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How much is Enough?

Could you imagine a life of playing a sport for a living? How, hitting a ball, or shooting a basket could make you millions upon millions. This is a reality that is very true within our lives today. Professional athletes are paid tons of money to play the sport that they love. Can we blame them for working hard enough to earn this right? Every person has a different view on this topic. Some people believe that athletes are paid way too much for their job. The sports are losing flare due to the rising ticket prices. This is shown in the way Mr. Seib writes about baseballs problems.

Baseball's problems-most of them rooted in the economics of modern sports have diminished the quality of the game and the loyalty of its fans. As baseball executives ponder the further expansion, as players' salaries continue to soar and as minorities turn to other sports, big league baseball seems increasingly distant from its sandlot roots.

(Seib 1)

This is what most fans are feeling with most sports, not just baseball. This causes the teams to lose fans because the game isn't played hard anymore. They have earned it and deserve that money. Mr. Yost describes this when he says, "Peyton Manning [...] signed a \$99.2 million contract for seven years that included a \$34.5 million signing bonus and performance bonuses that could earn him an extra \$19 million." (Yost 21). Peyton Manning is arguably the best quarterback in the NFL. He has won the MVP and has set many records for the position. He has

earned his pay check by fulfilling exactly what the organization needed. Sports are a part of our culture and aren't going to disappear. No matter how much the player or the organization that manages sports will stay. The talk of homerun race between Mark McGwire, and Sammy Sosa of 1997 was one that will be unforgettable. The race brought back memories of Babe Ruth and Roger Maris (Seib 1). This reminds us of the past and how sports used to be and how we can still connect with those roots. Sports have a weird way of bringing our nation together as one. We as a nation will always be able to be brought together by sports. This controversial topic of whether athletes' are paid too much will be explored through the athletes view, their performance, and their benefits to the organization.

The athletes need this job just like everyone else needs a job. The athletes are trying to support their families, and this is the same as other families. They are trying to find the best way to support them for their futures as well as there own. The athletes are going to do whatever the best opportunity for them is and they don't care what others think. How is this any different than other providers to families? Can we really blame them for taking advantage of their talents and opportunities? Not all athletes are paid the multi-million dollar deals. Some of them are paid well, but not multi-million dollar deals. All sports have problems with money and it is evident when Mr. Seib states, "Baseball's problems are from money. Salaries increase, pushing the organizations, and fans to pay more. In 1969 the average salary of a Professional Baseball player was \$24,909. In 1998 the average salary was \$ 4 million. However each team has a different average and pay roll" (Seib 2). The pay role has increased dramatically over the years. This is because of the demand for the great players, and inflation. This is because inflation has continued to grow skewing data, making it seem like there was a huge jump in the amount of money players were paid. It is stated, "The federal rate was changed in 2009 and can be changed

only by an act of Congress. Because of that high hurdle, over the last 40 years the inflation-adjusted value of the minimum wage has eroded dramatically” (A Bare...2). For many years the money has been increasing for everyone not just for professional athletes. Yes, Athletes salaries did increase more, but some of it was due to inflation. Players don't always just play for money to support their families, some play for the love of the game like Mr. Ching. “Left unprotected in the expansion draft, Ching spent the most difficult months of his career waiting for the Dynamo to reacquire him. Then he sacrificed almost half his guaranteed \$450,000 salary in 2012 to complete the trade” (Ortiz 1). Ching, an amazing soccer player, turned down half of his salary to play for the love of the game and for the team that he loved. He did this because he is soon to retire. Also he has given the organization breathing room for the salary cap and to pick up other players. Coach Kinnear of the Dynamo states, “We have two roster spots available, and we have what amounts to a very reasonable amount of salary-cap space in which to go out and sign impact players” (Ortiz 2). He had the whole team in mind and not just himself.

This is the players Job, just like how my Father's job is being a sales manager. Can we blame them for doing something they love? They had a dream and they have worked hard to fulfill that. They have worked their whole lives to have a job that they love, and should they take the blame for how much they make. Ms. Kim believes that we shouldn't blame them, “Pro athletes aren't completely to blame. Team owners often charge more than \$100 per ticket, and fans line up to shell out the money. The situation makes fools out of all of us – except those who are laughing their way to the bank” (Kim 2). This logic makes complete sense and everyone should understand that it isn't just the players. The players want the money yes, but they aren't saying we have to have this amount of money. The organization needs the players more than the player needs the organization. That is why the players are paid so much.

They must perform just like every job must. Yes they will be paid their salaries that their contract states. Although, if they want more money they must fulfill performance based tasks, “Manning also broke a number of the NFL’s most impressive personal records: Most Touchdown passes in a single season: 49 Highest passer rating in a single season: 12 1 Four touchdowns or more in 5 consecutive games Five touchdown passes in 4 different games in less than 12 months” (Yost 23). This shows just how important these players are and how they earn everything. Players like Manning are not always paid straight up; they earn some of their pay just like a sales person on commission. These players also have the threat of being cut or losing some of their salaries if they are not performing. Athletes put everything they have into their craft. Some players put off having a family so they can work hard at their job to really make their dreams come true. Tim Tebow has done this even with having a girlfriend. He claims he doesn’t have time for some, on the other hand, have families, but it puts even more stress on their job of whether being cut. “Sports stars who put their heart and soul into their craft deserve what they earn. When we watch them hone their talents, we’re all inspired to work harder in our own fields. Hard work builds character and inspires kids to be their best and follow their own dreams” (Kim 2). They put everything they have into it. Why is this different than what CEO’s earn? Players often do work that goes unnoticed, “The average NFL football player, for example, makes roughly, \$770,000 a year. Plenty of athletes don’t receive recognition of tutoring kids, helping victims of natural disasters, and building homes for the poor in their spare time” (Kim 2). Players at the amateur level do this as well. Why aren’t they paid for this hard work? Players work hard on and off of their fields. Players are always working, whether this is on their job, donating money, or giving back.

Winning is the most important part of an organization with professional athletes. When a team wins a championship they will make more money off of fan base. This is true, but how do you win a championship? “Tom Schieffer, president of the Texas Rangers, sees a have and a have-not hierarchy among the 30 major league teams. ‘I think you have a Big 10, Little 20, scenario,’ He says. ‘What worries almost everybody in baseball is how do we make the teams competitive’” (Seib 2). This is a great way to explain what happens within our world of sports. Yes, the players want this money but the organization wants the players so badly they are willing to pay that money. “No single player can make or break a team, but when a team makes a wholesale purchase of free agents, an also-ran can become a contender” (Seib 3). This basically means if I get that big name player we can still win. The organization will make more money, and when you have a great player on your team other players want to play with that athlete. This causes athletes to want to be on that team, which puts that team in contention for winning a championship. Teams will do whatever it takes to get that big name player, even if it means more money. However, some teams will not follow society. “I don’t care what all you scouts say. I’m not going to build my team around multi-millionaire superstars any more; I’m going with scrappy unknowns!” (Zaillian). This is huge because it shows how some organizations don’t have the money so they must find a way to win in other ways. The organizations need some players so badly they will make outrageous deals. This is shown through the deals that passed this winter for two baseball stars. “No other free-agent position player came within \$50 million of the deals that Albert Pujols and Prince Fielder signed this winter...No other free-agent came within \$100 million” (Onley 1). This is the kind of player a team needs to have to make more money, and to win a championship. That is why they were willing to pay that kind of money.

Building a fan base is extremely important. For every organization to be profitable they need a fan base. This is needed for more than just the organizations, but for fans and players as well. "Income comes from many components, but it mainly comes from the fan base. Schieffer states, 'revenues come from fans and then turn into contracts'" (Seib 2). This is huge part of sports to keep them going. Without fans prices go up driving fans away, and the organization will not have the money to pay the big athletes. Ultimately, if the organizations didn't have fans, we wouldn't have professional sports. We have whole days dedicated to sports with a whole television network for them. Money, every organization needs more. Not, only are the athletes making tons of money, but so are the organizations. "In 1997, paid attendance was the second highest ever (exceeded only by 1993). Also, players' salaries totaled more than \$1 billion for the first time while baseball's gross revenues exceeded \$2 billion" (Seib 9). This is outrageous the organizations are making a gross income of \$1 billion more than what the players make. With great players, great marketability and the ability to pull money are added to the organization. "On one hand, Manning certainly is more marketable than ever as a two-time Super Bowl winner, and as his current deals expire, he will be able to command more money to renew" (Best 1). This is the best for both parties the athlete makes more money, but so will the organization.

Are professional athletes paid too much? The answer to this question is strictly personal opinion. Athletes are paid amazing sums of money to play a sport. This seems wrong for athletes to make this amount of money. Although, they have earned the right to make that amount of money just like CEO's have earned the right to earn money and own their company. From the athletes and the organizations view, they players are not paid too much. This is because due to their performance the athletes have earned the money. From fans perspective athletes are paid

too much. Fans don't see how they could earn an amount of money that high. Are professional athletes paid too much?

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