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The Experience of College Football and Effects on the Player

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Abstract:

The objective of this thesis will be to analyze the experience of college football and the impacts it has on the player. The main research of this thesis will be to see how playing in college affects the athlete in three major areas of his life. The areas that will be discussed in this thesis will be how the athlete is affected physically, socially, and financially. This thesis will help show the public how much a single sport that athletes have been playing years in college. It truly takes control of their entire life in almost every facet of their lives. This will help show how the student-athlete is more than just a football player for the university but a valued commodity for their respective universities.

Key Words:

College football, Concussions, Social, Scholarships, Athlete.

In America people are consumed with athletics. People have been engaged in various sports since many were young children. Many families have raised their children through involvement of athletics. Athletics offer countless benefits; they can be an outlet for physical activity, and help foster development of camaraderie and competition. Casual interaction with sports begins at a young age for many. For some the premise of sports arises from playing in the streets to dreaming of becoming a success and playing a sport professionally. Most Americans have some interaction with sports and athletics; whether it is from leisure to competitive levels. According to dictionary.com sport is defined as “a contest or game in which people do certain physical activities according to a specific set of rules and compete against each other” (Merriam-Webster). This definition helps explain the various details that encompass the world of sports.

The range of sports is extensive, and ever changing and expanding. It is effortless to discuss sports as a whole; however for this paper the specific sport and all of its complicated facets of football will be discussed at length; more specifically Division 1 College Football. Football is arguably the most recognized sport in America. Children engage in the sport when they are just two and three years old, some carry a football from then on. Some boys slowly progress into full contact football by the time they reach fourth and fifth grade, some areas the age is even younger. Full contact football is when a player wears the typical equipment and intense physicality is allowed. Many children grow up idolizing their favorite football players as they watch them on TV. They wear the jerseys, and try to replicate their favorite player’s moves or actions. Americans are fortunate enough that football is offered in such a wide range of outlets from Pop Warner Football to Middle School Football Teams, and moving to High School and College football and eventually professionally. This country has football instilled in their lives at all ages. The sport tries to encompass everybody involved: from the players, coaches,

cheerleaders, the bands, the families, friends, and loyal sport spectators, to fandoms of a wide range (casual fans to intense fans). It is obvious football plays a significant role for many people, it is a game that offers athletes the chance to progress and move on to the next level as they grow.

Many young boys are first exposed to playing football at a young age, and then are able to be a part of an American tradition known as “Friday night lights”; that term refers to the games played under the lights. Many young boys begin their passion for the game by watching older boys in the local high school; where they hope and dream to be on that same field in the future. Their imagination runs wild dreaming of one day playing under those glowing lights, with a crowd chanting their name sends goosebumps down their back. Once Friday night is over we are fortunate enough to do all over again, and now kids do not even have to leave the comfort of their house. Kids are watching football on TV. One can spend an entire weekend planning to watch the various levels of football. Starting off on Saturday, watching their favorite college team play. There is not just one game; in a single day all across the nation there are hundreds of teams playing; through all hours starting in the wee hours of the morning until the late night hours. Luckily for young boys, if they have not had their fill of football; there is one more day left in the weekend, Sunday when the games and names get bigger when the professionals play. It is clear boys are given a chance to have football engulf their entire weekends. This creates that amazing dream of many aspiring football players to see just how important the game is too many; the dream to possibly play at each level and grow and grow to hopefully one day be the one on TV, to be the one who others wear their jersey number, the one who can say they made it. That idea of an opportunity drives boys to play and compete the hardest they can in hopes of having a chance at playing in college and possibly in the National Football League.

It is now evident that some people will want to compete and try to be a success in football, specifically college football. According to studies conducted by the National Federation of State High School Associations, they announced “that 1,122,024 participated in high school football in 2014 and of that 90,136 go on and play Division 1 Football “(Scholarship Stats). This statistic demonstrates how being able to play Division 1 College Football, is considered quite a difficult task to accomplish. Those who are able to be involved in college football are seen as privileged, few and far in between. The select few who are able to experience the dream of playing college football is limited. Most of the population cannot fathom what it means to play college football, and the toll it takes on the athlete. Viewers only see the positive side and that there can be no problems associated with the sport. Professional football players are seen as an idol on game day. The limited amount of the athletes in spotlighted during the game; however games are a small portion of the piece that builds the football experience puzzle. Speaking from firsthand experience the actual game is tiny part of playing Division 1 College Football; significant amounts of time and effort goes into the preparation before the game, and not to mention fulfilling the other obligations that the student athlete faces.

These demands are very stressful and time consuming for the student athlete. There are various roles that the athlete must fit into: social, academic, and athletic. Student athletes face challenges that many other typical college students do not have to deal with. Some of these experiences that most others will never deal with in their entire lives. At the conclusion of this paper an understanding will be presented of the effects of playing Division 1 College Football in three main components of the athletes life: physically, socially, and financially.

In order to understand how an athlete is affected physically, socially, and financially, some background is needed to better understand what the typical college football player might

experience. The student athlete has a limited amount of time when they are actually off. One is when the team is not competing in the off season. Then the actual season when they are able to display their talents on Saturdays for all to watch and admire. Both parts of the year are very demanding and require great time management.

The season segment starts depending on the team's first contest. The NCAA rules that football is allowed to have "40 units of practice before the first game" (NCAA). This means teams are allowed to start their season officially 40 days before their first games. This is where people will call that period fall camp or preseason. This is a time where the student athlete is strictly focused on Football and nothing else; because there is no school at this time the athlete can give their undivided attention and dedication to preparing for the football season to come. The NCAA has a lot of rules on the number of practices, and what types of practices are allowed. They state that a "team cannot have two practices a day on consecutive days" (NCAA). There must be a rest period of three hours between two practices on the same day. Unfortunately there is not much rules on meeting times or non-practice activities that make up a lot of the day during the preseason segment of the season. A typical day of training season starts around 6:30 AM with a team breakfast. Then the whole day is completely full of football activities. Going to position meetings to meet with coaches to review film, to viewing the opponent's film for the first game. Then after meetings the team goes to the weight room, for a lift and sometimes conditioning as well. Lifting is based on a schedule and focusing on gaining strength for the season. Conditioning varies based on goal for the season. It may be to become quicker, it may be to lose weight, it may be to increase endurance. The day continues with a team walk thru, which basically is a way to get around the NCAA by sneaking in an extra practice that is called a "walk-thru". It is now lunch time and right after lunch it is time for the actual practice. Once

practice is over there is treatment for the athletes to get their bodies ready for another day. Then the team has more meetings going over new rules, and the player manuals and expectations for the season. The day ends around 9:00 PM and repeats for about 3 to 4 weeks depending on when the team's first game is. The schedule is grueling and demanding.

The next part of the season moves into the actual season. This is when each college football team has a game each week, playing 12 regular season games, with one bye week. A bye week, is when your team is off for a game. The regular season is where teams have practice four days a week Monday through Thursday. Each practice varies on the level of intensity, depending on what day of the week. Usually practices are more physically demanding earlier in the week and tone down as Saturday approaches. College teams also have meetings throughout the week, which vary in time, and when to review practice and prepare for Saturday's game. The third part of the preparation is the weightlifting. Most college teams lift 2 to 3 times per week to maintain strength and perform at their very best on Saturdays. Fortunately the NCAA put in rules for how much a team can do football related activity each week while school is in session. They state that "Student-athletes may not participate in countable athletically related activities for more than: In Season for Four hours per day 20 hours per week" (NCAA). These rules only consider countable hours so what really is considered countable? To better understand what really is countable the NCAA states what is considered countable and it states:

Practices (not more than four hours per day). Athletics meetings with a coach initiated or required by a coach (e.g., end of season individual meetings). Competition (and associated activities, regardless of their length, count as three hours). Field, floor or on-court activity. Setting up offensive and defensive alignment. On-court or on-field activities called by any member of the team and confined primarily to members of that

team. Required weight-training and conditioning activities. Required participation in camps/clinics. Participation outside the regular season in individual skill-related instructional activities with a member of the coaching staff. Recruiting activities (e.g., student host). Discussion or review of game films. Participation in a physical activity class for student-athletes only and taught by a member of the athletics staff (e.g., coach).

These are items that are considered countable to the 20 hour rule. A survey was conducted and “Football players said they spent an average of 43.3 hours on their sport — playing games, practicing, training and in the training room — compared with 38 hours on academics” (Wieberg). This study just shows how demanding the sport is on the college football player. Also travel days are not countable, because some teams travel 6 - 8 hours on a Friday for the game on Saturday. The players are looking at over a seventy hour work week for more than 12 weeks in one semester.

This describes the very busy lifestyle of a college football athlete during their championship segment of their year. There is one thing as stated above that is all the required football activity that is demanded upon each college football player. The student part cannot be forgotten. The NCAA rules that “In Division I, student-athletes must complete 40 percent of the coursework required for a degree by the end of their second year. They must complete 60 percent by the end of their third year and 80 percent by the end of their fourth year” (NCAA). This is very demanding towards the athlete, this means they cannot take easy classes and all 100 level classes while in college each class they take must fit in with their major. Also in order to participate in collegiate athletics the athlete must be enrolled as full time student. In order to be considered full time a student must be in 12 hours to stay eligible. This means on top of their 20 hours of countable football related activities they must fulfill the demands of a full time college

student enrolled in 12 hours of classes. A regular student is expected to be “spending roughly 30 hours of study time and 15 hours in class. This 45 hours is the equivalent of a full time job – the reason that a student is called a full time student” (College Parents of America). Showing how just college alone is a full time job, put in the hours towards football and it is like 60-70 hours a week for the athlete. “All Division I student-athletes must earn at least six credit hours each term to be eligible for the following term and must meet minimum grade-point average requirements that are related to an institution’s own GPA standards for graduation”(NCAA). This means the athlete must pass half of his hours to remain eligible for the next season.

Now that the football player competed in the championship segment of the year, the athlete now moves into the off-season. It is clearly a big difference from competing during the season but still has a lot of required football obligations during this time. The NCAA allows up to 8 hours of countable football related activities they state these activities are countable:

Required weight training and conditioning activities supervised by an athletics department staff member. In football, participation in up to two hours per week of watching and reviewing films. Any voluntary athletically related activity in which the student-athlete chooses to participate (does not count in the eight hours) (e.g., initiated by student-athlete, no attendance taken, and no coach present). Participation in a physical fitness class conducted by a member of the athletics department staff. (National Collegiate Athletic Association)

This shows that the student athlete does have more time to focus on school in the off season but still has football obligations he must attend to in order to keep his scholarship. Now

that the segments of the school year are broken down into in season and off season how football does affect the student athlete physically, socially, and financially.

The physical demands to play football are very strenuous. The game of football requires athletes to be in their best shape of their lives in order to perform at the highest level, and have the ability to beat their opponent. The players train so much they are able to have excellent cardio and muscular strength. The benefits of training and playing the game of football include great physical benefits. Football players perform “An overall workout with the intensity and range of movements involved in the game, including kicks, twists, turns and throws, provide better overall exercise, according to a series of studies. The sustained, stop-start nature of the game helps to build long-term fitness and burn fat, as it mimics interval training” (Health Fitness Revolution). The training done for football is a type of training that not many people will ever do or receive. College football players enjoy the benefits of having strength coaches that have master degrees in weight training. Where non-football players do not receive that benefit anywhere else. Another great benefit of playing football is the mental health aspect of playing college football. “Football is great at helping to maintain a healthy level of endorphins and can make moods more stable. People suffering from symptoms of depression and anxiety can often use exercise to help alleviate symptoms and naturally lift dark moods. Football also promotes social integration, which also adds its own feel-good factor” (Health Fitness Revolution). As demonstrated in the quote the positive mood boost that football has is an added benefit. “Football at any level requires a great deal of running, jumping and quick changes of direction. The game is an excellent form of aerobic and anaerobic exercise” (Health Fitness Revolution). The great aerobic exercise gives the athletes a high level of cardio endurance. Football always keeps the athlete active and moving, this adds great benefits to engage in the cardiovascular

system, increased longevity, as well as reduced susceptibility to heart disease, osteoporosis, diabetes and other chronic disease This cardio is essential to the athlete to play at the highest level especially in the fourth quarter of the game. “Football combines periods of slow and fast movement with added bouts of sprinting. This makes the heart work at different paces and not just at a constant elevated level.”(Health Fitness Revolution). The way football players train is very dynamic and follows a style called interval training which gives the athletes even more benefits of being physically fit. “The excitement of the game itself, people sometimes don’t even notice that they are also getting a good workout. This will stop them from getting bored and giving up, which is what most sedentary people give as their main excuse for not exercising” (Health Fitness Revolution). The overall enjoyment is another positive and gives the players the edge over other people working out just for overall fitness. Another aspect that helps the body from playing football is the “increased bone density and mass. Football players are usually required to have a high protein and carbohydrate diet because the sport is so vigorous and requires them to be strong. The strength training exercises help with increased mass and bone density, which reduces the risk of bone and joint related diseases as you get older” (Health Fitness Revolution).

The game of football is a physical game, and has become more violent and gruesome as the athletes have learned new ways to get stronger and people are evolving into just naturally stronger people. This results in more physical injuries on the body. One major injury that arises from football is concussions. “Concussion is a form of traumatic brain injury that has been defined as a “trauma-induced alteration in mental status that may or may not involve loss of consciousness.” Terms such as getting a “ding” or getting your “bell rung” are sometimes used as colloquialisms for concussion, but inappropriately downplay the seriousness of the injury”

(Christine M. Baugh). The rise of concussions is a growing concern within the game of football. “Concussion accounted for a significant percentage of total injuries among athletes participating in collegiate football (8%) during the 2002-2003 season” (Michael McCrea). This number shows how common concussions are in the college football. Players who suffer a concussion are faced with severe after effects once receiving a concussion.

Complex cascade of ionic, metabolic, and physiological events that can adversely affect cerebral function for several days to weeks. Concussive brain injuries trigger a pathophysiological sequence characterized earliest by an indiscriminate release of excitatory amino acids, massive ionic flux, and a brief period of hyperglycolysis, followed by persistent metabolic instability, mitochondrial dysfunction, diminished cerebral glucose metabolism, reduced cerebral blood flow, and altered neurotransmission. These events culminate in axonal injury and neuronal dysfunction. Clinically, concussion eventuates in neurological deficits, cognitive impairment, and somatic symptoms.

Concussions are very serious and studies have shown that once a first concussion happens the likeliness to have another concussions goes up greatly. “football players with a history of 3 or more previous concussions were 3 times more likely to sustain an incident concussion than those with no concussion history” (Kevin Guskiewicz). This is very scary to see that concussions are a recurring injury not just during the entire career of playing football but within the same season. “1 in 15 players with a concussion may have additional concussions in the same playing season and that these re-injuries typically take place in a short window of time (7-10 days) following the first concussion” (Kevin Guskiewicz). This shows the severity of the injury and how once diagnosed and once the athlete tries to come back he may suffer from another one within a short period of time when returning to play. This injury is a major issue to

the athlete and really affects the physical and mental body of the athlete. Concussions are not the only issues that arises from playing football. The great demands of the season makes the body not perform as high as it did before the season started a studied conducted by the National Strength and Conditioning found that “significant decreases in the bench press and significant decreases in flexibility and vertical jump. The standing long jump and 20-yard shuttle run showed decreases in performance. Maximal anaerobic capacity basically remained unchanged while aerobic power increased by almost 6 %”(Bart Arnold). This decline in strength and agility shows the grueling demands causes the players to not be at their best as the season goes on which is very interesting because at the end of the season is when the players are expected to play at their highest level in the championships and playoffs. This requires athletes to endure the fatigue and mental toughness to play through the aches and pains to finish the season.

There both positives and negatives towards the physical component of the athlete playing college football. It is just one aspect that is being analyzed seeing how the athlete is impacted socially will now be examined to just see how football impacts the athlete socially.

Being a player within football, brings an experience that is special to those involved in the game; many cherish the experience. This experience puts the athletes on a pedestal especially at the college level when they get as much media time as the professionals. This category of few and elite effects the athlete how they interact socially. They are socially sculpted by playing college football.

The game of football helps project the idea of what is masculinity. Young males are able to show their physical stature off in a competition against another male that is trying to do the same thing. The winner of the game shows they are more masculine than their opponents. “The sport of football embraces and embodies traditionally masculine ideals like competition,

aggression, domination, independence, this sport provides a myriad of opportunities to explore norms of masculinity” (Jesse Steinfeldt, Matthew Steinfeldt). America has created a mindset that football players should live up to the definition of a “true” masculine figure. When a team wins those players are considered more superior and more “manly” while the losing team is criticized and considered not as masculine because they lost the game they compete in. Living in a world of social norms and how certain genders should act and portray themselves college football goes against those ideologies of antisocial behaviors like “intimidation, risking injury to opponent, cheating, intentionally injuring opponent on the field of play” (Jesse Steinfeldt, Matthew Steinfeldt). College football goes against all norms of how a male should act and goes against the typical definition of a gentleman. Merriam Webster defines gentleman as “a man whose conduct conforms to a high standard of propriety or correct behavior” (Merriam Webster). This definition goes against what a college football player represents when playing the game of football. The players shows more barbaric actions opposed to a gentleman. This raises the question how can Americans look at college football players as noble people and expect them to be socially appropriate when they are off the field when they are expected to show barbaric and manly actions on the field but be perfect gentleman once they are off the field and fit into the social norms. It is another aspect of college football players they must perfect, to show two different personalities on and off the field; and off the field are expected to show both complete opposite personalities perfectly when one or the other is expected to be displayed.

College football players also display a very interesting characteristic that not many people may think about when they see their favorite teams on TV, when they run out all looking together in one uniform ready to play against their opponent. Those players inside the helmet are all different. They are on one team but all come from different walks of life with different

backgrounds and different ethnicities. When there is racial tension at times. Everyone expects these young men to forget about racial barriers, and different backgrounds and work together to beat up on their opponent and lead their team to victory. So does college football show how to work together in a very social world and work together for a common goal and go against all odds and work together to win? “In 2002 it has been reported that nearly half of Division I football players were of African American decent” (Pitts and Yost). This demonstrates how young men were showing how there are really no racial barriers in the game of college football. The NCAA Student-Athlete Ethnicity Report, in 2010 announced that “African American players composed the majority of Division I football players at 45.8%. This is the first time African American players represented the dominant demographic since the NCAA began monitoring African American participation” (Pitts and Yost). This statistic shows where college football has been a front runner for breaking down the racial barriers. This aspect of the sport is truly an amazing feat when people in society still have issues with race and young male adults do not see race as an issue when they put on the same uniform. It is truly an amazing aspect that many people may forget about and not thinking of race when they play against their opponent. College football is the living model of being completely nondiscriminatory.

The notion of social class and social identity is defined by a school’s football team these young men represent the public opinion of how the public views their perspective school. This social identity is interesting “Football influences how schools see themselves and each other and how the general public perceives the field of higher education and the place of particular schools within it” (Lifschitz, Sauder, & Stevens). This social identity is truly amazing how a single sport that plays about 12 games a year defines an institution for the public. About 70 men contribute to this social identity to the public. These young men can positively or negatively represent the

school towards the public. “Football and organizational prestige and identity provides a fuller explanation for why the game enjoys so much enthusiasm from alumni and fans, why it is able to generate substantial revenue from media and ticket sales, and why colleges and universities support even losing programs’ costs year after year” (Lifschitz, Sauder, & Stevens). The spectators may forget when they are cheering for their favorite university football team that it is still just young men they are cheering for and those young men are the definition of social class. They are still students of the university but they are given a higher social status for being an athlete for the university. Football players are put into an elite category for the university and are the representation for the university.

College football players are social icons. They are looked at by all of the public. Unfortunately their lot of stereotypes that goes along with being a college football player. “A common stereotype in our society is that they are “dumb jocks” athletes are not as capable of performing well academically as their non-athlete counterparts” (Steve Wininger and Tiffany White). This is probably the most common stereotype out there for college football players. This negative notion is very negative and unfortunately leads to creating a mindset for the football players that their peers and teachers have a lower expectation for their academics because of this stereotype. “Not only are students and media labeling college athletes as unintelligent and lazy, but it seems that athletes persuade themselves that they are not as smart as the average student” (World Press). This observation describes the pressures of being a student athlete in the classroom. If it was not hard enough already, just try to be a college football player, and do well in school, they have the media and their peers not expecting much from them in the classroom. It is hard to do well in the classroom when people do not believe in them and only think they are

just football players. A major study, tested by the National Bureau of Economic Research, reported:

A significant academic gap between athletes and non-athletes when college athletes are reminded that they are athletes. They separated the athletes and non-athletes into a group and gave them each a test of thirty nine questions. However, the control group was asked to answer a series of questions about their roles in college before they began the test. This immediately set the athletes apart from others. The researchers found that students whom were identified as athletes scored dramatically lower than non-athletes. Thomas S. Dee, explores this phenomena, “This outcome confirms his hypothesis that some of the academic achievement gap between athletes and non-athletes — at least at his institution — can be explained by athletes psyching themselves into below-average performance”.

This study is very interesting to see how college football players are affected in the classroom and that the thought of being an athlete makes them think no one expects much from them in the classroom; because unfortunately that is how society has perceived the notion of a college football player. Imagine if they had the fans and alumni supporting them academically, as they did on Saturdays. That empowering backing they get on Saturdays may just drive them to do phenomenal things in the classroom like they do phenomenal plays on the field.

The life of a college football player all happens because one very important reason. The players earn their way from all the hard work and love of the game, and are finally rewarded with a college scholarship to show off their hard work and talents to thousands of people each Saturday. Football is a sport where players receive full scholarships the NCAA defines a full scholarship as “tuition and fees, room, board and course-related books” (NCAA). This full scholarship given to athletes “a total for an average year at a Division IA school to attend is

\$41,686” (Jennings). This is an astonishing number the athletes receive in a year. College football players are treated well especially compared to how much money they spend to regular students at the university. “Division I schools with football spent \$91,936 per athlete in 2010, seven times the spending per student of \$13,628” (Peale). A lot of college football players would be unable to attend college without a scholarship. It is an opportunity of a life time. The unfortunate thing about full scholarships and college football players is once at college the full ride scholarship does not seem to cover all expenses that are incurred at college.

Another aspect of how college football players receive money for things that are not covered in the scholarship, but receive nonmonetary benefits simply for being a student athlete; most people are unaware of the privileges they receive. “Athletes have access to special tutoring. the athletes have their facilities such as the University of Oregon's Jaqua Academic Center for Student Athletes” (Jennings). This is a benefit that is hard to put in a financial number, but this benefit makes a huge difference for the football players. This allows the players to not worry about having to pay for a tutor, and have private access to academic help that many regular students do not have that luxury. Another nice perk full scholarship football players receive is Pell grants “Pell Grants do not have to be repaid. They are designed to help cover additional everyday living expenses like gas, personal hygiene, and entertainment and cell phone bills. For low-income student-athletes who qualify, there are virtually no strings attached, and the grant is in addition to their scholarship. Many football players qualify for Pell Grants based on the lack of wealth from their parents and no expected financial contribution to their college education from their family” (Jennings). This is a nice benefit that many people do not know about when people come from lower income houses and are expected to not receive much financial help from their families this eases the cost of living while college. When an athlete applies for a Pell

Grant they are worth “\$5,500 a year and never has to be repaid because it is a grant, not a loan. Football players who qualify get \$5,500 each year to do with what they want” (Jennings).

Another great aspect that college football players receive the amount of top of the line gear and equipment. Also the “access to strength and conditioning coaches, athletic trainers and special athletic facilities” (Jennings).

Student-athletes on scholarship are also covered by basic medical insurance, disability insurance and catastrophic injury insurance. The NCAA requires that all student-athletes participating in certified events and leagues are provided with financial protection if they are injured

The cost of paying for college is very expensive. College football players do not have time to get a part time job to cover the remaining expenses that are not covered by their athletic scholarship. A study shows that “86 percent of college athletes live below the poverty line while in college” (Hayes). This is an astonishing number to realize that even though college football players receive a lot of money in scholarship. Due to their amateurism and not being able to make money from their talents in football they are left living below the poverty line. “The average out of pocket expenses for each full scholarship athlete was approximately \$3,222 per year during the 2010-11 school year” (Hayes). This may seem like a small amount, but the problem is that with over 70 hours of work from football activities to fulfilling their academic obligations, they clearly do not have enough time to get a part time job. The issue that arises is that how much money the university makes on each football player, and how each player is unable to keep any of the money that they make for the university. “The fair market value of the average Football player for Division I football is \$121,048 and Texas football players were valued at \$513,922” (Hayes). This shows there is a huge gap on the average scholarship to how

much each player is worth to the university the number is actually \$79,363 (\$121,048 – \$41,686 = 79,362). Then if the college football player plays at a one of the power five schools their fair market is well over a quarter million dollars.

The football players are money making cash cows for the university. The NCAA controls all the money they make off the players. The NCAA is able to justify this great one-sided contract because they are paying for the school and to earn a college a degree. Once the athlete is done with their eligibility at the university many are left to take care of all medical expenses that are required to repair their bodies after a gruesome 4 years of playing college football. Fortunately they are left with a college degree to earn a good salary because they now have a bachelor's degree.

The life and experience of a college football player is a once in in a life time experience. They experience college in a completely different way compared to most students. They are able to play a sport that many people can only play through high school. The college football experience teaches life lessons; and represents a time that they will cherish for the rest of their lives. The players build life time friendships with their teammates and their coaches. Football players learn a lot of important life lessons, in unique ways that others cannot relate to. The game of college football engulfs the athlete in every aspect of life. They lay their bodies on the line for the game of football that they love. All athletes will make tremendous sacrifices for the game: from long sore nights with bumps and bruises that last an entire season. The players face the risk of major injury, like a concussion or a torn ligament in any of the joints of body. This is a sacrifice that every college football player makes when they sign up to play college football. College football players also face a lot of social differences when they play the game of football. There are some benefits to the impacts of how the athlete is affected socially while playing

football in college. They get to be idolized and looked upon every Saturday when they get to show off their talents on game day. They also show how to not think of race when competing, and put all racial barriers aside and work together for one goal and that is to win games and championships. Unfortunately football players also have social issues that affect them in a negative way. They must face the negative stereotypes of them being “dumb jocks” and not expected to do well in the class room. This causes the athletes to fall into the trap that as long as they perform on the field they do not have to worry about the classroom. Football players must shun that noise and overcome the social pressures and excel in both the field and classroom. The football players also are impacted financially when they play college football. They receive a scholarship to pay for their college education. Even though they are on a full scholarship they still live in the poverty, about 86% of football players live under the poverty line. They make that sacrifice to play the game that they have grown up with as an integral part of their life. It is very clear that the life of a college football player has very glamorous moments and ask any college football players they would not trade their football experience for anything. The game of football impacts the players in every way especially affecting them physically, socially, and financially and college football will continue to impact all the players that get the opportunity to compete at the collegiate level.

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