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Composition II

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Rhetorical Analysis

The article, “7 Common Sense Reasons Why College Athletes Should Be Paid (According to Jay Bilas)” is written by Maurice Peebles. Peebles sat down with ESPN college basketball analyst Jay Bilas and created an interview-based article based on Bilas’ insight. Bilas believes that college basketball athletes deserve to be paid. This has been a debate for sports fans, administration, and the NCAA for many years. The fact that billions of dollars are made off of these athletes, yet they receive little reimbursement in return, is one of the main arguments siding for these athletes. I believe that Bilas and Peebles’ article is effective for their argument based on their strong use of logos and ethos.

The compensation for college athletes has been in question for many years. There are many people in support of the situation as it is. The athletes in the most popular sports, particularly basketball and football, are all granted full athletic scholarships and other university based repayment. The main argument of this article is that the forms of compensation that these athletes receive simply aren’t enough or fair regarding the situation they’re in. Therefore they should receive more financial reimbursement.

I believe that the intended audience for this article could be directed at many different groups of people. One of the main groups could obviously be to NCAA officials to try and persuade them into agreeing with this article. Another could be sports fans who feel that these athletes should be paid. And lastly, the audience could possibly be school officials because parts of this article are directed at school administration.

The majority of the article is quoting Jay Bilas and his seven reasons why athletes should be paid. Appealing to ethos, Jay Bilas is one of the most credited college basketball analysts in the world and certainly one of the most recognizable. He also played college basketball so he has insight on the life of an everyday college basketball player. Not only did he play college basketball, he played at Duke University where he also graduated from law school. Duke is one of college basketball’s true blue bloods.

Bilas also relies heavily on the use of logos in his argument. In his argument he uses statistics, facts, and logical thoughts and ideas that work for his case. This can be seen in a quote from his opening paragraph, “In any facet of college life, only one class of people have any financial restriction on them at all and that’s athletes. So the idea that it's based on education is a lie. No other student is told what they can and cannot make, and if it affects their education, or scholarship, or anything.” This quote displays his appeal to the logic of the situation that these athletes are put in. This article also presents statistics for their argument such as, “CBS Sports and Turner Broadcasting alone paid more than $10.8 billion to the NCAA back in 2010 for 14 years of rights to do this…”

One of his biggest points in the article is that the ridiculous amount of revenue that the NCAA brings in far outweighs the compensation the players themselves receive. Many of the article’s arguments fall back to the revenue that the NCAA brings in versus the compensation the athletes receive. Perhaps the biggest form of reimbursement for student athletes comes in the full athletic scholarship most players receive. The majority of these scholarships covers an athletes full college tuition along with textbooks, meals on road-trips, hotels, and other small expenses. Bilas uses logos again to state his opinion that these forms of reimbursement simply aren't enough.

Two of the points in his article appeal to fans of college basketball specifically. A popular belief is that paying the players will hurt the quality of the games. Using some pathos appeals, Bilas argues that the enjoyment the fans receive from watching college athletics today wouldn’t worsen if athletes were to be paid. He commonly makes this effective appeal to the fans but I believe he could’ve went more in depth with his pathos appeals.

One of the last reasons Bilas uses in his argument once again appeals to logos and ethos. Bilas uses logic and his established credibility to argue that good college basketball players would stay in school longer. Typically the more talented players leave college early to pursue professional contracts and opportunities. While the average player values his education more if playing basketball at a professional level might not present itself as a possibility. Bilas believes that if athletes were to be paid, this would keep the better players in school longer, although it might not have much of an effect on the best players. His credibility and college basketball experience make this piece of the argument effective because of these strong appeals to ethos and logos.

The timing of this argument is presented at a good time now that arguments for college athletes to be compensated are at an all time high. The strong use of rhetoric appeals, especially logos and ethos, make it easy to trust the information that the audience is reading. Although I believe that more examples of pathos could be used to appeal to the audiences emotions and values. Overall, Bilas and Peebles present accurate information, informed insight, and persuasive reasoning to their argument. Making this argument effective in every sense of the word.