**Do Professional Athletes Get Paid Too Much Money?**

**By**

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Wouldn't it be great to make nearly $111 million a year simply to play a game? Tiger Woods, along with many other professional athletes, certainly think so. But do these athletes really deserve all that money?

In my mind, absolutely not. Professional athletes are making too much money in a society where salaries and wages are traditionally based on the value of one's work. In today's society, one should be paid according to the job’s economic importance and their value to society.

Teaching is one of the most economically important occupations because our future economy relies on the education of its youth, yet teachers are paid astronomically less than the average professional athlete is. In fact, each basket Kobe Bryant scores earns him equivalent to the average classroom teacher’s yearly salary.

However, some may argue that while teacher’s only provide service to a single classroom, superstar athletes are entertaining fans all around the world, enticing people with a feeling of relaxation and excitement.

Obviously, what these individuals must not be aware of is the most important man in our nation, the president, who makes critical decisions that affect the entire world every day, only makes $400,000 a year. While President Obama is hard at work reviving the economy, the unproven rookie in the MLB is earning way over that figure.

Furthermore, police officers, firefighters, and doctors save lives while risking their own for a fraction of what sports stars make. People in the military leave their families at home to defend and protect the country knowing they may never return. It's truly a pity that none of these true heroes are given the same recognition by society as athletes such as Brett Favre or Michael Jordan are given.

While I do understand that making it into the pros is not an easy thing to do, and that it takes a tremendous number of hours of hard work and dedication every day to earn a job in professional sports, these people do nothing more than entertain the general public.

Moreover, in my mind, if these athletes want to continue to be rewarded with the fame and fortune that is unfairly bestowed upon them, they must prove to the world that they are going to be positive role models for future athletes, and those who admire them.

These infamous players must grow up, and prove to America that they can be positive role models for kids on and off the field. They may get leeway when it comes to their salaries, but the law should be overpowered by any amount of talent.

If Alex Rodriguez earns the same amount of money as it would take to feed the nation's poor for a year, he can’t cheat and take steroids. What kids learn from successful ballplayers like him is that “It’s okay for me to use illegal substances, because in the long run, it will pay off by earning me an enormous contract.”

In order for these players to gain respect, they need to have a more significant impact on the community.

Finally, what really puzzles me, is how athletes get upset when athletes say that millions of dollars won't be able to support him and his family, and that they need more. What puzzles me even more, is how after holding out for weeks, and sometimes months, the owners give in and pay them what they don't deserve.

Think about Jamarcus Russel, the former No. 1 overall pick in the '07 draft. He is on a six-year $68 million contract, with $31 million guaranteed. In simpler terms, that means that despite currently being recognized as one of the biggest busts of all time, and even if he were to get injured tomorrow and never play again, he will still have $31 million in the bank. In any other job, if you don't perform to your expectations, you're fired. There is no guaranteed money.

The whole system that allows professional athletes to just swim around in money is simply ridiculous, and it needs to stop. When asking people whether they think athletes are paid way too much money, most agree with me.

Do you?