserving scum (including some of the coaches), but the notion that the athletes are getting "nothing" is simply factually wrong.

15 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Unemployed_Northeastern 1 week ago [in reply to R. G. Price](#)

True. I guarantee you that if colleges are made to pay their athletes, it will come in the form of "enhanced" tuition increases on the rest of the student body. The entire system (betting one's entire life on the probability of finding a well-to-high paying job directly out of college that can make one's \$500/month or \$1000/month or even \$2000/month or higher student loan payment) cannot collapse soon enough.

8 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



UrbanRedneck2 1 week ago [in reply to Unemployed_Northeastern](#)

And it would be only right to collapse and be replaced on a system where scholarships were for academics or economic circumstances only. Who knows give it time and high schools might also drop sports (to be replaced by European style club teams). In the long run though there would be more semi-pro, minor league, or farm club football and basketball teams similar to how baseball and hockey does. Or maybe variations like arena football.

9 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



davidchirac 1 week ago [in reply to UrbanRedneck2](#)

While it would be beneficial to America if colleges dropped athletic scholarships, I find it hard to imagine unless someone forced American sports to embrace promotion/relegation or some other open system. There's a reason why English Premier League & MLB have similar average attendances, yet AAA has one-third the average attendance of English soccer's second division. Human nature spends an inordinate amount of attention on those at the top & as long as the minor league teams are cut off from competing at the top, whereas NCAA allows the market to saturate at the Division I level, which will continue to get the best athletes the top pro leagues won't yet take, college sports will continue to be the dominate player outside the top professional leagues.

5 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



UrbanRedneck2 1 week ago [in reply to R. G. Price](#)

A free college education? Actually only a small percentage of football and basketball players earn a 4 year degree and even when they do it's in something like sociology or basket weaving or some other what we call "athlete degrees". And even then thats only because they get personal tutoring and other staff and students helping them along. So in effect college for most of them is only free room and board. Think back to college and just how many athletes you ever met taking calculus or chemistry.

17 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**Rapt** 1 week ago [in reply to UrbanRedneck2](#)

Unfortunately, I have to agree that the value of a college education for the majority of the Div I revenue sport athletes is very low for a number of reasons: choice of majors, amount of time available to attend class and study, emphasis placed on athletic achievement over academic excellence, etc. The fact that most schools have relaxed academic requirements for athletes is a testament to the fact that they are value first as an athlete and then as a student.

7 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**JUM1** 6 days ago [in reply to Rapt](#)

Let's be frank: the sanctimony of Colleges claiming they provide a free education to their scholarship athletes is an embarrassment to honesty: since there is no certainty that a scholarship will be renewed, and since many of these scholarship athletes have very limited resources, colleges should rephrase their claims: if the athlete is good enough the receive scholarships for 5 (yes red-shirted players are on scholarships) years ion a row, only then will he/she receive a free education. If their athletic talents do not measure up, that claim is nothing but a scam!

3 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**J.J. Zucal** 1 week ago [in reply to UrbanRedneck2](#)

Excuse us? The fact you mention "basket weaving" shows you have no clue — only rhetoric — about what you're writing. The vast majority of college football and basketball players do earn degrees in what you would consider "real" majors, such as sociology, chemistry, medicine, journalism, because they realize they have very little chance of reaching the professional level.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)**Mondfledermaus** 1 week ago [in reply to J.J. Zucal](#)

Huh? At least in my college most basketball and football players were majoring in Physical Education, even though only one player there has made it to the NFL in the last 30 years and none ever to the NBA.

8 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**David Mebane** 2 days ago [in reply to J.J. Zucal](#)

'Athletes' cannot be placed into a single group. Athletes in the high-revenue sports at big, national programs generally cannot choose from among the full set of majors offered at the university. (Most major in business.) For athletes in other sports, the situation is different.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)**Mondfledermaus** 1 week ago [in reply to R. G. Price](#)

They could receive an education, if they are in any shape for studying after 35-40 of strenuous physical workout.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)**Tom Boyer** 1 week ago [in reply to UrbanRedneck2](#)

The basketball players ARE getting paid, why can't people get this. They are getting paid tuition, room, board and all expenses of attendance -- the value of which is anywhere from \$100,000 to \$300,000. No, they don't get spending money but they can take out extremely modest student loans and have more spending money than the average student, while graduating with very little debt.

The only way a college scholarship is a bad deal is when it's given to someone who has no intention of actually doing the work and earning a degree. Those people should not be in college, they should be in a football minor league.

Most of the ills in NCAA football would disappear overnight if NFL players could be signed to long term developmental contracts like baseball players.

10 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**willallen2** 1 week ago [in reply to Tom Boyer](#)

Why can't you grasp that your opinion or my opinion, as to what constitutes a good or bad deal, is irrelevant? Don't you have the ability to understand that, whatever our opinion, it is immoral and illegal for economic entities, like, say, the Big 10, and SEC, to enter into a collusive agreement that sets a ceiling on what compensation will be given to the laborers who produce the product being sold?

What is it about people that makes them think if the laborer is wearing a football helmet, and is eighteen years old, it means the managers of the 18 year olds can do whatever they want? I'm sorry if this seems harsh, but are you out of your mind?

44 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**Rapt** 1 week ago [in reply to willallen2](#)

I subscribe to several possible reforms, short of outright salaries for college athletes:

- a) Make them eligible for workman's compensation, and/or require the university to underwrite medical insurance. For schools to deny coverage or compensation for injured students is immoral.
- b) Give them a royalty stream of proceeds generated by the school and the NCAA for sales of merchandise, media, etc.
- c) Allow them to market themselves to professional teams while still in college. Honestly, I don't see the harm
- d) Give them some walking around money. Tuition, room and board are great, but that doesn't help the student have a life outside their dorm room or help them get home for Christmas.

14 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**UrbanRedneck2** 1 week ago [in reply to Rapt](#)

I like your point b. where you say the student should get compensated for revenue streams. For example video games that feature their likeness, sale of merchandise with their names, etc... I remember one story of a division one basketball player who blew up when he was in a mall and saw a store selling jerseys with his name on it and he was getting nothing from it.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



aaron schnier 1 week ago [in reply to willallen2](#)

The compensation isn't being set. The value of an education at Stanford is significantly higher than one from Middle Tennessee State both in terms of raw dollars and prospective value. If the players do not appreciate the difference in value that is certainly not the fault of the NCAA.

And even if it were being set there is probably a very small minority of people that would say that such collusion were unfair if it were done in the name of competitive balance. The NFL, NBA, and NHL all have salary caps, which are effectively the same thing as the limitations on scholarships in college.

At the end of the day it is the very football helmet that they wear that make myself and others believe that there is nothing ethically wrong about restricting their compensation. We aren't talking about lawyers, accountants, nurses, or teachers here. We are talking about athletics, which is nothing more than a form of entertainment which produces its best product when the competition is leveled. The players elected to pursue that career and it's a little disingenuous to claim it's unfair that they should have their compensation restricted when that is the very hallmark of the industry that they have entered.

1 person liked this.



willallen2 1 week ago [in reply to aaron schnier](#)

Compensation can be set by two colluding parties without the colluding parties deciding that the compensation will be equal in value. It is the collusive agreement that remains illegal..

The salary caps in the professional leagues you mention are only legal because the players have formed a union, and the salary cap has been collectively bargained. The reason why the NFLPA decertified for a few months this year, when their CBA expired, was to make it legally impossible for the NFL owners to unilaterally impose a salary cap. The analogy simply is without merit.

When tickets are being sold, and television rights auctioned, entertainment is a business, just like accounting, and antitrust laws apply. Two entities cannot legally enter into an agreement, to limit what is provided to the people whose actions form the basis of the entertainment, unless those people have become party to the limit via a union and a collectively bargained agreement.

16 people liked this.



pzed301 6 days ago [in reply to willallen2](#)

Thanks to willallen2 for keeping the main issues (collusion and coercive bargaining) in focus. I have yet to read a comment in this thread that even attempts to argue that these practices are not ongoing, and that if they are, they are in some way justified.

For those who support the current system, please educate me. Are there circumstances, other than the aforementioned collective bargaining agreements, that would legally justify the limits that are documented here? I suppose that enlisting in the military or becoming a priest are a couple of examples, but do we really want to argue that playing college sports is akin to joining the army or the Catholic Church?

The fact that so many who have commented here have ignored the key thesis drives home a secondary theme in this article: the sentimental attachment to the way things are inhibits our ability and, more importantly, our

willingness to apply established principles of law and justice to the context of college athletics.

6 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



sansculottes 1 week ago [in reply to Tom Boyer](#)

the value of those products is set by the athletes' employer. They should at least give them the option to take the cash, instead of in-kind payment. No other sort of employment permits an employer to pay employees only in goods and services whose value is determined by the employer.

5 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



basketballjonesing 1 week ago [in reply to Tom Boyer](#)

agree with you...tuition, room and board, and all expenses of attendance PLUS stipends during holidays (when they have to stay on campus during the holidays to continue the sport schedule quite often put up in a local hotel) and travel, oh yeah, travel national and international and touring while doing it (read Georgetown/China), networking (that opens doors) with alumni, ESPN, camps and coaching (talk to most collegiate coaches and ask how they got their start, they met a coach while playing colleges sports who offered them a job, got a call from an old teammate who is now coaching a college X etc.) and I could go on and on, especially about how the college system is used by the NBA and NFL (some one mentioned that the MLB has a farm system that eliminates the collegiate problems, but they have their own mess with the Central American baseball farms systems) as a Farm system for their leagues, deferring the cost on to the University's/NCAA and public/tax payer pockets...many of us have missed the point that the majority of these schools are educational institutions physically built on TAX PAYERS dollars (state and federal), student loans (federal money that is another screwed up system) and corporate/private investment in R/D. some other points addressing Taylor Branch article:

"The hoax is that it's the only place in American society where we impose amateur status on someone without their consent. They're not amateurs because they've chosen to be.

-I signed a contract with the University when I became a student/athlete and agreed to play sports and be compensated with a scholarship, as do all student/athletes. Do I need to go any further on this point?

-If these athletes think that they are so great and do not need to go to college to play pro football (READ: value the collegiate athletic experience as compensation/preparing them for their career above and beyond that of the scholarship compensation) then tell them to go straight to the NFL...oh wait, the NFL will not let them...fight the NFL!!!

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



willallen2 1 week ago [in reply to basketballjonesing](#)

Yes, and the people who you signed a contract with had entered into an agreement with other entities who sought your attendance while you played a sport. The purpose of that agreement was to limit what you were offered for attendance. Such an agreement is patently illegal.

5 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Garrett Harris 1 week ago [in reply to Tom Boyer](#)

The idea of "long term" and football seem to be mutually exclusive. The NFL doesn't appear to sign most of it's current players to long-term contracts. I'm not an expert but there seems to be a lot of three and four year contracts out there.

Now there's something that hasn't come up yet. The NFL is avoiding the risk of developing young football players with their "

three years removed from high school graduation" rule. I can't imagine any NFL owner wanting to risk developing an 18-year-old football player. I think they'd much rather have the colleges do it.

The owners would also have to add the expenses of scouts, coaches, equipment, venues etc. Football has a much larger roster of players and far fewer games to cover the bills--20 football games (including preseason) vs 160 baseball games.

Thanks for the post, I wouldn't have realized some of the rational behind that rule! One has to wonder how tight the NFL owners are with the NCAA.

Hmm. Now I kind of feel bad for Maurice Clarett. I never cared for him but I'm starting to think he got a tough deal.

3 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Paul Thomas 1 week ago [in reply to Garrett Harris](#)

Yes, the pro sports love the college system, because it does the work for them of weeding out the players who are either athletically inferior or too injury-prone to survive in pro ball. Net result is that the few who make it to pro sports end up much better off (making tens of millions a year in some cases), but far more people end up getting nothing, as compared to say English soccer, where the top players don't make as much, but there are something like 200 fully professional teams and hundreds more semi-professional teams.

2 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Annia Dowell-Wiltshire 1 week ago [in reply to Paul Thomas](#)

Actually, the top English soccer players make gazillions more than NFL players, because there's no salary cap. You're never going to see an NFL player on £190,000 a week, like Man City's Yaya Toure or Man United's Wayne Rooney. (And that's without even going into continental players--Real Madrid, Barcelona, Internazionale et. al. pay even more.)

But yes, there are vastly more professional and semi-professional teams, so overall, more people have the opportunity to get compensated for their athletic performance.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Paul Thomas 5 days ago [in reply to Annia Dowell-Wiltshire](#)

190000 pounds a week is 9.8 million per year. Granted, it's pounds and not dollars, and the exchange rate makes direct comparisons confusing, but even using current exchange rates, which are pretty unfavorable to the US dollar, that's only about \$14M. Messi makes \$16M.

Peyton Manning makes \$18M, in a sport with a vastly smaller overall revenue intake, a salary cap, and a lot fewer players worldwide. Baseball, which has no cap, frankly blows those salaries away.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Stefano de Stefano 1 week ago [in reply to Paul Thomas](#)

Are you insane? Top players in English soccer make as much if not more than 99% of the top players in any sport

in the US (Jeter is on par, so is Peyton, so is Lebron). Messi has at least a \$200M contract (fine, Spanish league). Same with Rooney.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



MikeSchilling 1 week ago [in reply to Garrett Harris](#)

The NFL doesn't appear to sign most of it's current players to long-term contracts. I'm not an expert but there seems to be a lot of three and four year contracts out there.

Not even that, really. NFL contracts are not guaranteed, so a three-year "contract" is really a 1-year contract, with the team having the option of rehiring the player at the agreed salary each of the next two years. Quite often the later years of contracts are "renegotiated", with the team saying "We know your contract is for X, but we think you're only worth Y. Take it or leave it."

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Mondfledermaus 1 week ago [in reply to Tom Boyer](#)

If it was me and you offered me 300K or the opportunity to be a part time student (as most players are after training 35-40 hours a week) I will take the money and go to college later.

2 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Stefano de Stefano 1 week ago [in reply to Tom Boyer](#)

have you ever stopped to think that that is not enough? First off it is a conditional \$35K with an option for three more. So you have to discount the value against the risk of injury among other things. Then you have to present value it (money today is worth more than money tomorrow). So really, you are looking at something closer to \$60-90K. \$60K for 4 years. maybe some kids take that. Maybe some kids don't. Point is they should have a choice. The 14th amendment actually guarantees them that right. But right now they don't have that choice b/c colleges are engaging in anti-competitive practices to deny students a choice between companies (Universities) that would otherwise have to compete for the students.

2 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



[R. G. Price](#) 2 weeks ago

The absurd thing is that there is all of this money floating around due to college sports, yet college tuition keep rising faster than anything else. Obviously this whole thing is a scam.

Here is how it should work:

College sports should use the same basic framework as the NFL, shared revenue and salary caps.

Should student athletes be getting "paid"? No, that isn't the answer, all that would do is bring even more corruption into college sports. The answer is to take the direct economic benefits away from individuals and spread them out across the entire university system, so that the economic benefits going to any individual school or coach would be minimized.

It should work like this:

All revenue from college sports, including the licensing the NCAA does right now, etc. should be pooled. 80% of that money should then be divided proportionally among all participating colleges and universities by student population and go toward the cost of tuition. These would not be scholarships, the money should just go directly toward the cost of tuition for every student, bringing the cost of tuition down equally for all students. College coach compensation should be capped as well, and of the remaining 20% that should be divided equally among all of the participating colleges to help pay for the salaries of the athletic staff, including the coaches. This would put college coaching on a more equal playing field. Non-pooled money would be allowed to supplement the compensation for athletic staff, but the pooled money would provide a base and all compensation would be capped, just like player's compensation is in the NFL.

This would take a lot of the nefarious financial incentives out of college sports and turn college sports into something that can help to bring down the cost of higher education for everyone.

The notion that the athletes should be getting all of this money is baseless as well. If the colleges didn't exist for the purpose of higher learning there would be no college athletics at all. The money should be funding higher learning, that's the fundamental basis of the whole system. Right now the money is just going to a bunch of undeserving people who are getting rich off of other people's contributions. That's not right, but it doesn't mean that all of the money should be going to the athletes either.

15 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



rktsci 1 week ago [in reply to R. G. Price](#)

This ignores the fact that as a whole, college athletics loses money.

8 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



willallen2 1 week ago [in reply to rktsci](#)

Which ignores the fact that some individuals, due to their ability to better influence the cartel, are becoming extremely wealthy by accessing revenue streams that other people cannot access, due to their inability to influence the cartel.

10 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Mondfledermaus 1 week ago [in reply to rktsci](#)

That doesn't prevent the schools to pay their coaches million dollar salaries.

4 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



rktsci 1 week ago

If NCAA athletes get paid, it will kill college sports at most of the Division I schools. Most of the schools lose money on sports. Sure, Texas and a few others turn a profit (if you don't charge them for the tuition waivers the athletes get), but most lose money when all scholarship sports are factored in.

In the last year, Sport Illustrated had an article that exposed the secret that most schools lose money on bowl game appearances. Sure, they might get paid a few hundred thousand to come and play, but they are saddled with the forced purchase of tens of thousands of tickets (that often are unsold), and the expense of sending the team down for a week and following up with the band, cheerleaders, etc. But the schools go anyway, since most coaches and athletic directors get bonuses for bowl appearances.

There is also the Title IX factor. The only sports that turn a profit are football and men's basketball. But Title IX would force equality for

women's sports - but if they junked track, swimming, soccer, baseball, etc. and had two men's (FB and BB) and two women's sports only (BB and softball), they might still turn a profit.

One way or another, we're heading for a showdown and it will be ugly. The current instability in conference membership is all about positioning for when the big football factories force the NCAA's hand and create a playoff system that generates more money for them - and squeezes out the upstarts like TCU and Boise State.

5 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



UrbanRedneck2 1 week ago [in reply to rktsci](#)

Your right. Consider a football team with 50 scholarships has to math that with 50 womens scholarships so your talking 100 scholarships. Thats 100 worthy students who are struggling with high school calculus and physics in order to get even a partial scholarship that could be helped out.

2 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



neutral_corner 1 week ago [in reply to UrbanRedneck2](#)

What's your definition of "worthy student?"

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



UrbanRedneck2 1 week ago [in reply to neutral_corner](#)

One who's been working hard in high school. Getting good grades in biology, english, calculus, chemistry, history, and foreign languages and has a good chance of having a career. Or one who has musical talent.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



cakraft24 1 week ago [in reply to UrbanRedneck2](#)

bill gates says you have no idea what your talkin about

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



AfGuyReturns 1 week ago [in reply to cakraft24](#)

Bill Gates should thank his lucky stars for having the good fortune to able to deal with the myopic management team at IBM at the time.

They basically handed him a pot of gold and the license to make more of it because of sheer short-sightedness.

2 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Danny Bowen 1 week ago [in reply to AfGuyReturns](#)

Or his long-sightedness and great business sense. Potato, Potahto.

2 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



MikeSchilling 1 week ago [in reply to Danny Bowen](#)

Gates tried to sell DOS to IBM; they turned him down.

2 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



sureshot32 1 week ago [in reply to rktsci](#)

You can bet that the schools that lose money are still paying their AD and their coaches a boatload of money. So still, the only ones not making money are the ones performing. Plus, athletic departments largely lose money because (as I said) the administrators are highly paid, facility improvement, and the cost of other athletic programs. Many football and basketball programs actually do generate revenue, which is then used to build bigger buildings, pay for non-revenue-generating sports and pay guys and girls who do not actually participate in any meaningful activity.

7 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



VS1 1 week ago [in reply to sureshot32](#)

Meaningful activity is apparently objective. I think that college sports, even in the recent generatig sports (football, basketball, and even baseball and hockey at my alma mater) still do one immense good-provide students an education who otherwise wouldn't have one. They see excellence in athletics and postulate that it could lead to academic excellence. Getting an education is meaningful in my book

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



UrbanRedneck2 1 week ago [in reply to VS1](#)

Again, how many actually get that good education? Few graduate and those that do get almost meaningless degrees. Now I take that back for other sports like swimming or cross country. At my alma mater, the University of Kansas, those sports had 3.0 average GPA's.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



VS1 1 week ago [in reply to UrbanRedneck2](#)

It's not true that few graduate - most college athletes, even in football and basketball, graduate. They're required to graduate a certain percentage or face penalties from the NCAA - usually in thr form of lost scholarships.

As for whether those degrees are worth anything - <http://mgoblog.com/content/des...> - scroll about halfway down that link and you'll see what members of the '97 Michigan Wolverines football team have been up to. That was a national championship winning team - and you'll notice that they have mostly gone on to be successful in their lives.

More to the point though, my statement about meaningful activity was in reference to non-revenue-generating sports. @sureshot32 said they are not doing anything meaningful. These kids play sports where they know that

making millions isn't going to happen - they are truly scholar athletes. (And you can probably tell, I think that there are a lot more true scholar athletes who play football and basketball than most people assume.) And in my opinion, the track star who gets a scholarship to run track and gets a college degree in the process? She is doing a great, meaningful thing. And good for her.

In my opinion, which is affirmed by what I've read in this article, college athletics are a great opportunity for kids who would otherwise not have them. There are serious problems. The problem isn't that student athletes aren't students - while that is true in many cases, typically if you're not serious about your schoolwork, you get kicked out of school. See: Tate Forcier, Boubacar Cissoko, and plenty of others.

The problem isn't even that the universities don't pay the athletes - football players support the entire athletic department, allowing not only for themselves to go to school but also gymnasts, swimmers, wrestlers etc. And I think that is a good thing.

The problem is that these kids have their rights unfairly hampered by the NCAA - not being able to get a lawyer or an agent? Not being able to sell their own stuff? Not being able to act in advertisements? I don't see what's wrong with kids doing any of those things. When I was a student, I wouldn't have "lost" my eligibility at the school if by some miracle somebody decided to use my ugly mug to sell their product. Why can't a student-athlete, who actually adds value to a product, have that same right?

2 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



UrbanRedneck2 1 week ago [in reply to VS1](#)

Those are good points. Consider the teens who are able to go into the X-games, some as young as 14. They are able to do all the pro marketing stuff your talking about. Same with olympic athletes who forgo college and go straight into the olympic games. They are allowed to market their skills. Yet in college only the college makes money off of them.

3 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



David Mebane 2 days ago [in reply to VS1](#)

The list of players in your link is doesn't mean much, since it's a single team and hardly an exhaustive list.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



VS1 1 day ago [in reply to David Mebane](#)

I agree with you-except two points. The one team was a national championship team in one of the ten highest grossing revenue programs in college sports-so they were the archetype for "exploited" student athletes. And so far, we've heard a lot of anecdotes that the "education these guys get isn't worth much." now you've been presented with anecdotal evidence that disputes this-again from a program that would probably be held up as a red standard for exploiting athletes. Except in this one case, the shoe doesn't fit.

Honestly, that list is as good as any other story is that says "college athletes don't get a valuable education." the value of an education is impossible to measure, and so this argument is presently based purely on anecdotes. And that list is a compelling one.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



UrbanRedneck2 1 week ago [in reply to sureshot32](#)

Or in the case of the University of Kansas, people in the ticket office were skimming tickets and reselling them.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Mondfledermaus 1 week ago [in reply to rktsci](#)

You are getting backwards the objective of TCU and Boise State should be to get better graduates not better football teams. The University of Chicago realized that long time ago and disbanded their football team.

2 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Stefano de Stefano 1 week ago [in reply to rktsci](#)

this ignores licencing and apparel and TV rights which are negotiated at the conference level. No sir, I do not agree with the contention that most schools lose money. I would lose money to if I put my income from my day job into an SPV, but paid my expenses directly out of pocket.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



John Jordan 1 week ago

Superb work. Thank you.

10 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Bill Galluccio 1 week ago

I personally don't care if college athletes get benefits on the side, but I don't think they should get paid. They are getting a free education. Despite what the media says, most college athletes go on to have careers in things other than sports. Thanks to Title 9 if you pay the football players you have to pay the water polo players too. Most college athletes use their scholarships to go onto careers. If you really want to stop the issue of players getting benefits the easiest way to do it is punish the people offering the handouts. If the owner of the tattoo parlor in Ohio knew he faced jail time or crippling fines for bribing college players maybe he would have thought twice before trading tattoos for merchandise. Sure people will take the risk, but at least they would be sharing in the risk.

2 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Pigmund von Hamkinstein 1 week ago [in reply to Bill Galluccio](#)

Yes, in America the government can prosecute any citizen for handing out freebie tatoos and other goods to college atheletes. Are you crazy? What world are you living in? It has been, is currently and forever will be legal to offer free goods and services to a college athelete. Tattoo parlors, car dealerships, and any other business establishment didn't sign away their rights to do whatever they want with their products and their time and labor. If I had the power to strip away someone's citizenship in this country, you'd be the first person I go after.

8 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**sansculottes** 1 week ago [in reply to Bill Galluccio](#)

Great! Let's start with the shoe companies and apparel makers whose products the players are forced to wear. How is bribing an AD any better than bribing a student?

3 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**Alexander Allen** 1 week ago

The correlation between athletes and slavery is not outrageous. It's fitting for this contemporary era. etymologically, society changes the meaning of words over time. To be clear, athletes are NOT slaves (in the traditional sense). These players are generating income and even students for their schools but are forced to work for free (or academic scholarships). What is constitutional about this?! The NCAA policies need to be reformed to effectively and fairly compensate these employees. A "student-athlete" is a job. The conservative, and biased rhetoric of "They can walk any time they want" is ineffective and unrealistic. Most of these athletes use sports to get out of their low socioeconomic neighborhoods and seek to make it pro.

---Just my thoughts

8 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**Robert Lent** 1 week ago [in reply to Alexander Allen](#)

Athletic scholarships are not comparable to slavery. People don't compete for the opportunity to be enslaved. Slaves cannot quit, that's one of the essential characteristics of slavery. Athletes can quit. Most scholarship athletes have no expectation of making the pros. For those who go pro, college is a valuable internship. For the rest, an athletics scholarship gives them the opportunity to pull themselves out of poverty. Paying athletes result in a reduction in athletics scholarships, thus leaving many people out in the cold.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)**Mondfledermaus** 1 week ago [in reply to Robert Lent](#)

True most player have no expectation to make it to the pros, but if the coach notices that the player is giving priority to schoolwork, he may revoke the scholarship and give it to someone with real pro ambitions. Coaches get paid millions and are expected to win and have a limited number of scholarships, they are not going to waste them in people that want to get ahead through education.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**Josh Low** 1 week ago [in reply to Mondfledermaus](#)

If players are blowing off practice for any reason then their athletic scholarships should get cut. The deal is for them to find a balance between school and athletics. If they're not able to hold them both up, then they get cut.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)**onion** 2 days ago [in reply to Josh Low](#)

and your comment really brings the hypocrisy of the situation to the forefront. a music student gets a scholarship for studying and playing music. a biology student gets a scholarship for studying and conducting research in biology. a "communications" student gets a scholarship for...playing football. someone in a latter comment suggested making football an academic major, just like biology, music, engineering or whatever. after all, such a big-time sports program is really just training students for a career in football. i'm not sure that is the right solution either, but it is true that the current system is just plain weird. a biology student is not expected to excel at biology AND excel at another full-time job. the flipside is that a biology student doesn't get to blow off biology and still get paid.

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply

**mtbr1975** 1 week ago

And we wonder why this country is failing in it's need to educate our youth to compete in business globally...

2 people liked this.

Like

Reply

**Mike Revelle** 1 week ago

All this talk about free education: Do you know how much time is put into playing D-1 Football at a major school such as Bama, USC, etc...These kids are putting in 40 hours of practice/game time/travel a week and then they are supposed to get a real education. there are only 168 hours in a week 23% of that time is dedicated to football related activities. Then with 6-8 hours a night for sleep, thats another 30% of their time gone to properly rest. Then there is class...what REAL MAJOR can you have in college and successfully complete a 4 yr degree with that much time of your day gone? No accounting degrees, no engineering, etc....

Yes, there are always exceptions to the rule, Andre Luck being one right now, and Myron Rolle at FSU being another. But more often than not, these guys are majoring in Social Sciences, Humanities, Exercise Science...

After reading this article, it made me realize just how long the NCAA (as it is called now) has been in the pimp game.

16 people liked this.

Like

Reply

**marik77** 1 week ago [in reply to Mike Revelle](#)

Communications is a popular major among the academically disinclined also.

I totally agree with your main point about the role of time in the quality of education.

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply

**UrbanRedneck2** 1 week ago [in reply to Mike Revelle](#)

I agree. You seldom see a D-1 player in a difficult course and even those easy courses they need tutors and all kinds of help to keep a lousy 2.0 GPA. If anything they should get a matching scholarship to allow them to return someday and finish a degree. So if they play 4 years they should get 4-6 years of scholarship with that.

5 people liked this.

Like

Reply

**Danny Bowen** 1 week ago [in reply to UrbanRedneck2](#)

I would say that applies for just about anyone.. Do you know how many "normal" people go to college and get an English degree? Some people just want to get a degree to get a degree because its what they've been told is going to benefit them by, you guessed it, schools. The scam is that somehow a college education is going to keep you from working at McDonalds. It might for some, but more than likely its going to be hard work and connections that gets you anywhere in the work force.

2 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**Danny Bowen** 1 week ago [in reply to Mike Revelle](#)

Or Greg McElroy, graduated in 3 years with those hours. I guess it REALLY has more to do with how much you want to use the resources at hand than it does with college football. Working 40 hours a week so that you can pay for college? Sounds pretty darn normal to me.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**sansculottes** 1 week ago [in reply to Danny Bowen](#)

What is not normal is working a job that requires extensive travel, during school days, and bed checks, and required attendance at various functions. And that also prohibits making any kind of money while working 40 hours a week. A scholarship is not compensation, it's a scholarship. If it were compensation, then the NCAA and the schools would be on the hook for workers' compensation and disability claims.

4 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**UrbanRedneck2** 1 week ago [in reply to sansculottes](#)

To be fair, players in the NFL also dont get workers comp or disability.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)**[Kyle Manning](#)** 6 days ago [in reply to UrbanRedneck2](#)

You're just wrong. The NFL has disability plans that apply to all players.. Players are also eligible to file for workers comp claims in either the state they live in, or play in. These rights are both enshrined in the collective bargaining agreement. Even before the newest agreement, players possessed the right to file for workers comp as they had not bargained it away.

3 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**Wolf Like Me** 1 week ago [in reply to Danny Bowen](#)

Right, it is, but so why would a condition of this particular job be that you lost due process, the right to profit from your name and likeness,, etc.

6 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



aaron schnier 1 week ago [in reply to Wolf Like Me](#)

They didn't lose due process. They never had it to begin with. There is no right to play college athletics.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



willallen2 1 week ago [in reply to aaron schnier](#)

There is a right to enter into contracts (and college athletes do enter into contracts with the schools that successfully recruit them) with a party to the contract who has not, in turn, colluded with another entity to limit what you will be offered, subject to a binding collective bargaining agreement.

3 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Paul Thomas 1 week ago [in reply to aaron schnier](#)

You're confusing procedural due process (what this article is talking about) with substantive due process. I don't have a right not to be convicted of murder, either. But, I DO have a right to be tried in a fair manner.

Similarly, assuming that you do not subscribe to the ridiculous fallacy that the NCAA is not a public actor, one can simultaneously affirm that there is no right to play college sports and that if one DOES enter into the college-athletics world, one has a right to be treated in accordance with basic principles of fairness.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



J.J. Zucal 1 week ago [in reply to Mike Revelle](#)

Mike, most football and basketball players show they are quite capable of balancing athletics and academics. There are many 3.00-plus athletes with medical and business majors.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Mondfledermaus 1 week ago [in reply to J.J. Zucal](#)

Come on business majors are a joke.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Josh Low 1 week ago [in reply to Mike Revelle](#)

I majored in political science. I knew plenty of other sociology and communications majors. History is common. I think it's ironic that no one really thinks twice about it if regular students major in dance, foreign languages, Asian studies, etc. but if athletes do it then their education is a joke.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



marik77 1 week ago

I believe that college athletes should have a choice: (1) they should play sports simply as temporary employees of the university, or (2) they should register as students and take classes with a college education as their "financial" award.

Of course, given the moral corruption that defines college athletic programs today, many athletes would try to do both.

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



goldenlion9 1 week ago

Well, the world loves sports. The U.S. has its military-industrial complex - and big sports. Maybe these are just two reasons we are in decline as a nation. (The madness in D.C. is another.) The average person is happy with endless NFL games and college Saturdays. It's a way of feeling attached to something, even if its value is questionable. After the games are over, the watchers are the same as they were before. They don't even have the health benefit of playing the sport. The young people who play sports, looking to grab the gold professional ring, would be better advised to plan for a promising day job. What percentage of star high school athletes make it to and through college sports, and what percentage of college players make professional?

4 people liked this.

Like

Reply



Danny Bowen 1 week ago [in reply to goldenlion9](#)

Well if everyone had that mentality we wouldn't have people that make it to the stars. There is nothing wrong with aiming high and failing.. there is a lot with aiming below where you could have been. You just won't know it, I guess ignorance is bliss, but I say why not give it a shot?

Like

Reply



Eva Dean Folkert 1 week ago [in reply to goldenlion9](#)

Yes, and most HAVE to find a day job if they play football. According to a 2010 NCAA study cited in a text entitled Social Issues in Sports by Ron Woods, 5.8% of boys make it from high school to an NCAA football program and 1.7% make it from the NCAA to the NFL. Simply, according to these statistics, obtaining a career as a professional football athlete is rare. Young men have better odds at becoming doctors, lawyers, teachers, and businessmen.

2 people liked this.

Like

Reply



[Benjamin S. Nye](#) 1 week ago

WOW. That is what I call a persuasive argument. Just wow.

4 people liked this.

Like

Reply



[Elizabeth Bowen](#) 1 week ago

Oh, yes. Now let's move on to the argument about why high school athletes should be paid. And by all means, don't leave out choir members, debaters, and everyone else who participates in an extracurricular activity.

The point of college sports it not to make money. (If it were, the majority of athletic programs would've folded long ago, because they lose money.) Nor is it to provide professional development for people interested in pro sports careers. College sports exist, like bands, choirs, and debate teams exist, to provide fun extracurricular activities for students. The VAST majority of college athletes -- and that's including

football and basketball players -- do not go on to pro sports. Any more than most members of the debate team become lawyers, or most members of the choir become Broadway stars.

If people were really interested in solving corruption in college sports, they wouldn't be demanding that players get paid. They would be demanding that all universities play like the Ivy schools. No scholarships. Strict academic requirements. I'd go even farther and say no recruiting. Just play with the kids you have, like the average public high school.

Meanwhile, the NFL and NBA can come up with their own minor leagues for the people interested in pro careers. Then the people who want to make money right away can go there and see how far their talents can take them.

If schools are forced to pay athletes, then schools will get rid of their athletic departments, because most schools can't afford to pay every single member of every single team. And all people who advocate paying athletes will be responsible for taking away valuable extracurricular opportunities for kids who aren't in it for the money.

13 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



willallen2 1 week ago [in reply to Elizabeth Bowen](#)

If the purpose of college sports is not to make money, then the colleges should stop auctioning television rights for billions. They are breaking the law, and it is a travesty that they have not yet been successfully litigated against.

10 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Elizabeth Bowen 1 week ago [in reply to willallen2](#)

Uh, the Ivy League doesn't auction off TV rights for billions of dollars. Neither do other FCS schools. Or Division II or Division III schools. Even the majority of FBS schools don't make that kind of money. You're judging the whole of college sports by a handful of BCS schools.

5 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



willallen2 1 week ago [in reply to Elizabeth Bowen](#)

Uh, there are at least 70-plus schools, encompassing over 600 players, participating in the auction of television rights for billions. You seem to think that the fact Harvard doesn't participate makes that reality irrelevant. You are wrong.

(Edit) Geez, I went back to read new comments, and see I left out a "0". Make that over 6000 players. I wouldn't want to sell the BCS conferences short in terms of their rapaciousness!

15 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Trent Spriggs 1 week ago [in reply to Elizabeth Bowen](#)

The leagues inferred are BIG 12, ACC, Pac 10, SEC etc. Notre Dame has its own channel/deal. The Ivies and the military academies have not been 'in play' since the TV era started in the 50's... It has long been a business...

3 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Danny Bowen 1 week ago [in reply to Elizabeth Bowen](#)

IF those schools had the athletics programs that the schools you are referring to did, they would be selling T.V. contracts as well. I wouldn't pretend that somehow Ivy league schools are not greedy. btw, Nice name.

Like Reply



Zachary Robertson 1 week ago [in reply to Elizabeth Bowen](#)

Please write what you just said to the NCAA, which apparently has no problem at all in pulling in 100's of millions from college sports while all these universities are losing money.

2 people liked this. Like Reply



1st Avenue South 1 week ago [in reply to Elizabeth Bowen](#)

"College sports exist, like bands, choirs, and debate teams exist, to provide fun extracurricular activities for students"

-Athletes are recruited to colleges as athletes, not as students. Their education and development in their sport is their primary concern, academics secondary. To an aspiring doctor, lawyer, or accountant, extracurricular activities are secondary. There is a difference.

"If schools are forced to pay athletes, then schools will get rid of their athletic departments, because most schools can't afford to pay every single member of every single team."

- Really? You don't think they can come up with a reasonable revenue sharing plan, similar to the NFL? You think they are just going to give all the money the football program makes to the lacrosse team and neglect administration entirely?

Maybe you should just quit talking and go invest in a Critical Thinking course.

7 people liked this. Like Reply



aaron schnier 1 week ago [in reply to 1st Avenue South](#)

* Athletes are recruited to colleges as athletes, not as students.

To what end? Why do universities do that? To raise the prestige of the college and to raise funds for non-athletic and non-revenue pursuits. I could quibble with your entire premise, but even if it is true, the money being raised is also going to support athletic programs where there is no hope of professional dollars down the line, such as volleyball or wrestling which are largely populated by people taking advantage of a free education.

Besides that it has been proven time and again that success in college athletics breeds a loyalty amongst the fanbase that pays off in contributions to the academic side of the university as well as attracts prospective students and enriches the university as a whole.

*- Really? You don't think they can come up with a reasonable revenue sharing plan, similar to the NFL?

Well the NFL doesn't have Title IX to deal with.

* Maybe you should just quit talking and go invest in a Critical Thinking course.

If you're going to troll, at least don't be stupid.

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



LaKid 1 week ago [in reply to Elizabeth Bowen](#)

Last time I checked, my alma mater was not making millions of dollars from the performances of its choir. The issue is not extracurricular activities, but the millions universities and colleges make from the extracurricular activities of some of its students. And many of those students don't benefit either financially or academically from their effort.

I am sure many of my college football playing friends would object to the whole "free" education thing, especially as they hobble to orthopedic specialists for treatment from injuries they suffered years ago - and have to pay for out of their own pocket. I'm injured on the job (not due to my own negligence) and Worker's Comp pays. Not for college athletes.

2 people liked this.

Like

Reply



Paul Thomas 1 week ago [in reply to Elizabeth Bowen](#)

The purpose of big-time college athletics is not "to provide fun extracurricular activities," it's to advertise the universities. The problem with all those figures about athletic programs "losing money" is that they ignore revenue gains from advertising. It's like saying that "just the marketing division of Target" loses money. I mean, think of all the money they're spending on those weekly ads!

Well, of course they're losing money. They make up for it by the fact that the clothing department, which is ultimately part of the same entity, sells more clothes.

2 people liked this.

Like

Reply



astralislux 1 week ago

I don't get the concept of state-sponsored sports.

2 people liked this.

Like

Reply



Carl Monday 1 week ago [in reply to astralislux](#)

Me either. Just let the professional sports teams develop their own talent at their own cost and get colleges out of the business of subsidizing it. Its one thing for a college to give us tomorrow's doctors, and engineers and scientists, etc, but athletes? Who cares?

10 people liked this.

Like

Reply



emily a. lovins 1 week ago [in reply to Carl Monday](#)

This is what professional soccer teams do in Europe. Seems like a much better system to separate highly competitive sports and academics....

8 people liked this.

Like

Reply

**UrbanRedneck2** 1 week ago [in reply to emily a. lovins](#)

It's also what baseball teams do in the US. Sure colleges have baseball teams but in contrast to football and basketball, few go from playing for a college to the pros.

6 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**Paul Thomas** 1 week ago [in reply to UrbanRedneck2](#)

Actually, about three-quarters of the baseball players who sign pro contracts, and a majority of American-born pro players, are ex-collegiate players.

"Moneyball" (ooh, topical!) contains, among other things, a great description of the Oakland A's' shift to drafting almost entirely college players (for a while, anyway, until they actually became OVERdrafted). What it doesn't spell out, though, is why drafting college players became a business opportunity that the A's could exploit. The opportunity comes from the fact that drafting college players offers reduced risk over drafting high schoolers (for instance, many of the pitchers who were going to blow out their arms anyway have already done so in college)--and the risk reduction comes free of charge to the team.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**john chamberlin** 1 week ago [in reply to Carl Monday](#)

Precisely. The obvious economic exploitation of the 'indentured servants' (in lieu of the slavery metaphor) of big-time 'college' football and basketball (other levels and sports are irrelevant) is the basic issue. Why are so-called institutions of higher learning are in the business of providing training for the future employees of the professional cartels of the NFL and the NBA. Cui bono? The conference commissioners (not even Dickens could have come up with the name "Slive" (head of the SEC); ; the head coaches; the ADs; the broadcast/cable channels and other media; the universities themselves; and of course the NBA and the NFL which would otherwise incur the costs of hiring this labor pool.

5 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**Garrett Harris** 1 week ago [in reply to Carl Monday](#)

Who cares about Athletics?

Here's the deal with athletics. We are drawn to athletic greatness because we witness athletes exceed the perceived limits of human ability.

In athletics we routinely watch humans accomplish what was once considered impossible.

We can experience it on a personal level by training for a marathon and running a distance we once thought to be beyond our abilities.

There is a value and enjoyment in watching the human form perform with physical excellence.

"It's one thing for a college to give us tomorrow's doctors..."

I'm reminded of what George Carlin once said, "Today, someone is going to see the worst doctor in the country."

There's no point to my mentioning Carlin's statement. I just thought it was funny.

Like Reply



Garrett Harris 1 week ago [in reply to astralislux](#)

Have you heard of The Olympics?

For U.S. Athletes the pay is \$25,000 for Gold \$15,000 for Silver \$10,000 for Bronze.

Helping you understand "state-sponsored sports"--priceless.

In reality, I'm not sure how much of The U.S. Olympic Committee's money comes from the government.

BTW good use of the hyphen in "state-sponsored".

Like Reply



Paul Thomas 1 week ago [in reply to Garrett Harris](#)

The USOC gets almost no money from the government, though that's a rarity in the international scene. Most countries do fund their Olympic teams directly.

Almost all USOC money comes from sponsorships, corporate partnerships, charitable contributions, and the like.

2 people liked this. Like Reply



theozisback 1 week ago

The college sports apparatus has too many competing parties, all willing to screw the talent (ie teenagers) to maximize their profits and limit their responsibilities and costs. The professional leagues themselves, individual schools, conferences, networks, coaching staffs and the NCAA each have their own interests; they create and enforce their own rules which together make an overlapping and often contradictory mess. That in turn gives room for savvy agents, boosters and lawyers to come in and wreak their own havoc. The whole thing won't be reformed for the same reason the tax code won't be simplified- changes would eliminate tons of profit for third parties and it'll make life easier for the labor force. Can't have that.

I knew plenty about the dirt that the NCAA does, but this article is one of the few that doesn't sugarcoat the role that colleges and conferences have had in shaping the sports landscape. The history of the NCAA was excellent. Great read.

6 people liked this. Like Reply



Charles Eichman 1 week ago

These guys ARE paid in scholarships and training prior to going pro. And I don't feel sorry one damned bit for any of them. They're glorified for playing kids' games, then radically over-compensated if they reach the next level. Turning the NCAA into an official minor league isn't the answer to the problem. Let pro sports generate their own minor-league programs. Leave college to kids who actually want to further their education. Exploited? My arse, sir.

3 people liked this. Like Reply



maxdi 1 week ago [in reply to Charles Eichman](#)

The premise of the article is that they are effectively underpaid because their property rights are stripped under the fiction of the student-athlete label and the effective cartel effected by the NCAA. The author makes clear that other adult actors within the NCAA system, such as coaches, are paid very well when they assert their own property rights in free-market fashion. Sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. If the coaching pool is talent deserving free-market income, then clearly the athletes are, too.

19 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Danny Bowen 1 week ago [in reply to maxdi](#)

I was "underpaid" in the Marine Corps but it gave me necessary training that I did not have before. There is a fee of sorts for someone giving you an opportunity you would not otherwise have. The coaches generally have prior job experience that is relevant. Some have coached in the NFL and it is already a career for them. Players are getting an education in the sport, as well as in school. I mean, we could argue that college coaches should not be paid as much as they are, and I would pretty much agree with you.. but then again.. its slightly different with coaches than students of the school. IF coaches were given scholarships.. then sure. But I'm not sure what coach you are going to get with a scholarship.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



sansculottes 1 week ago [in reply to Danny Bowen](#)

"Student athletes" are not paid. A scholarship is given to them gratis because they are worthy students. That is the NCAA's story, and they should be held to it. If not, then students can retain the rights to their likenesses, dispose of their own personal property any way they see fit, and receive compensation for injuries received on the job.

3 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Andrew Dupont 1 week ago [in reply to Danny Bowen](#)

"There is a fee of sorts for someone giving you an opportunity you would not otherwise have."

And that would be fine if it were opt-in, but it's not. A talented high school football player must attend a university in order to have a realistic shot at an NFL career; he's got to take his "payment" in the form of an education that he might not want and did not ask for.

The argument you're making (and that the NCAA itself often makes) is a curious one because it seems to acknowledge that student-athletes are employees; they're simply being paid with scholarships instead of money. Money is fungible. It's legal tender for all debts, public and private. For a student-athlete to be paid instead of receiving a scholarship would be an improvement — he could spend that money on whatever he wanted. He could even spend it on a college education.

It troubles me because I thought we'd decided that money is the only fair compensation for a day's work. When mining companies used to pay their employees in "company scrip," redeemable only at the company's own store, it was rightly seen as a cynical and coercive measure that limited the mobility of workers. But the mining companies were only able to get away with it because they were the only job in town. The NCAA, too, is getting away with it because (at least for football) they're the only path to the big leagues.

9 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



aaron schnier 1 week ago [in reply to Andrew Dupont](#)

But it's not the fault of the NCAA that there are no viable development leagues in football. And that is the crux of the argument in my opinion....if people actually wanted to watch 18 year olds fumble around a field while they gained enough proficiency there would be viable development leagues already. But we don't really want that. The fact that those leagues don't exist is evidence that despite all the hand wringing the skills that college athletes have is largely worthless without the training they are receiving in college. The universities are profiting from the existence of a football team largely independently of who is playing on that team. It is the name of the university that makes the lions share of the money.

Also athletes are not employees. They are at best interns who are learning a trade...not necessarily different from any other unpaid internship that earns college credit. There is no meaningful difference between college athletics and the unpaid internship I had one summer where I had to put in 45+ hours a week for nothing more than an introduction to a trade and some networking contacts.

Like Reply



sureshot32 1 week ago [in reply to aaron schnier](#)

I'm going to go out on a limb and say there weren't 102,000 people showing up to your internship to watch your introduction to a trade. I'm also going to go out on another limb and say you didn't earn your boss \$4 million per year plus as a result of your performance. These things matter.

3 people liked this. Like Reply



James Norris 1 week ago [in reply to aaron schnier](#)

Does your trade feature a national monopoly that bans companies from providing any compensation to their interns by threatening to take away their ability to compete with other companies? It is the fault of the NCAA because that organization uses its monopoly position over football for 18-22 year olds to prevent any competition from arising.

4 people liked this. Like Reply



Andrew Dupont 1 week ago [in reply to aaron schnier](#)

There are laws on unpaid internships in the US; largely unenforced laws, sure, but laws nonetheless. For an unpaid internship to be legal, it must pass a handful of tests. Two of them are especially relevant to this discussion.

First: "The training, even though it includes actual operation of the facilities of the employer, is similar to what would be given in a vocational school or academic educational instruction."

Second: "The employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the trainees, and on occasion the employer's operations may actually be impeded."

If playing college football were an unpaid internship, it would be an illegal one, because it fails both these tests. It fails the first because they're not learning the vocation of football; they're playing football, much the same way that NFL players play football. It fails the second because schools do derive an immediate

advantage from the activities of their athletes — in fact, the entire operation would cease to exist if these "interns" chose not to participate.

Finally, every company I've worked at that has had internships (paid or unpaid) has made only a handful of slots available — a small fraction of the number of paid employees they have. But if the organization chart of a college football program were applied to any other company, you'd see a handful of highly-paid executives at the top, eighty unpaid interns at the bottom, and nothing in between. Does that sound like a company that treats people fairly?

4 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Paul Thomas 1 week ago [in reply to aaron schnier](#)

If people didn't want to watch pitchers throwing 86 MPH and hitters striking out all the time, there wouldn't be rookie league baseball, right?

Wait, no. There IS rookie league baseball. In spite of the fact that NO ONE WATCHES IT. Why? Because it's valuable to MLB teams to have rookie league baseball exist.

If player development is valuable to the NFL (it is), and was not being handed gratis to teams on a silver platter, they would rapidly find ways to develop players through minor-league ball. Those teams would lose money, but as I said elsewhere on the thread, who cares whether one particular department of a larger entity "loses" money in an accounting sense? If it increases the entity's overall profit, it's worth doing.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



David Mebane 2 days ago [in reply to aaron schnier](#)

You don't really think that the amount of money the university makes doesn't depend on the quality of play on the field. Why else do coaches make so much money? Why else do schools put so much energy into recruiting?

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



willallen2 1 week ago [in reply to Charles Eichman](#)

Hey, Charlie? Howza'bout we have all the entities, who pay people who to do what you get paid to do, enter into an agreement that you should be paid whatever they collusively deem "fair". Care to guess what would happen to your compensation?

9 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Tom Boyer 1 week ago

Wonderful story but just dead wrong about the conclusion.

There is a really obvious answer that does not involve professionalizing college football: Allow NFL teams to sign players at any age to developmental contracts. A minor league system would blossom overnight -- many of the elements are already in place. Great football prospects who are not college material would no longer be coerced into having to masquerade as college students -- they could do what they do best, which is train for the NFL. Players like Terrell Pryor for whom a full ride scholarship is a terrible hardship, who want to

drive a Lexus and live in the luxury condo and eat in the best restaurants, could do that with their signing bonus instead of having to be paid under the table by shadowy college boosters. The suggestion that college football players on a full scholarship cannot afford movie tickets is absolutely ludicrous. Most are NOT poor, and those who are may take out low-interest student loans for all the spending money any reasonable college student would need and still graduate with far less debt than the average student. Baseball provides a wonderful model for football. Those who want to go to college can do so, and those who want to postpone college to sign the professional contract out of high school have that option available to them.

College football would lose out on some talent but only a small fraction. What it would be left with would be kids who are in college by choice, and that's a good thing.

12 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



willallen2 1 week ago [in reply to Tom Boyer](#)

A pretty good plan, but your post implies that NFL teams aren't "allowed" to go in that direction. The truth is that they don't want to, and they collude with colleges to avoid it, with the help of the NFL Players Association.

The only thing that can break this system is a successful anti-trust lawsuit against the BCS conferences and NCAA, or legislation from Congress.

12 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



jourdansway 1 week ago [in reply to Tom Boyer](#)

Best Reply on this board

3 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



UrbanRedneck2 1 week ago [in reply to Tom Boyer](#)

I don't think it will happen. Why? NFL teams are not about to put out the money to start minor league or farm teams like baseball does.

The closest thing to that would be the arena football league which is independent of the NFL and barely makes it.

4 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



JackHolmes 1 week ago [in reply to Tom Boyer](#)

Let's assume that all you suggest comes to pass - it still wouldn't solve the conundrum of apportioning the massive TV revenues that either the NCAA or Conferences/Universities receive to who is actually generating the revenue and interest - the players. Even when the NBA allowed high school players to be drafted directly into the league (and deprived college BB of talents such as KG, Kobe, LeBron, Tracy McGrady, etc.) - television networks still paid a king's ransom to televise the NCAA BB tournament. ESPN still pays the NCAA in order to televise the College World Series, even though MLB has a full-blown minor league system. Why? Because they know that alumni will tune in, no matter if the talent level is slightly diminished or not.

Even if the NFL allowed the signing of players straight out of high school - College Football would still be big business and would still create stars (through exposure on TV) whose rights could be exploited without compensation through sales of jerseys, video games, etc. The NBA developed the NBDL as a minor league system but even though the quality of ball there is probably better

than your average college game, NCAA Basketball is still much more popular because of marketing and the huge alumni audience and loyalty. College athletics are a big \$ business. Even if you stopped giving athletic scholarships (as was suggested on this board), e.g. the Ivy league, alumni and universities would find ways to bring top athletes to their schools to play sports so that the gravy train of TV revenues would keep flowing to them.

You can't deny that there is a great inequity here. Even if you established a minor league and toughened academic standards so that the stereotypical "dumb jock" couldn't attend the major universities and only "true" student/athletes could and further eliminated athletic scholarships so that the economically disadvantaged couldn't play either - I still think there would be massive TV revenues and a workforce that was being exploited financially. As long as there are massive TV revenues, the economic inequities have to be dealt with.

5 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



aaron schnier 1 week ago [in reply to JackHolmes](#)

I actually can deny there is a great inequity here for the very reasons you stated in your comment. As you pointed out, alumni will watch their alma mater regardless of who is actually in the jersey. The fundamental flaw with your reasoning is your belief that players generate the revenue and interest. They don't.

As the author of the article stated, we follow college athletics almost tribally and elect to watch their exploits in lieu of other entertainment options completely independently of who is in the jersey. The TV contract with the SEC, for example, didn't change any this summer even though the conference lost the last 2 Heisman winners to the NFL because fans of 'Bama and Auburn weren't only following their teams because of the players. They were following the teams because they're fans of 'Bama and Auburn.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



sureshot32 1 week ago [in reply to aaron schnier](#)

The SEC has put more players into the NFL than any other conference. The mere presence of Heisman Trophy winners is not the end all/be all of viewership.

For evidence that the players actually do matter, go look at attendance/viewership numbers for teams that excelled and teams that did poorly. Teams that stink do not draw as many fans and are not featured on television as much (exception: Notre Dame - as poorly as they do, NBC still gives them a seat at the table). It's a fairly elementary concept.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



David Mebane 2 days ago [in reply to aaron schnier](#)

Okay, now I actually do think you really believe this. I suppose the trustees at the University of Alabama have screwed up by paying Nick Saban so much money. And Saban should really just stay home instead of traveling all over the country recruiting in the off-season. And why spend so much money on things like athletic tape? The fans don't care! They'll love Alabama even if she goes 0-12! Sir, if you believe this, I think I can say with confidence that you've never been to Alabama.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Chris Schlect 1 week ago [in reply to Tom Bover](#)

Not quite. Your proposal would be dead-on if fan loyalty depended exclusively upon the virtuosity of the play on the field. While that is a factor, fan loyalty rests upon something more fundamental.

What your suggestion overlooks is the cultural meaning and the economic value behind a university brand name. Consider my experience, shared by millions of others. I devotedly follow the WSU Cougars NOT because they play the best football I can find. I follow them because WSU is my alma mater. As an undergraduate I was fully indoctrinated into the cultic Saturday rituals: school colors, fight song, shouting in unison together with many thousands, scapegoating opponents and referees, solidarity with Cougar nation in joy and in sorrow as we all participate vicariously together through our team's experiences on the field. I watch ESPN gameday mainly to see the Cougar flag flying in the background.

Even if your theoretical NFL farm team brought better-quality football to my town, I will not be ritually connected to the the team. Remember that "fan" is short for "fanatic".

This fanatic loyalty, more than the quality of play on the field, is the backbone of college football's success. Fanatic loyalty flows from natural impulses that are deeply human. These impulses express themselves in different ways in different cultures. We should not be surprised that media broadcasters, merchandisers and university development officers have found a way to monetize this human impulse and profit from it. Your proposed NFL bush leagues will not be able to compete with this until our cultural values shift.

2 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Michael Ellsworth 1 week ago [in reply to Chris Schlect](#)

Exactly... while I like the minor league idea, there is no way that minor league teams in football or basketball could hope to fill the huge cultural space that college football and basketball fill. These sports have more than a hundred teams which attract tens of thousands of fans each. The big state university teams provide an identity for people from that state, and the private-university teams provide a class identity for their followers. It's not about the sport itself. Look at the average attendance in minor league sports and tell me that they can play this role... no way.

I think athletes should not only be paid, but also cease to be students. I'm not talking about the 95% of student-athletes that treat sports as extra-curricular activities, I'm talking about the big-money, big-school sports (men's football, men's basketball, and perhaps, a few schools of baseball, ice hockey or women' BB). In these sports, the universities can form affiliated corporations in charge of running for-profit sports and they can pay their players. They university can make money, the players can make money, and we can end the sham of "student-athlete" who can't read.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



sureshot32 1 week ago

Great article. Exposing the hypocrisy of the NCAA is an important job and this article goes a long way in doing just that. Most striking to me, was the quote from Josephine Potuto and the response from the author:

“In order to reach due-process issues as a legal Constitutional principle, the individual challenging has to have a substantive property or liberty interest,” she testified. “The opportunity to play intercollegiate athletics does not rise to that level.”

To translate this from the legal jargon, Potuto used a circular

argument to confine college athletes beneath any right to freedom or property in their own athletic effort. They have no stake to seek their rights, she claimed, because they have no rights at stake.

I wonder if she delivers lines like this with a straight face. It seems to me that people like Potuto, Myles Brand, Mark Emmert, and disgraced Miami AD Paul Dee consciously propagate their lies. I don't buy that they are doing this for the greater good or even that they believe they are doing this for the greater good. I believe they are just like Walter Byers, clinging on to power and money and knowingly screwing the kids all the while. These people are too smart not to realize the harm they are inflicting on the "student athletes". I call every single one of them out for their misdeeds. In my mind, they are as guilty as sin.

8 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



willallen2 1 week ago [in reply to sureshot32](#)

Fer' Chissakes, we have a Supreme Court which once declared that a professional baeball team travelling across state borders, to play another professional baseball team in front of a paying audience, was not engaged in commerce among the several states, and thus Federal anti-trust laws did not apply. Then, a few decades later, the same court essentially said the reasoning in the previous case was without merit, but that the then-current court liked the result, so screw Curt Flood.

Why anyone pays much respect to that institution is a bit of a wonder sometimes.

3 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



aaron schnier 1 week ago [in reply to sureshot32](#)

I honestly don't understand what the author was getting at here. All Potuto was saying is that there is no constitutional right to play college athletics so there is no due process violation in depriving someone of playing athletics. You show me where in the constitution it requires government to protect the right to play football and then you have a point.

I think this was just a case of the author trying to make this a civil rights case where he feels more comfortable. But this isn't Brown v. Board of Education and it's not about getting blacks the right to vote. It's about playing football and Potuto is right that there simply isn't any sort of right to do that.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



sureshot32 1 week ago [in reply to aaron schnier](#)

Potuto says that because the player does not have any substantive property interest, that player has no right to due process. So why doesn't that player have a substantive property interest? Because the NCAA has stripped him of his right to a substantive property interest. He can't sue for substantive property interest because, as Potuto states, he has no substantive property interest.

Clearly the NCAA has endeavored to remove the right to earn money playing football while setting up a system in which all of the adults not only make money, but make obscene amounts of money. Do you think Emmert works for free? Do you think Brand worked for free? Do you think the athletic directors, coaches and assistant coaches at schools across the country work for free? Thousands and thousands of adults make money off these kids who do all the work. It was set up thusly by the NCAA and the NCAA continues, through dubious means, to enforce this setup - allowing the rich to get richer and the poor to remain that way. At this point, the NCAA = Darth Vader and his Empire, while the student athletes = Luke Skywalker and the rebel forces. I hope Skywalker strikes Vader down, and soon!

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Paul Thomas 1 week ago [in reply to sureshot32](#)

As someone with a legal background, I can tell you that "standing," as a legal concept, is full of those sorts of empty-headed tautologies. It's essentially a tool used to bounce lawsuits that the courts don't like at an early stage, without giving the person a fair hearing. (To be fair, some suits really don't deserve a fair hearing-- the infamous [and very real] "Motion to Kiss my Ass" comes to mind-- but the doctrine is also often used, usually by conservatives, to shut down legitimate challenges to the existing power structure.)

Like Reply



rick jones 1 week ago

Having never been a grad student I don't know the answer so will ask - do grad students get paid for being TAs and such?

Like Reply



Todd Shepherd 1 week ago [in reply to rick jones](#)

Well, put it this way, many grad students across the country have felt so aggrieved by their pay structure that they've unionized on occasion: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/G...>

4 people liked this. Like Reply



dfranklin1 1 week ago [in reply to rick jones](#)

The simple answer is that most, if not all GA's and TA's get paid for their services through tuition scholarships and stipends. The amounts tend to be disparate and based on discipline; science fields get more than social science fields. This raises the whole issue of fair compensation for anyone teaching in HE. The growing use of contingent faculty, including adjuncts and TA's to reduce costs incurred by a variety of misguided investments including athletics, is a concern for academic quality.

4 people liked this. Like Reply



Lucretia 1 week ago [in reply to dfranklin1](#)

Actually dfrank, it seems to be the cost of administration in HE that is the main culprit in tuition rises. Back to the point. Assistant Coaches (sometimes known in college football as G.A.'s) in certain institutions that have graduate program, give a \$2,000 per year stipend, graduate tuition and sometimes food and on-campus room to coach football. This occurs in volleyball as well as football and is a good source of 50-hr./week labor during their athletic seasons. Of course, the quality of their graduate programs varies quite a bit....

Like Reply



UrbanRedneck2 1 week ago [in reply to rick jones](#)

Back when I was in college many times the TA's and student instructors did a better job teaching than the professors.

2 people liked this. Like Reply

**LaKid** 1 week ago [in reply to rick jones](#)

At my school, TAs receive a salary and tuition waiver. The wage is the same, no matter the discipline. I disagree with franklin that the use of TAs and adjuncts is the result of cost cutting measures. TAs and adjuncts are used primarily for basic studies classes - try getting a PhD in Biology with 25 years of teaching experience to teach Biology 101 to 600 students. Remember, and they will remind you if you forget, a PhD is a research, not teaching degree....

[Like](#) [Reply](#)**Coneyclone** 1 week ago

Great article, and some interesting comments too, but no one's mentioned the effect of bowl wins, Sweet 16 status and the rest on college fund-raising. Sometimes called the Flutie Effect, for Doug Flutie's profound impact on Boston College's national reputation, many schools, especially private ones that want to inflate their endowments, pay serious attention to their sports programs. There's one dynamic going on between higher education and the NCAA, and another between a school and its alumni.

3 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**Trent Spriggs** 1 week ago

The student-athletes connected to money making sports, that is the ones that are on televised or ranked should be compensated. Further, big time coaches earn much more than professors and the money generated on league or national broadcast contracts are in the billions. Entire athletic programs are fed from money sports and the position of the school in terms of marketing is buoyed by prolonged media exposure. Also, the money made from apparel, greater tuition/student body volume and alumni bequests is also considerable. The corrosive atmosphere in college sports today can be cleaned up by giving kids their due in deferred payment at graduation for team achievements, championships or individuals awards. We should keep in mind, that it is only within the cloistered world of the NCAA; in all of the great United States, that we can see the tawdry spectacle that royalties are not directly attributable to the artist/performer. This is wrong, and this lamentable situation should be corrected. The old notion that students are amateurs is out of fashion. We need a 2.0 upgrade on this count. We need only to look at courtside seats that run over 200 dollars or jersey sales in the 10's of thousands for a particular player at nearly 50 bucks a pop. We can do better than this America...

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)**Chris Chiou** 1 week ago

Frontline did a special report on this... <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/...>

[Like](#) [Reply](#)**Paul Tullis** 1 week ago

I said the exact same thing in HuffPo 3 weeks ago: "the debate over the (U. of Miami scandal) is a distraction from the real issue in big-time college sports, which is that the whole system is a scandal. It profits from the work and talent of its labor force, giving almost all of the athletes almost nothing while thousands of individuals, institutions, and corporations are enriched by their talent and hard work." <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/...>
And btw Jeff-- I propose a system to pay every single athlete.

3 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



jourdansway 1 week ago

At my alma mater (an SEC school) the revenue from football pays the athletic scholarships of almost all the other athletes on campus. If we pay the football players, the other programs would have to shut down because they definitely do not generate enough revenue on their own. The player gets more than an education. If we pay them, then we charge them for rent, utilities, food, training, (coaching and facility fees), travel, hotel and medical care.

Like Reply



UrbanRedneck2 1 week ago [in reply to jourdansway](#)

But, this goes back to should colleges have any sports programs at all? Remember universities having sports teams is an American only thing. Colleges in China, India, and Europe dont have them and are beginning to really kick our tails in the area that really matters - academics.

PS. I should say yes, schools in Europe have sports teams (clubs) that compete against other schools but it isnt as hyped as it is here.

7 people liked this. Like Reply



LouisaF 1 week ago

Way too much of the budget and attention of my university goes to their well-known sports programs. The athletes are cut so much slack academically that their status as students is mostly for show, they are pampered, famous, and given even more slack for criminal behavior. They don't need the test scores or the grades to be admitted as other students do. Are you really trying to claim that they pay tuition? Millions of dollars get sucked into often corrupt college basketball or football teams.

What exactly does this have to do with a university-level education for non-athletes who have the scores and the real grades and pay the full tuition with school loans they'll be paying off for decades? Nothing at all. And what happens to the athletes after they "graduate"? Sometimes they succeed. Most of the time they are handed a meaningless degree and sent out in a world they aren't prepared to navigate. I think sports programs should be completely separated from universities and turned into vocational training programs. Let's stop pretending these athletes are scholars and imagining that they do anything for the university except suck it dry.

4 people liked this. Like Reply



AfGuyReturns 1 week ago [in reply to LouisaF](#)

Case in point - Dexter Manley. Played for the Redskins and somehow managed to graduate from college with a degree - without being able to read.

2 people liked this. Like Reply



Zachary Robertson 1 week ago

Exactly right on TitleIX argument. There is no reason that all athletes would have to be paid evenly or even at all. Use the same rubric for the amount of money the program generates and use that to pay out to athletes in the programs that are generating the most revenue. They already do this with the coaches, why not the players?

1 person liked this. Like Reply

**Todd Shepherd** 1 week ago

Eric P. Cartman understands..."Stoo-dent Atho-leets? Oh that is brilliant, sir!

<http://www.southparkstudios.co...>

2 people liked this.

Like

Reply

**David Blum** 1 week ago

First off, even remotely comparing big time college athletes to anything associated with plantations or slavery seems to be ludicrous. I would wager that 99.9 percent of these guys are having the time of their lives at their universities.

As you wrote, very few of these people will turn pro. So that free education is not to be scoffed at. I'm still paying off my student loans. Do you realize how tuition has skyrocketed in recent years? Over the course of a lifetime, the value of a Stanford or UCLA education will prove invaluable. Not to mention the networking opportunities with alumni. A question: how many minor league baseball players could you name? Not many, probably, but you could name a bunch of fb/bb players because they play for universities that have millions of alumni who are rabid fans. They root for laundry. I'd root for UCLA if we fielded a team of elderly Lithuanians.

Take Notre Dame. They've stunk for nearly a generation. How many stars have they had? Yet they're still popular. Can you imagine an Auburn alum/fan thinking: dang, Alabama (or Florida) has a lot of stars, I'll root for them. The universe would implode, it's unthinkable. Laundry/alma mater.

I support giving students a place at the table. That's always a good idea. But paying them poses questions: what about Title IX legal implications - if they only pay the fb/bb players, what if the players in other sports sued. And how many lawsuits would that entail? It seems logistically problematic.

I also agree about corporate sponsorship, which is shameful. I play the NCAA EA football game on my PS3. It's (yes, even the game has a sponsor) sponsored by Reeses Peanut Butter cups. Great message to the kids, NCAA, we need more obese ones.

But I ultimately we have to consider what role we want universities to play in our civic society. If we start paying athletes, we're essentially turning our conferences into minor leagues. USC will be the equivalent of the Rancho Cucamonga Quakes. I don't mind some extra stipend - Beano Cook says they used to get laundry money in the 50s. But let's keep them as students, not minor leaguers. I would also strengthen academic requirements (I realize it's utopian).

Lastly, it's possible the NCCA will be out of the football business. The Pac 12 might take some teams like Oklahoma to become the Pac16. This is could lead to a rush to super-conferences who all sign their own TV deals.

2 people liked this.

Like

Reply

**ReadWriteThinkPlease** 1 week ago [in reply to David Blum](#)

"I'd root for UCLA if we fielded a team of elderly Lithuanians."

Judging by UCLA's performance the past few seasons, you already are...

And the corresponding sea of empty seats at the Rose Bowl means that you, unfortunately, are in the minority of Bruin "fans."

The truth is that a winning football team produces increased ticket receipts, increased merchandise sales, and increased television

money (a team with a losing record is not going to get a prime time TV broadcast, unless they are the patsy scheduled by the big guys during the so-called non-conference games just so the big guys can ensure a win. And it's amazing how many smaller schools will gladly agree to be the patsy, regardless of the risk of injury to their lesser talented players, just to get that money and TV exposure.)

Perhaps a 'Bama fan will never root for Auburn. But a fan of college football will eagerly watch the best teams play, regardless of affiliation, just for love of the game itself. And that's where the big money comes in - prime time TV, BCS bowl games, the extra tickets sold to people who want to watch a potential national champion or future Heisman winner play.

You mentioned Notre Dame. Yes, when it originally signed its TV deal with NBC, it was the envy of the collegiate sports world. But precisely because Notre Dame has played so poorly - and its ratings have correspondingly dropped - over the last decade, its new deal is nowhere worth as much as SEC and Big 10 schools are now getting from TV rights. More information here: <http://www.aolnews.com/2009/06...>

Therefore, college football is not laundry, and never has been when it comes to making money, as the article makes clear.

The NFL has plenty of money - the NCAA should let it create its own farm system, ala MLB. Then players can be drafted out of high school and choose whether to play at the college level or go into the farm system. Farm system players are paid; college players continue to receive scholarships. Players who want a college education can receive one; players who just want to see if they have what it takes to go pro can take their shot. Fans who love their school no matter would still have teams for which to root; fans who just want to see young men combat on the field can watch farm teams play.

Like Reply



Matthew Wassink 1 week ago

Two Words:

Division III.

True student-athletes. Competing for love of the game at over 230 football playing schools. Where academics come first and corruption is almost unheard of. The last bastion of amateurism.

6 people liked this. Like Reply



UrbanRedneck2 1 week ago [in reply to Matthew Wassink](#)

And there is no reason Div I and II could not be converted into the same programs.

Like Reply



ReadWriteThinkPlease 1 week ago [in reply to UrbanRedneck2](#)

And I'll give you 21.2 million reasons (the amount of money paid out in the BCS Championship Game last year) why Div 1 never will.

Like Reply



Kyle Manning 6 days ago [in reply to Matthew Wassink](#)

Except corruption isn't unheard of at Div III. It just isn't widely reported and disseminated because nobody gives a damnbecause it's Div III. Athletic scholarships are "prohibited" in Div III. So what do schools do? Set aside a certain number of supposedly "academic scholarships" to be given to talented athletes on the successful sports teams who academically in no way make the cut for the scholarship.

This is a widespread and common practice. How is this not avoiding the rules and rewarding amateurism? It isn't. And this at the level where very little money is generated from athletics. You apply the Div III model to Div I and the billions of dollars at stake, at absolute nothing would change in terms of corruption. It's an attempt to paper over the huge amounts of money generated with the cry of "amateurism" and "love of the game." It's pathetic, phony and doomed to failure.

Like Reply



[Lamar Henderson](#) 1 week ago

The most ridiculous thing about this subject is that institutions supposedly dedicated to education are wasting some time, effort and money on extracurricular games, most of which lose money for the schools.

I have a solution to this problem -- ban college sports.

6 people liked this. Like Reply



[Anthony S](#) 1 week ago

The words that come to mind in the world of big-time college athletics are hypocrisy and exploitation. When we watch a major college football or basketball game, everyone knows that very few of the players are really students first. They have different entrance requirements, courses designed to allow them to meet eligibility requirements, special academic instructors who's sole purpose is to keep them academically eligible. The NCAA has pretended it is pre-WW II America where students played sports for recreation in front of a few hundred or a very few thousand spectators, almost all students and faculty. This world has not existed for many, many years. For the most part, universities do good with their profits from major sports...and I, like many others root for their Alma Maters. Wouldn't it not be better for athletes to be paid comparable wages to minor league sports athletes with 4-year contracts...and if they meet the general admission requirements of the univeristy, they could be additionally offered an athletic scholarship. If they make extra money in legal ways...so be it. It would be no different than a student who works in the bookstore or a dining hall making a few extra bucks. This would be a much more sane, honest and reasonable policy, while allowing the universities to make money for their good works in educating American students and promoting research that advances our nation and the world.

1 person liked this. Like Reply



[HuskerFan_1](#) 1 week ago

The great radical Nebraska state legislator Rep. Ernie Chambers years ago put forth a bill in the Nebraska Unicameral designed to pay Nebraska football players as state employees for all of the various reasons listed in this article. Of course this was done long ago (in the early 1980s) and was considered lunacy and absurd by both the local and national media! It certainly looks like Ernie was again well ahead of his time.

Like Reply



[HuskerFan_1](#) 1 week ago

Many of this article's finer points such as suggesting to pay collegiate athletes were long ago (in the early 1980s) proposed in the Nebraska Unicameral by the often referred to, radical state senator Ernie Chambers. Chambers put forth for several years in a row a bill, that was considered both lunacy and absurd by the local and national media, to pay Husker football players as state employees. It now appears that Sen. Chambers was light years ahead of his time. Let's just hope that when he takes his seat again in the Nebraska Legislature again next year, after being term limited out, he'll resume his fight for these underprivileged and underrepresented athletes.

Like Reply



DaveProuty 1 week ago

Just to be clear, you mention Penn State and head coaches with multi- million dollar salaries in the same sentence.. Penn State head coach Joe Paterno earns about \$500,000 per year and gives a generous portion of that back to the university.

2 people liked this. Like Reply



LaKid 1 week ago [in reply to DaveProuty](#)

And he is an exception

3 people liked this. Like Reply



Wazoo2u2 1 week ago

The real purpose of college/professional sports is to keep masses of mediocre minds occupied, entertained and not questioning. A stupid populace is a happy populace - and easily governed.

4 people liked this. Like Reply



Starman535 1 week ago

I have a simple remedy for all this: give all athletic scholarship holders a full stipend (including health insurance) just like any graduate student on assistantship gets, except that the athlete's health insurance should also offer lifetime coverage for any permanent injuries. That way, they are paid a reasonable wage, (on which taxes are paid also), plus they get the educational benefit and they won't have to live in poverty either while playing or if they are injured. Such a policy could apply to all collegiate sports, and provide the universities some cover against allegations of impropriety - these athletes would, in effect, become employees of the university.

4 people liked this. Like Reply



[Thomas van der Voort](#) 1 week ago

Look, the reality of playing NCAA football and basketball certainly isn't comparable with slavery, but it's hard not to see the logic of the two systems as similar. Slave owners, after all, used the fiction that slavery was a "positive good" for their slaves to justify the institution. Couldn't slave supporters argue that slaves were, in fact, "paid"--in room, board, and "civilizing influence" (of inestimable value!--in just the way NCAA supporters argue that athletes are "paid" with a "free education." In reality, of course, slaves were creating value for their owners with no right to profit personally from it, with no option to do anything else. NCAA football and basketball players really are in a similar position--though of course they are much better off.

Maybe most college sports are still of such a size that their primary function is "educational." But big-time college sports is far more an entertainment business than it is an educational endeavor. When you think about it as a business, you realize "education" is just the fiction

used to keep labor costs down. Whatever they're charging a non-scholarship student, what really is the incremental cost to house, feed, and "educate" an athlete? And are the schools really trying to "educate" athletes, just as you would any student, or are they trying to "keep them eligible?" There's a difference. And please don't tell me about how college sports "lose money" overall. Look at it at the level of individuals--plenty of people get paid.

And paying these guys a few more bucks in addition to the scholarship they get now isn't the panacea some believe it to be. That just raises the fixed cost a bit, but keeps the system in place. Players will still try to benefit as much as they can and colleges will still compete for talent on the "black market" currently in place.

College sports has lived with its built-in contradictions for a long time, but the bigger it gets, the harder it is to maintain without the whole thing imploding.

6 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



rwrae72 1 week ago

"This danger helps explain why the NCAA steps gingerly in enforcements against powerful colleges. To alienate member colleges would be to jeopardize its own existence. Long gone are television bans and the "death penalty" sentences (commanding season-long shutdowns of offending teams) once meted out to Kentucky (1952), Southwestern Louisiana (1973), and Southern Methodist University (1987). Institutions receive mostly symbolic slaps nowadays. Real punishments fall heavily on players and on scapegoats like literacy tutors."

You are a moron. What kind of punishment do you think USC just received? After a 4+ year investigation (really a colonoscopy) the ncaa took the words of a convicted felon over university officials. USC was not allowed to be present during the felon's examination. One player and his family were found to have done wrong, and there was never any proof the university or anyone connected (as in a booster) was involved. A coach was given a show cause for a photoshopped picture and a two minute call to his cell phone (presumably the whole dastardly deal was explained in a voice mail). The ncaa even got the date of the call wrong.

For this the bowl ban (2 years), 10 scholarships a year for three years, 75 scholarship limit for three years, immediate transfers for juniors and seniors (free agency), no fans at practice (even though boosters were never implicated).

What a joke. This is a rogue, vindictive organization.

And by the way, how many programs would be thrilled if after a 4-5 year investigation only one player's family turned up dirty?

6 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



cheeseburglar 1 week ago [in reply to rwrae72](#)

Hard to guess where you went to school... but a fantastic ad hominem argument nonetheless. Also, didn't know OJ Mayo and Reggie Bush are the same person from one family. Good to know.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



sureshot32 1 week ago [in reply to cheeseburglar](#)

Reggie Bush was the only football player implicated. Football is the sport that was hammered. Perhaps you can explain what OJ Mayo had to do with the football program?

2 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)

**rwrae72** 1 week ago [in reply to cheeseburglar](#)

If pointing out that USC was hammered by the ncaa while Miami, Auburn, Ohio State, North Carolina, Alabama, Michigan, Oregon and a host of others skate for the same or worse is not relevant, then god help you.

Also (you probably don't remember because you were stuffing a cheeseburger you know where) Mayo was cleared by the ncaa before he matriculated to college. All of a sudden he is dirty?

Many programs have figured this ncaa rules system out: you staff up with a huge compliance department. When there's cheating, you self-report violations and self-impose minor sanctions. You do this forever and the ncaa won't touch you. Ohio State had 300+ violations over a 10 year period but because they self-reported, no punishment. This is how you game the system!

Finally, I repeat: If your program underwent a 4-5 year investigation you would be thrilled if it turned up only 1 player and his family who broke the "rules." USC was screwed and make no mistake this was a witch hunt led by Paul Dee, who was the athletic director at Miami when they were going rogue.

2 people liked this.

[Like](#)[Reply](#)**ReadWriteThinkPlease** 1 week ago [in reply to cheeseburglar](#)

"ad hominen"

I do not think this phrase means what you think it means.

While I would not have used rwrae72's language, as I think the author of the article is anything but a moron, rwrw72 is factually correct.

While the article asserts that schools have received mostly symbolic slaps on the wrist since SMU, that is not the case for USC. It is the harshest penalty handed down by the NCAA since the SMU death penalty, even though the case involved one football player, one basketball player, and one homesick Romanian tennis player who used a sports department phone card to call her family long distance. That's it, after four years of investigation. Not to mention that the Reggie Bush case - which was the impetus for the harshest penalties - was centered around payments and benefits provided to Bush's family, some 150 miles south of campus in San Diego.

Also, the payments to Bush's family were not connected in any way to Bush playing for USC. Instead, it was a marketing agent (not sports agent, as the article would have it) who wanted to exploit Reggie AFTER he turned pro. And indeed, the marketing agent put pressure on Reggie and his family to turn pro as soon as Bush was eligible, which was directly counter to USC's vested interests.

Yet it was USC that received the harsh punishment. And yes, this is relevant in light of the article's assertions about college athletics, money and the NCAA.

The NCAA not only doesn't punish schools beyond a hand slap even when the schools are caught red-handed with multiple players committing multiple infractions that directly affect their playing time at the school; but the NCAA will punish other schools for lesser transgressions for no other discernible reason than what can only be termed capricious willfulness.

And let's not mention that the NCAA thought it proper to name Paul Dee to the Committee on Infractions. Forget the recent U of Miami allegations, which can make one nostalgic for the SMU Mustangs of the '80s; Dee had already had his school sanctioned for the egregious Pell Grant scandal on his watch before he was named to the Committee. This is the type of

college athletics professional the NCAA thinks should be handing down pronouncements on institutional ethics and values?!

Something stinks in college football, and it's not just the filthy lucre. Money is money, and the US loves and rewards people who make it, period. I can't really blame the players, who have millions of dollars dangled in front of them, for wanting to go around what can seem like draconian rules. But the institution in charge of enforcing the rules is patently incapable of its responsibility.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



rwrae72 1 week ago [in reply to ReadWriteThinkPlease](#)

Well done. Beautifully presented. Where is the cheeseburger? Nowhere to be found...

I regret using the term 'moron' in describing the author. It should have been saved for the cheeseburger, who smells like a condescending berkeley or stanford prima donna.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Stephen Kaufer 1 week ago

I do not agree with the plantation/slavery analogy. Further, I do not agree that the scholarship (which is more than just tuition and an education) is something to be taken so lightly. As someone who paid his own way, and worked while at school, a free ride would have been an incredible relief for me. For others, I can imagine it is their only access into college and to a degree. But most importantly, what the author fails to take into account is that these kids are not impressed into service, nor are they forced to play. In fact, the circumstance may more aptly be described as them being allowed to play...they are given the privilege. A privilege I was never afforded because I just do not have the physical gifts they do. I will never know the feeling of running out of the tunnel to 90,000 adoring fans cheering. I will never know the exaltation of winning a championship with 85 of my brothers on the field. I loved playing football and basketball when I was younger, and if I thought there was one chance in a thousand that I could have played for my alma mater, I would have done it gladly and for free. I never got that chance...but these kids do. I cannot speak for 100% of the players, but talking to those I knew that played, to a man, they told me how they love the game and love playing. So, how does this article, which scoffs at the scholarship, reconcile the fact that these kids get to do what they love and are allowed to go to school for free to do so? Because the schools make money. But this discussion into the money is questionable. In actuality, the author can attack the NCAA, but not the schools. As is well known, only about 15 schools actually make money on their athletic programs. I do not seem to recall a lot of stories about plantations running in the red. With that said, if the author wants money for the players, maybe he could suggest that the NCAA pay it...he makes a point about them accumulating too much revenue. But if you really took all the money the NCAA made as profit and evenly distributed among the student athletes, would it be any more than a few dollars per student per week? Plus, there is the extra question about those sports which do not generate revenue. For those who don't know...that is just about all of them except men's basketball and football. If the author's entire argument is based upon the money made, how does it address those sports that are "loss leaders" for the schools? Those kids get scholarships, too. If the system is so corrupt and solely for profit, how is it that these programs still exist? And please, do not mention Title IX. 99% of the sports which do not generate revenue were on campus long before Title 9. After reading the piece, it is clear that this article does more to play on the emotions of the reader than provide a factual basis, a reasonable alternative, or even a solution. You read this and say, "Yeah, that's wrong! Those poor kids!" But if you think about it...are they really suffering? And if paying them is the solution...how are schools going to do that? Simply stated, they're not. What will happen is that many athletic departments around the nation will close down or significantly reduce the number of teams on campus. Then what? Fewer sports, fewer players and a lot kids who would have gotten scholarships (and the educations he says are hardly compensation) now will not. No one is saying the NCAA is not a bloated system that needs to be overhauled. But the tenor of this article (treating the athletes as slaves) is based upon the presumption that they are playing sports as a job with a scholarship as the compensation; as opposed to the truth that they are doing what they love to do and they are lucky enough to be given a free education to do so.

3 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



willallen2 1 week ago [in reply to Stephen Kaufer](#)

I'll ask again; what is difficult about grasping that economic entities are acting illegally when they sell tickets and television rights to entertainment events, and then enter into agreements about what the limits should be on what is given to the individuals whose talents and efforts make the ticket sales and televisions rights sales possible?

9 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



aaron schnier 1 week ago [in reply to willallen2](#)

I'll reply again. First off, sports leagues collude with each other all the time. See, for example, the NFL salary cap. It is the nature of the business of sport, where competitive advantage needs to be limited to produce the best product.

Secondly, the athletes aren't adding very much value when it comes to ticket sales and TV deals. The SEC contract didn't go down when the last 2 Heisman winners left last year because the fan bases in the NCAA are tied to universities and not individual players. If it were players that were actually generating the money then there would be viable professional development leagues springing up everywhere to cash in on deals like the conferences receive.

Last year the Big 10 distributed \$150M+ to its member schools. If the money were in the players then people would start professional development leagues to cash in. But it's not. It's in the brand that the universities have created and it's not at all clear why players should be able to cash in on that brand more than they already are in terms of scholarships, training, networking, and publicity.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



sureshot32 1 week ago [in reply to aaron schnier](#)

You're making a lot of assumptions here, Aaron. Saying that minor league football hasn't been created because of a lack of interest is silly. There are many factors that go into the decision to start or not start something so expensive. The startup costs would be astronomical and the insurance would be through the roof as well. Plus, you don't think you'd get any cooperation from the NFL or the NCAA do you? Can you say obstruction? In addition, high school students would be taking a heck of a risk by entering some sort of minor league system that hadn't been yet established. Would they really get paid? Would they get TV exposure? Would the NFL be willing to draft guys from this developmental league?

I'd like to see someone with a lot of money start something like this. If Mark Cuban took some of his cash and started up a minor league football league, he might be quite successful indeed.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



JohnnyPat 1 week ago [in reply to aaron schnier](#)

The NFL, NHL, and NBA salary cap are the result of a compensation package collectively bargained between player's unions and ownership. There is no collusion.

2 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



willallen2 1 week ago [in reply to aaron schnier](#)

How often must it be explained to you that salary caps that arise from collective bargaining agreements with players

unions are in no way legally analogous to a cartel entering into agreements among cartel members, which place a limit on what is given a player on a unilateral basis, without the players having collectively bargained for such a limit?

2 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Joshua Perry 1 week ago

I hate the schmucks who call it a free education. The players are working full-time for it. Oh, and it's a one-year deal that could continue.

4 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



mandycat 1 week ago

Derrick Jackson, a syndicated columnist you can catch on the Boston Globe Web site, publishes his annual "Graduation Bowl" results. His statistics boil down to "The more successful a college sports team is, the smaller the number of players who actually graduate. And the graduation stats for black players are particularly dismal."

So I think the slavery analogy holds up. These kids end up with neither a pro career nor a degree, just some wasted years of their youth.

4 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



LaKid 1 week ago [in reply to mandycat](#)

Sadly, that is true. And institutions of higher education should be ashamed for letting it happen.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



aaron schnier 1 week ago [in reply to mandycat](#)

Of course, the more successful a program is the more likely it is to have players leave early to the NFL or transfer to other schools in hopes of more playing time-neither of which is reflected in the graduation rate.

So, yes, there is a problem insofar as a lot of people aren't embracing the educational opportunity provided to them. But it's not as bad as its made out to be.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



rwrae72 1 week ago

"This danger helps explain why the NCAA steps gingerly in enforcements against powerful colleges. To alienate member colleges would be to jeopardize its own existence. Long gone are television bans and the "death penalty" sentences (commanding season-long shutdowns of offending teams) once meted out to Kentucky (1952), Southwestern Louisiana (1973), and Southern Methodist University (1987). Institutions receive mostly symbolic slaps nowadays. Real punishments fall heavily on players and on scapegoats like literacy tutors."

What kind of punishment do you think USC just received? After a 4+ year investigation (really a colonoscopy) the ncaa took the word of a convicted felon over university officials. USC was not allowed to be present during the examination of the felon. One player and his family were found to have done wrong, and there was never any proof the university or anyone connected (as in a booster) was involved. A coach was given a show cause for a photoshopped picture and a two minute call to his cell phone (presumably the whole dastardly deal was explained in a voice mail). The ncaa even got the date of the call wrong.

For this the bowl ban (2 years, even though ohio state's players were not denied this "special experience"), 10 scholarships reduced for each of the next three years, 75 scholarship limit for three years, immediate transfers for juniors and seniors (free agency), no fans at practice (even though boosters were never implicated). And they did consider the TV ban but showed their fair-mindedness by ultimately deciding not to pile on.

You also failed to mention who was in charge of the USC case: Paul Dee, the infamous athletic director at Miami when their program was out of control.

How could you fail to mention this travesty?

And by the way, how many programs would be thrilled if after a 4-5 year investigation only one player's family turned up dirty?

2 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



cheeseburglar 1 week ago [in reply to rwrae72](#)

People understand you are upset about the current state of USC football and you blame the unscrupulous acts of the NCAA for your school's misfortune, (anyone else see the hilarious irony here?) but save it for the USC fan board (the readership there is far more inclined to agree with your particular brand of logic,) no need to post essentially the same comment twice.

2 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



rwrae72 1 week ago [in reply to cheeseburglar](#)

No need for you to post at all, cheeseball.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Robert Lent 1 week ago

Obviously, Division III must be shut down. Division III athletes work hard, and get no compensation at all. Why should one group be paid for their work, while another is not. The standard answer is "But Division I sports make money, while Division III sports do not!" But since when has pay for work had anything to do with whether an entity makes money? If your business makes more money, this doesn't necessarily mean you make more money. Your employer could choose to offer bonuses, but doesn't have to. And if your employer loses money, that doesn't mean you don't get paid! But that's the standard that the advocates of paying college athletes are using. If it is wrong not to pay D-I athletes, it is wrong not to pay D-III athletes.

We also have people competing for unpaid internships. These positions involve work, and people stand in line for a chance at one of them. These unpaid interns don't even have their room and board paid for. Clearly, if it is wrong not to pay D-I athletes, then unpaid internships are also wrong.

Comparing Division I athletes to slaves is absurd, because "voluntary slavery" is an oxymoron. What sort of slavery is it when people actually compete for the opportunity to be enslaved? Real slaves can't leave. College athletes can quit at any time they wish. Obviously, the college scholarship is something the players want, and they find the compensation of a college scholarship (which is quite a lot of money) adequate, or else they would not pursue it.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



David Pennington 1 week ago

Disgusting is exactly what it is. Not only should current athletes be paid and paid well. Past athletes should also be paid for their time and injuries. The NCAA, the universities and coaches and all others involved should publicly apologize following financial settlements of course.

Like Reply



Natan Pheil 1 week ago

I tend to agree with this author in regards to universities and the fraudulent NCAA essentially exploiting college athletes for huge monetary gain. Some other numbers not mentioned in this article that have recently come to light include the average value of a FBS football and basketball player are \$121,000 and \$265,000, respectively. Using those numbers, it's easy to justify paying athletes. If a university student on a full academic scholarship can make \$10/hour working as a lab tech in the chemistry dept, why can't an athlete make the same for the mandatory 20 hour practice week? Let's be honest; an additional \$800 a month is pennies compared to what the university and the NCAA makes off these athletes. I'm just astonished at the people who cry 'unfair' simply because they didn't have the talents of the athletes in question. Just because you weren't afforded such payments is not justification for why they shouldn't be either. More than that, take a step back for two seconds and realize the criminality of the whole situation.

1 person liked this. Like Reply



Stew Winkel 1 week ago

You want to pay college athletes? Fine. But then let's take away athletic scholarships for everyone. Because, really, why should scholarship money go to athletes? Colleges and universities should be about academics. So if an athlete qualifies for an academic or need-based scholarship, fine. But otherwise, pay tuition, room, board, books just like everyone else. If you want to get paid, that should be the trade-off. And no one who advocates for paying athletes should complain about that because according to all of them, a free education is worth "nothing" anyway.

College athletes don't like it, don't accept the scholarship, don't agree to abide by the rules. Go play your sport in Europe, go straight to the minor leagues. I am sick and tired of the complaining. Do you know what I would have given to a) been a college athlete and b) received a free college education? Anything. I would have given anything for that. If athletes chose not to take advantage of the free education, that is their fault.

5 people liked this. Like Reply



Stew Winkel 1 week ago

also - where does the money come from to pay athletes? I understand athletes and athletics generate millions of dollars for some schools (but not all, and not most), but tuition is off the charts already. If you are going to pay athletes, that money has to come from somewhere? If it results in a one cent raise to tuition, it can't happen.

1 person liked this. Like Reply



LaKid 1 week ago [in reply to Stew Winkel](#)

Like any business, the revenues from the sale of the business's goods or services would pay its employees. Hence, the athletic department would pay the students from the revenues received from games (TV, ticket and concession stand sales) and a pro rata share of revenues from the sale of collegiate merchandise. Most Booster organizations raise money for scholarships, so that is another source. Given how popular college sports are, especially TV broadcasts, renegotiate TV deals, using the NFL as a model.

Anyone who thinks college sports are going to go away is just plain naive.

[Like](#)[Reply](#)

Wyl McCully 1 week ago

I'm wondering where the voices of the alumni are on this one. I EARNED my degree. Allowing students to graduate while "functionally illiterate" diminishes the value of that degree. I attend Michigan State University for the quality of my education. I cheer for the Detroit Lions for the quality of their sportsmanship (ok, bad example).

I have no problem paying student athletes and find no validity in the argument that the sport will suffer should they get paid. Does anyone honestly believe the Rose Bowl would be less exciting if the kids took a share of the profits? My problem is with the student part of it. If you are going to claim that these are students, make them do the work. Earning a degree is hard work and passing "students" who wouldn't have otherwise been accepted to their elite academic program in the first place simply on the merits of their athletic performance makes a mockery of the college system.

It is insulting that someone who had teachers coerced into granting passing grades and fraudulent exam results is granted the same "rights, privileges, and immunities" (as it says on my degree) as I am.

The most disgusting part is that alumni (read boosters) are one of the biggest causes of this problem.

4 people liked this.

[Like](#)[Reply](#)

LaKid 1 week ago [in reply to Wyl McCully](#)

I agree, which is why we need to stop calling them students and call them part-time employees who take classes. And pay them. This wouldn't prevent a Miami-type situation, but might have prevented players at Ohio State trading signed shirts for tattoos.

What will prevent another Miami is changing parents' perception that throwing or catching a football will lead to riches. Solving the NCAA problem will be much easier.

[Like](#)[Reply](#)

Michael Ellsworth 1 week ago [in reply to Wyl McCully](#)

Except the "take classes" part, I'm with you. The big program should just hire athletes as athletes and end the sham. The smaller programs and all the non-revenue sports can then be independent of the stink.

[Like](#)[Reply](#)

Anthony bencivenga 1 week ago

Simple fix: Give players an option upon their recruitment. The first option would be a guaranteed four year scholarship, with the player receiving a degree at the end after they fulfill academic requirements (I would also not be against paying athletes who choose this option a small salary, either). The second option would be a one-year potentially renewable contract, where the student is an employee of the university, hired and paid specifically to play the sport. The player would not have to attend classes and would not receive a degree after their eligibility is exhausted.

It's a fact that many athletes do not want the "education" from the university they are receiving as compensation for their athletic abilities, and many are not actually receiving any education at all. Why should athletes be forced to accept compensation they don't want in exchange for doing their job (yes, it is a job considering the amount of hours coaches require players to devote to it) playing for a college team?

2 people liked this.

Like

Reply



PVlynn 1 week ago

The shame is giving coaches multiyear contracts and then after a few years having to buy them out at millions. Look at UVA who got rid of a football and a basketball coach before the contracts were up so they were paying millions to 4 coaches all in one time frame and crying about how poor the athletic department was. It is time for all college presidents to say every coach gets a two year contract - period. If they are good then contract renewed for another two years and so on. If bad they are gone and no extra money put out. Once you fix the overpaying and the multiyear aspects of the coaching contracts then look to the players.

Like

Reply



Seekonk 1 week ago

A college education is certainly valuable, but the problem is that our big time college football and basketball programs routinely bring in athletes who can't and/or don't do the course work. The under-the-table money and bogus academics is a scandal.

My prescription for dealing with corruption in major college sports is to eliminate the requirement that the players be matriculated. Make matriculation optional, and pay the players a living wage.

Run the college athletic programs like mini-sports franchises, and let the grad/under-grad business and sports-management majors manage the teams. Like hotel or aggie programs.

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



LaKid 1 week ago [in reply to Seekonk](#)

Non-matriculation during playing season or non-matriculation, period? What you are suggesting is another professional sports league run by higher education institutions, which is not their mission. And would be opposed by professional leagues, especially football and basketball. And hope you don't run afoul of anti-trust legislation in the process.

The solution is to abolish the sham called the NCAA, make student athletes students who are part-time temporary employees like graduate assistants and develop a regulatory body without conflicts of interest which will protect the interests, both academic and physical, of these employees.

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



keith dix 1 week ago

The solution is obvious: end intercollegiate athletics.

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



keith dix 1 week ago

The answer is obvious: end intercollegiate athletics.

2 people liked this.

Like

Reply



Auburn Bloz 1 week ago

Auburn is years ahead of others. They already pay their players.

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



Auburn Bloz 1 week ago

Auburn is far ahead of the rest. They pay all their players

Like

Reply



LaKid 1 week ago

Thank you, Taylor, for such such an informative article. It is time to expose the lie the NCAA perpetuates in the name of "protecting" student athletes who are nothing more than unpaid labor generating millions of dollars for the institutions they attend and the conferences their institution belongs to. How can you expect an organization - the NCAA - to realistically govern institutions whose presidents comprise its board and which receives monies from the activities of said institutions? College football in reality is nothing more than a farm league for the NFL. Unfortunately, most college players do not sign lucrative pro contracts and the graduation rate of college athletes is well below their non-athletic peers. If, if, the NCAA truly was concerned about the "student athlete", then academic performance, especially retention and graduation, should be its primary focus, not the receipt of "improper compensation" which make a player ineligible in his/her sport. The benefits the Ohio State players received pale in comparison to the millions the University received in television revenues, revenue from the sale of college merchandise and all other ways in which the university has made money from the work of its "student athletes".

It is time to abolish the hypocrisy called the NCAA and make "student athletes" what they really are, employees of the institutions they play for. Pay them a salary during the season, something comparable to what a graduate assistant receives and provide tuition waivers. And put them back in athletic dorms. Provide health and even more important, disability insurance. Allow outside employment during the off season. What scholarship athletes currently receive or might receive if compensated as employees would never come close to what the institution gets from them. I have friends, still in their 20s, who played college football, never went pro, and are experiencing physical problems because of the injuries from their playing days. And no recourse because they were students, not employees. How many of us would agree to such terms of "employment"?

Let's face it, college sports is BIG business and we should all be concerned and ashamed that 18-22 year olds are exploited in such a manner in the name of getting an education.

3 people liked this.

Like

Reply



nordenstadt 1 week ago

As the father of two student-students, I do not want to pay even higher tuition and fees to their schools to subsidize money-losing athletic programs.

Most college athletic programs lose money. Most subsidize their programs from student fees. Why all the concern for the 85 football players who do not pay tuition at the expense of the thousands who do.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Devin 1 week ago [in reply to nordenstadt](#)

What the hell's a "student-student"?

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



LaKid 1 week ago [in reply to Devin](#)

A polite word for slave

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Devin 1 week ago [in reply to LaKid](#)

I believe the NCAA euphemism for slave is "student-athlete". A "student-student" would, apparently, be the child of a misinformed doofus.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



LaKid 1 week ago [in reply to Devin](#)

Hah hah, too funny

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



sureshot32 1 week ago [in reply to Devin](#)

Student-student is probably intended to serve as juxtaposition to student-athlete... meaning his children are both "students only".

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



nordenstadt 1 week ago [in reply to sureshot32](#)

Bingo!

I didn't want to call them mere students or non-athlete-students or some such. For one thing, one ran cross-country in high school. She elected to concentrate on being a student in college.

If alumni want to subsidize college sports, ok. If the NCAA wants to mandate higher ticket prices to pay the athletes, ok. If a college wants to cut its basketball coach's salary in half to a mere \$1 million in order to fund students and that college makes money on sports, ok by me.

I do not want to pay for student-athletes with tuition and fees. Since most universities lose money on sports,

and since state support for colleges is decreasing in many places, raising tuitions is a place the money could come from.

By the way, I don't want to pay more taxes to subsidize college sports either.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



LaKid 1 week ago [in reply to nordenstadt](#)

Because the university is not earning millions of dollars from the work of those other 20,000 students. If your child developed a product that earned the university millions and didn't benefit financially, wouldn't you be mad?

Receiving a free education, if that, doesn't compare to what the university got.

2 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



nordenstadt 1 week ago [in reply to LaKid](#)

The point is the university takes money I give them for tuition and fees to subsidize sports.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Garrett Harris 1 week ago [in reply to nordenstadt](#)

Wait a second. You have two kids participating in college athletic programs that are losing money?

I don't get it. Your kids are benefiting from a subsidized program and you want that to stop?

I could understand your reluctance to pay higher fees if your kids weren't in the athletic program but...they are in the program.

I'm confused.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



jbmckay 1 week ago

To all of the commentators who are outraged that an athlete should expect anything more than a "free" education in exchange for their labor, consider that:

a) An eighteen year old running back may be NFL caliber, but there is no market to sell his labor. The NFL artificially restricts his access to the league for three years, so he has no place to play but college. If he wants to play in college, he has to give up any rights to income or compensation outside of his scholarship. A central organization, the NCAA, sets the terms of the labor-scholarship exchange, with no variation permitted between schools. Schools can compete on facilities, reputation, and other soft factors, but not on hard, monetary compensation. For most everyone I know, monetary compensation is at a very close to the top of the list when choosing where to work.

b) Playing D1 sports is a year-round, full-time job. I was recruited to play D1 soccer, not on scholarship, and was told in no uncertain terms I could not play other sports, had to practice year round, and could not take any classes that started after 1PM because that would interfere with practice. A lot of classes started after 1PM. Some student-athletes do remarkable things, and are able to excel academically and athletically - the exceptions do not prove anything. Most D1 football and basketball players do not graduate, some because they can't,

some because they don't want to.

c) Everyone else is getting paid. Some commenters have noted that if we pay players, tuition would rise for everyone else. That's nonsense. There's a reason coaching salaries at big schools are in the millions of dollars. It's because there's money available in the system for schools to spend on big sports, and the only place they can spend it on personnel is on coaching. Coaches have benefited. Good for them. Their players have not. You could pay the 85 scholarship players on a D1 football team \$1,000 a month (a lot more than I lived on in college), and the total cost would be about \$1MM a year. Subtract that from the head football coach's salary, and he still makes more than the college president, the governor, and the best professor at the school.

d) Yes, there will still be corruption in college sports, but we've made the choice as a society that we want big-time sports connected to schools, and as long as there are TV contracts, there will be a lot of money, and money breeds corruption. 80%+ of the corruption will be focused on just a couple of sports, football and basketball. There are not a lot of booster scandals in D1 swimming.

I ended up going to a DIII school, and playing two sports. Sports helped me get into a school I might not have gotten into without them. I watched D1 college basketball constantly in college (almost 20 years ago), and loved every minute of it. I don't watch it much anymore.

20 people liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



LaKid 1 week ago [in reply to jbmckay](#)

Excellent analysis. Want a job running the NCAA?

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



Unemployed_Northeastern 1 week ago [in reply to jbmckay](#)

" There's a reason coaching salaries at big schools are in the millions of dollars."

- Tuition pays for those salaries. The reason (some) coaches get paid millions, and (many) deans and presidents make several hundred thousand per year is because of decades of annual 5-7% tuition increases. That, and the highly successful practice of replacing retired, tenured profs with adjuncts who make maybe \$2000/semester.

"You could pay the 85 scholarship players on a D1 football team \$1,000 a month (a lot more than I lived on in college), and the total cost would be about \$1MM a year."

- A few months ago, the Chronicle of Higher Education (I think) ran an article that claimed that the average D-I football program LOST \$3 million per year. The reasons why universities field such teams are 1) school pride 2) alumni boosterism 3) football culture attracts many applicants.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



sureshot32 1 week ago [in reply to Unemployed_Northeastern](#)

If the TV contracts aren't directly helping to pay for coaches/ADs/assistant coaches salaries, they certainly are indirectly paying for these things. Otherwise, to paraphrase my boy Chris Rock, "Where the &^\$'s the money going?"

The Pac-12 just signed a deal that will pay each school \$21 million PER YEAR. Where's that money going? It sure isn't going to the kids!

[Like](#) [Reply](#)

**LaKid** 1 week ago

How about the penalty FSU received for students, some who were NOT athletes, cheating on an on-line exam? For a music appreciation class, no less. Neither University administrators or coaches were aware of the cheating - it was arranged by a graduate assistant. FSU self-reported when the cheating was uncovered. And had to vacate wins in all the sports the now ineligible athletes played. Which included vacating the 2007 NCAA track championship. So you punish not only the ones who cheated, but also ones who didn't. How is that fair?

And Cam Newton played an entire season, won the Heisman and national championship and we are all to believe he was not aware his father was shopping him around to the highest bidder. Give me a break.

Like

Reply

**Christopher58** 1 week ago

Great piece and extremely true right down to the rivets here. The sad truth, however, is that it doesn't stop at college athletics. Already in high schools athletes are being harassed by coaches to specialize in one sport, to join and pay for "club" teams that are almost a requirement for making the high school teams at many schools. The parents, with hopes of college scholarships or better dancing in their heads, spend months of weekends traipsing about endenturing their children to this sham world. I recently witnessed -- and this is no lie -- two girls soccer coaches try and woo an 11-year-old niece from one club soccer team to another with a quiet promise that they could waive the membership fee. Nike just signed up my high school and asked if we would put the swoosh on our website and field fences. We have lost our way as a culture in many ways. None sadder than this.

6 people liked this.

Like

Reply

**TPalaima** 1 week ago

"Educators are in thrall to their athletic departments because of these television riches and because they respect the political furies that can burst from a locker room."

"Fans and educators alike recoil from this proposal as though from original sin. Amateurism is the whole point, they say. Paid athletes would destroy the integrity and appeal of college sports. Many former college athletes object that money would have spoiled the sanctity of the bond they enjoyed with their teammates. I, too, once shuddered instinctively at the notion of paid college athletes."

Who are these 'educators' of whom Taylor Branch writes these things?

Certainly not many serious professors who are not "in the thrall to their athletics departments because of television riches." Any of them who have taken the time to read about the financing of big-time NCAA sports know that all but at most two handfuls of BCS programs lose money each year--and the most recent statistics are that those schools losing money are sapping an average of ca. \$9 million from their school budgets. And that figure is with accounting methods that do not fully track the costs of running sports programs.

And many of the same sorts of educators, i.e., serious and dedicated teachers and scholars, have long ago recognized that athletes should be paid because despite the Ministry-of-Truth-like gimmickry of the NCAA's Academic Progress Rates and Graduation Success Rates, true 6-year graduation rates are appallingly low, especially for minority athletes, and athlete-students, many of them, need a college degree to do the one thing their 'slavery' period makes them capable of doing: coaching in schools. Many faculty who have long been outspoken on the moral sins being committed by sports programs with the official support of presidents and boards of regents and trustees now see the

situation as so bad that they have given up on seeing to it that the educations athletes receive are legitimate.

Why? When the NCAA has an official regulation that athletes should be involved in sports no more than 20 hours per week, but their own surveys of student-athletes in big-time sports show them involved 35-40 hours and more and presidents and athletics directors openly admit that football and basketball players have 40-hour work weeks as athlete....

Programs could easily pay the big-time sports athletes \$15,000 per year above and beyond tuition by simply bringing coaches salaries back within the earth's atmosphere. Who signs off on coaches' salary increases? Presidents who lack the moral courage while presidents to do anything that would jeopardize their own now CEO-scale salaries and perks.

The educators of which Branch speaks are sports be-smitten faculty, often in professional schools like engineering and business, who get appointed by presidents to 'athletics councils' and the like, and the new professional class of administrators who have mostly long ago given up on defending academic principles, or even remembering what they are.

Members of the Knight Commission, particularly the ex-presidents whom Branch interviewed, are symptomatic. They have all sorts of great ideas and are outspoken once they are ex-presidents and have no more power to use or careers to risk.

Despite calls from the NCAA's president and an NCAA university presidents' panel and organizations like the Knight Commission for faculty oversight of sports recruitment, admissions, budget, I know of no campus on which these three areas are monitored by independent faculty-nominated and faculty-appointed faculty committees.

The huge salaries paid to head coaches at the Joneses of college sports, UT Austin, are paid despite the faculty council registering protests. The Longhorns Network went through without any screening and vetting by the faculty council. Likewise licensing revenues were handed over 90% to athletics without any faculty discussion or faculty vote.

So, please, let's not use broad strokes and misuse the term educator in this way.

For a 17-page detailed report on what is wrong at UT Austin see:

<http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/...>

This report is in a long line of articles, commentary pieces, questions to presidents and regents, and three years of service on the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics. Others have written Taylor-Branch style exposes of extravagant "we eat what we kill" misuse of money.

The support for doing something--so long as nobody has to do it--is broad and comes from some surprising quarters even within the administration. But again none will speak openly or act in ways that jeopardize their now ca. \$250,000 to \$623,000 salaries. And the NCAA is hopeless, because from their president on down, their excessive livelihoods and perks depend on the very football television contracts and other revenues that they are supposed to be controlling.

Foxes are not only minding the hen house, they are eating the eggs and letting most of the chickens die a slow death while a handful prosper.

6 people liked this.



Michael Ellsworth 1 week ago [in reply to TPalaima](#)

One slip up in a great piece of journalism... he should have said university and college administrators or the education establishment or another phrase.

**john chamberlin** 1 week ago

From the NYTimes of 9/4/2011--all that one needs to know about the NCAA

Letter of the Law 1, Proportion

0

By GEORGE VECSEY

“Coach, am I going to the game?”

Negative. That was how Jeremiah

Taylor learned that not only was he not playing in Marshall’s opener at West Virginia on Sunday, but he was not allowed to accompany the team to Morgantown.

Taylor, 23, ran afoul of an N.C.A.A.

rule he says he still does not understand, and has been suspended for one game.

The N.C.A.A. says it could have been worse; he could have missed the entire season.

“I have no clue,” Taylor said over the phone.

Taylor would seem to reflect one of the positive sides of college football — a father who belatedly enrolled in college before making the football team as a walk-on defensive tackle in 2010. The N.C.A.A., while trying to catch up with all the inspired chicanery in recruiting and sustenance of star players, must also keep track of the minutiae of eligibility rules.

By the N.C.A.A.’s standards, Taylor played the entire 2010 season without certifying that he had never received a salary or significant expenses while an amateur athlete.

The N.C.A.A. says it sends out an electronic form to every potential player.

Taylor said he never received one in his e-mail and was never advised he had to fill one out.

“Our fault, not the kid’s fault,” gritted Doc

Holliday, the Marshall coach, with the conviction of somebody from the rural town of Hurricane in the state residents call West, By-God, Virginia.

“It was not a clerical error,” said Stacey Osburn, the associate director of public and media relations for the N.C.A.A., who said that Taylor could have been barred for an entire season, but that because of the circumstances, the university and Taylor were being punished only one game.

The game just happens to be the intrastate opener against West Virginia, which has won

all 10 meetings between the only two Division I football programs in the Mountain State.

Holliday, who played linebacker and was later an associate head coach at West Virginia, is in his second year at Marshall,

best known for the 1970 airplane crash that wiped out the team (and was the subject of the 2006 movie “We Are Marshall”).

He has nurtured Taylor, who had worked for a telemarketing company for two years after high school, to support his fiancée and his daughter, Kyra, now 3.

Another child is on the way. Eventually, Taylor enrolled at Marshall and went out for football in the spring of his freshman year. At 300 pounds, he

earned playing time in his first season.

Last month, somebody at Marshall noticed that he had not submitted an amateur form. The person in the Marshall compliance office who handled Taylor's eligibility form is no longer working there, Holliday said.

"Yeah, it definitely is unfair," Taylor said Friday afternoon when his appeal was denied. "I never got anything in the mail."

The N.C.A.A., which last season allowed Auburn and Ohio State players under suspicion to play in big games, was all over this rather murky case. Unable to travel with the team, Taylor he said he would probably watch the game from his mother's home in nearby Ohio, and get ready for the next 11 games.

E-mail: geovec@nytimes.com

Like Reply



mediaspecialist 1 week ago

"Mens sana in corpore sano." You've got to be kidding. Not with the risk of harm that football brings to both the "mens" and the "corpore." American higher education is prostituting itself to big-money sports and corporate advertising. -(sound of athlete puking)-

2 people liked this. Like Reply



El_Superbeasto 1 week ago

There is a model for paying students who do work for universities, and it's applied every day in graduate schools all over the country. Offer free tuition and stipends. If you want to make an offer more attractive to top recruit, offer a fellowship on top of it.

Like Reply



Cathy Edwards Thompson 1 week ago

Many people commenting here know very little about the historical nature and psychological oppression of slavery. Many slaves could have just got up and walked away . . . The reason they didn't because to subject themselves to such persistent inhumane treatment was often the 'lessor of the evils that beset them' - walking could have meant being lynched, beaten into brain damage or a lifetime of physical handicap which in turn only worsened your condition as you were then a burden to an already burdened family and community. Which, IRONICALLY 400 years later is the same choice many of these black college athletes must face. To you suffer the burden of making others rich and powerful and satisfy yourself with the crumbs from their table or do you walk away and get no crumbs at all. In short, it's slavery!!! Thank you Mr. Branch for having the courage and integrity to speak truth!!!

2 people liked this. Like Reply



karll 1 week ago [in reply to Cathy Edwards Thompson](#)

Most of us are slaves to our jobs! Sure, we can up and quit but then we become a burden on our families and/or society. Instead we're accepting crumbs while the CEO gets rich. It's slavery....right???? Wrong!

Like Reply



sureshot32 1 week ago [in reply to karll](#)

This issue is much different than yours, however. At your job, you made be paid poorly, but there's no one limiting your pay. If your employer thought you were worth more, there's no rule that says he/she can't pay you more. When these kids are in school, they have strict limits as to how much they can get as far as tuition, room, board, etc. For kids whose parents are rich, it's not really a problem because their parents can easily subsidize them and help pay for their car, insurance, dates, etc. The poor kids get no such help from home.

Also, if you want to leave your job, you can easily do so and work at any other company in the world (even in the same town/same field). These college kids cannot. If they want to go to another school, there are strict rules preventing them from doing so. First off, they will automatically be ineligible for at least one year (if it's within the conference, they may sit out two seasons). In addition, many will lose that year of eligibility forever. If they are seniors... well, too bad - they're done forever. If a coach decides to leave however, there are no such restrictions. No penalties. No ill effects.

The system is rigged to support the adults and take advantage of the kids. If you support the status quo, there may be something amiss with your sense of right and wrong.

Like Reply



Gepap 1 week ago [in reply to karll](#)

You are right - those slaves actually knew they were slaves. Our masters have convinced us we aren't slaves.

Like Reply



Gully 1 week ago

Instead of paying college athletes, how about allowing them to sell their scholarship in a competitive market for cash. They get to play and make some money, someone else gets to take classes the athlete doesn't want at a competitive price.

Like Reply



aaron schnier 1 week ago

I don't recall any football players being lynched or beaten half to death for electing not to attend college or for transferring to other schools.

So...no. Just...no.

Like Reply



Me Two 1 week ago

Much ado about nothing.

Compared to other sources of income, the revenue that athletic programs generate is vastly overstated in this article when considered on a per campus basis.

I would venture to guess there aren't many more than a dozen FBS schools where their athletic departments bring in more than their student housing departments. And fewer still where the athletic revenue exceeds 15% of tuition revenue.

Finally, show me a university who's athletic department generates more revenue than the university generates in grants and contracts (research) and you'll show me a crappy research university.

For the most part, athletic revenue is used to fund the cost of athletic programs. They don't subsidize universities. Indeed, more universities than not must subsidize their athletic departments.

2 people liked this.



Mark Klone 1 week ago

[This is actually in response to aaron schnier below, but was made as its own topic for some reason.]

Excellent points, especially about the consideration that people really don't care WHO plays for the college team, it's the college team they are supporting.

Another detail that people miss when arguing memorabilia sales is that schools can't sell the likeness either. They can sell a jersey number, but they can't sell a jersey number with a name on it. Go to any school's shop, and see if you find anything. You won't. I went to Florida's and the only one they sell is a Tebow jersey, but they didn't start doing that until AFTER he left. There are also logistical issues to consider. In most cases, numbers are shared. Offensive player A is the starting QB and wears number 12. Defensive player B is a 4th string DB and wears number 12. Since no names are on the backs, should Player A receive the revenue for selling a #12 jersey purchased by Player B's family? The family member is clearly NOT buying the jersey because it is Player A's jersey.

Another thing to consider. Just this past weekend, Desmond Howard was honored at Michigan. He wore number 21. If you watched gameday, his family was decked out in the throwback #21 jerseys that were produced FOR THAT GAME. They clearly did not purchase the #21 jerseys for whoever the current #21s are, but rather for Desmond. So who gets that revenue?

Again, for 99% of the jersey sales, it's pretty clear whose jersey is being purchased, but if you are going to pay players for the merchandise they sell, then you have to be 100% clear and accurate on who receives the revenue.



toolong 1 week ago

Tl;dr



[Hector Miranda](#) 1 week ago

Actually, Bush did not return the Heisman Trophy. He pre-empted the Heisman Trust by stating he would return it; no doubt wanting to avoid being 'the only person ever stripped of a Heisman Trophy.' But, he has never returned the actual trophy to the the Heisman Trust.



rwrac72 1 week ago [in reply to Hector Miranda](#)

He should keep it. He won it on the field. If he has to return it, which other winners deserve to keep theirs? The Heisman Trust acted shamefully and buckled to public pressure. The hatred towards Bush and USC was intense. I'm not apologizing for the actions of him and his family (couldn't they wait another year to cash in?) but really he became a scapegoat for all that is wrong with college football.

And there is no proof USC knew anything about his family's "business" dealings. If the ncaa says they should have known, hen Auburn should have known about Scam Newton. Why does he get to keep his Heisman?

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



Sanford Sklansky 1 week ago

Even though few college athletes football and basketball make it to the pros, the pro leagues are basically using the colleges as a minor league system. To a lesser extent so is baseball and hockey. Maybe the professional sports leagues should throw a little cash to college athletes as well.

Like

Reply



clifc 1 week ago

Mens sana in corpore sano. What a joke. And along that line here's something from "Athletic Business", 1/21/11:

"An NCAA survey has found that student-athletes spend more time on sports preparation than on academic study, the latest evidence that being a college jock is a full-time job.

Conducted last year and released at last week's NCAA Convention in San Antonio, Texas, the survey found that football players at the FBS level say their sport consumes an average 43.3 hours of their time per week (including time spent playing games, practicing, training and in the training room), compared to 38 hours on academics.

And football players aren't alone. The breakdown for Division I baseball players was even more lopsided — 42 hours devoted to baseball, 32 to academics. Basketball came closest to something resembling balance, with men's players reporting 39 hours per week devoted to the sport, and 37 to academics, while women reported a breakdown of 37½ and 39.

These numbers appear to make a mockery of the NCAA's 20-hour rule, adopted in 1991 to limit demands on athletes' time so they can be students, too . . ."

I guess athletes never get to party with their nose to the grindstone like that. I've known people who've worked full-time while going to college full-time. And long ago I was able to 'enjoy' that kind of schedule myself for a semester. Not nice. So I can see why academic accomplishment would be suffering. I can also see how much the schools are asking from those who are excelling not just athletically but academically. It's not very fair.

The right thing for the NCAA to do is actually enforce its 20 hour per week rule. But, once again, the boosters wouldn't like that and it will never happen.

4 people liked this.

Like

Reply



Will_Tulsa 1 week ago

The shame of college sports just like the shame of the college student loan program is a symptom. The president of Harvard asked some good questions in a 2009 NYT column titled "The University's Crisis of Purpose."

As the world indulged in a bubble of false prosperity and excessive materialism, should universities — in their research, teaching and writing — have made greater efforts to expose the patterns of risk and denial? Should universities have presented a firmer counterweight to economic irresponsibility? Have universities become too captive to the immediate and worldly purposes they serve? Has the market model become the fundamental and defining identity of higher education?

But the Harvard professor Harvey Cox gets closer to the core of the problem.

Whether the money is charged as rubles or pesos or dollars or francs is irrelevant. It is money, any money, that makes these magic carpets fly.

And religion? Where is God?

At Logan airport in Boston there is a niche thoughtfully set aside for the divine. Squeezed into a side corridor, not far from where the lost luggage can be sought, the footsore traveler can say a prayer to Our Lady of the Airways. The chapel is modern, almost chic, trying its best not to look to anachronistic in its improbable setting.

As we sit here waiting, somehow both impressed and intimidated by what is around us, we also know in our innards why this world has cracked. We discover that despite the ordered, soft-pedaled ambience of the waiting area, we occasionally have the impulse, like Dostoyevsky's man from the underground, to smash it all up, or at least overturn an ashtray. But we also know we do not need to. As we look around we realize that despite its subtle suggestion of permanence this terminal is already decomposing, that its quiet assurance of competence and efficiency cannot deliver what it promises.

We know that here before us the five pillars of modernity are being eaten from the inside.

Like Reply



Dirk 1 week ago [in reply to Will Tulsa](#)

The "apparent" world is the only one. The "true" world is only added by a lie. -Nietzsche

Churches and mosques are as much a waste of money as the NCAA.

Like

Reply



Peter McIlhon 1 week ago

They ARE compensated now. But tuition is the equivalent to Health benefits or a 401k. The next logical step to eliminate these "NCAA infractions" is to change the definition of what an infraction is. Paying them eliminates a large portion of these highly publicized infractions. Of course not all athletes will be paid the same. Football players will most likely be paid more than baseball players and so on and so forth. Paying them is the smartest option.

1 person liked this.

Like

Reply



JohnL7 1 week ago [in reply to Peter McIlhon](#)

Agreed. The issue was clinched for me when Nick Saban made the statement about agents that Branch quotes in the article. Any system that allows Nick Saban, with a straight face, to call someone else out as a pimp just for trying to earn what the market will bear has got to be corrupt.

Also, for the reasons some of the athletes have posted, the education that D1 athletes receive is often not going to be the same education received by students paying full tuition or getting other forms of aid. I would think that only an unusually talented and/or motivated athlete could get the most out of the school academically with all the demands that D1 athletics puts on him.

Like

Reply



kate4114 1 week ago

Simply start by allowing colleges to provide the "full cost of attendance" as they do with many other scholarships rather than the oppressive "grant in aid" which forces the sale of mementos and trinkets, which causes "rule" violations. Heavens, just the money saved from bloated enforcement staffs would pay the difference. No, we can't all afford it, but then we can't all afford to pay Nick Saban either (thank goodness)!! What happened in the White v. NCAA anti-trust case?? One chance in a million to make corrections and they got sold out. . again!

Like

Reply



nordenstadt 1 week ago [in reply to kate4114](#)

If we did that, the colleges would lie about the "full cost of attendance." Check the websites of various colleges today. Some minimize the number to make it look cheaper. Some maximize it to make their sticker price look higher. There seems to be no rationale.

Like

Reply



Treespider 1 week ago

So if we pay an athlete does that now make them an employee of the institution who is subject to being fired for poor performance just like

the coach?

My understanding is that once an athlete accepts a scholarship assuming they can maintain their academic standing, the athlete is entitled to the benefits of the scholarship for the duration of their college "career".

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



J.J. Zucal 1 week ago [in reply to Treespider](#)

My understanding is that a "four-year" scholarship is actually one-year scholarships which are renewable. Academic standing is one consideration for renewal; yet there have been too many non-renewals due to injuries.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



tjcUNC 1 week ago [in reply to Treespider](#)

Perhaps you should read the entire article, or even the first couple of pages where the example is given of an athlete denied scholarship in his fifth year such that he then had to finish his college education on his own dime.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



tjcUNC 1 week ago

I hope Mark Cuban has read this. If as is rumored, he is considering investing \$500 m of his own money to develop a college association in competition with the NCAA, the playbook is right here. As much as do not like Cuban, the NCAA makes him look like a peach of a guy.

1 person liked this. [Like](#) [Reply](#)



Chuck Hoover 1 week ago

Simple fix for all of this. The NFL and NBA must take a larger role. At a minimum, create viable minor league systems as have baseball and hockey. This allows players that have no desire to be in college another option. I know this will have consequences for collegiate athletics. But it needs to start somewhere.

[Like](#) [Reply](#)



dsivesind 1 week ago

One point I have not seen is that as long as our society focuses so greatly on money, and we have corrupt people just about everywhere, changing the system will not fix anything. It would likely just change who is skimming the money.

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