

2011

Major College Basketball in the United States: Morality, Amateurism, and Hypocrisies

Robert C. Schneider

The College at Brockport, rschneid@brockport.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/pes_facpub



Part of the [Kinesiology Commons](#)

Repository Citation

Schneider, Robert C., "Major College Basketball in the United States: Morality, Amateurism, and Hypocrisies" (2011). *Kinesiology, Sport Studies and Physical Education Faculty Publications*. 59.
https://digitalcommons.brockport.edu/pes_facpub/59

Citation/Publisher Attribution:

DOI: 10.2478/v10141-011-0011-y

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Kinesiology, Sport Studies and Physical Education at Digital Commons @Brockport. It has been accepted for inclusion in Kinesiology, Sport Studies and Physical Education Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @Brockport. For more information, please contact kmyers@brockport.edu.

Major College Basketball in the United States: Morality, Amateurism, and Hypocrisies

Robert C. Schneider

The College at Brockport, State University of New York, USA

ABSTRACT

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and member institutions' presentation of major college basketball in the United States as an endeavor of amateurism is contradictory to the realities of college basketball. Discussed are the following amateurism related hypocrisies: a) requiring players to fully engage in formally structured basketball activities as a priority over education, b) expansion of the post season March Madness tournament regardless of the fact that players will miss more classes, c) compensating basketball coaches with salaries contingent on success defined by winning, and d) the athletic scholarship. Literature supports amateurism hypocrisies in major college basketball (Bermuda 2010, Colombo 2010, Sundram 2010). Understanding the effect of NCAA and member institution hypocritical behavior on determining the moral standing of major college basketball is discussed in the context of claims by Grant (1997), that Machiavelli recognized the necessity of political hypocrisy. A utilitarian analysis using Jeremy Bentham's holistic utilitarian approach calling for the agent to "sum up all the values of all the pleasures on the one side, and those of all the pains on the other" (p. 39) to determine the degree of morality, indicates a presence of morality in major college basketball. Under the premise that major college basketball is an extension of core values held by higher education, Aristotle's Golden Mean (Aristotle, 1941) is used to help identify a point of balanced moral perspective concerning sentiments of the sporting community held for the sport. The end goal is to maintain major college basketball's strong level of satisfaction among members of the sporting community, while controlling the false representation of amateurism surrounding it to preserve the moral and structural integrity of major college basketball.

KEYWORDS

hypocrisy, morality, basketball, utilitarianism

Introduction

Staying abreast of amateurism trends affecting the morality of college basketball is important for the purpose of maintaining and protecting the integrity of the game. (Throughout this article the terms "college basketball" or "basketball" are used and represent the full phrase "National Collegiate Athletic Association [NCAA] Division I men's major college basketball.") Without moral integrity, the overall foundation of college basketball runs the risk of weakening, which, under a worst case scenario, could lead to the demise of the sport. More realistically, though, the immorality of particular parts of college basketball, including aspects of amateurism, would weaken the sport's foundation and

diminish public interest. Thus, an honest assessment of the moral state of college basketball should be ongoing and is in its best interest from the standpoint of sporting community satisfaction and the sport's preservation. To that end, a review of college basketball in terms of the extent to which NCAA and member institution claims of amateurism are hypocritical and to what extent those hypocrisies affect the morality of the sport deserve examination.

Financial evolution of college basketball and amateurism

A cursory understanding of the history of college basketball is helpful in revealing the truth of what it currently values in light of its claim to be an endeavor of amateurism. Although the core of college basketball has generally remained intact over the years, the environment of the sport has changed dramatically. When basketball was invented in 1896 by Dr. James Naismith (Noverr 1983) it was tied closely to higher education and was played by students attending college. By 1905 basketball was recognized as a permanent winter sport in colleges (Swanson & Spears 1995) and the participants truly were "student"-athletes. The first NCAA tournament took place in 1939. Television was introduced to college basketball in 1940 and during the 1960s and 1970s its popularity continued to increase. Today, college basketball generates large sums of money (Knapp & Sreenivasan 2011). Elite players, drawn to the universities by athletic scholarships that contract those players under terms of conditional participation, are instrumental in generating the money.

Currently, the post season NCAA men's basketball tournament (March Madness) earns approximately \$771 million a year through television rights alone (Wiebert 2011), which is over 90% of its operating budget (The National Collegiate Athletic Association, 2011). By most any standard the amount of money generated by NCAA Division I men's basketball players is enormous and is a primary focus of the NCAA and member institutions. (The NCAA formally refers to colleges and universities that are members of the NCAA as "NCAA member institutions" or "member institutions" [National Collegiate Athletic Association 2010]).

As college basketball has evolved, revenue generation has become the focal point, overshadowing the achievement of academic outcomes of players. College athletics has become an environment that more closely resembles professionalism than amateurism (Suggs 2004). Traditionally, part of the "college experience" has included extracurricular activities in the form of athletics that provide students with beneficial experiences complimenting their academic program of study, which, by the definition of higher education should be its central focus. However, in college basketball's current money oriented environment, experiences gained by its players might best be described as happenstance byproducts of basketball participation rather than planned outcomes centered on traditional goals of higher education. As an extracurricular activity, college basketball should be secondary to academic programs and not overshadow or push them aside in the interest of money. College athletics does not genuinely reflect higher education and is indicative of a corrupted system that threatens the integrity of college athletics (Ferris, Finster & McDonald 2004).

The realities and hypocrisies of college basketball

Four examples that support the reality of college basketball's unstated purpose to generate revenue and that are contradictory to general definitions of amateurism include: a) requiring players to fully engage in formally structured basketball activities (i.e., practice, and games) as a priority over education, b) continued expansion of the March Madness tournament regardless of the fact that players will miss more classes, c) compensating basketball coaches with salaries contingent on success defined by winning, and d) the athletic scholarship. These are just a few of the realities of college basketball that do not support the NCAA claim that college basketball is an endeavor of amateurism. Later in this paper a more thorough analysis of these four examples will add credence to the notion that the NCAA's amateurism claim is one of hypocrisy rather than reality.

Hypocrisy

Establishing an understanding of what is considered “hypocritical” behavior is necessary prior to making hypocrisy judgments related to college basketball and amateurism. The general definitions of hypocrisy and Niccolo Machiavelli’s views on hypocrisy from a political leadership perspective provide a basis from which judgments can be formed as to the legitimacy of the NCAA’s claim that college basketball operates under the principle of amateurism.

Layman’s perspective

Grant (1997) describes the term “hypocrite” as “an epithet, never a term of praise” (p. 1). Hypocrisy, according to Grant, usually includes a pretense of virtue, idealism, or sympathetic concern used to further selfish ends. From a layman’s perspective, hypocrisy is defined as professing standards, beliefs, feelings, or virtues that one does not hold or possess and the term falseness is commonly associated with hypocrisy (hypocrisy, n.d.). To be hypocritical approaches a degree of dishonesty, which, when prevalent in an organization, taints the morality of the organization.

Machiavelli and political leadership perspective

Machiavelli offered political leadership related perspectives on hypocritical behavior and supported such behaviors by leaders as necessary to lead effectively (Grant 1997). He believed rulers must attend to the way their actions appear, speaking moral language through opportunities presented through moral discourse (Grant). When efforts, however, are not made by leadership to eliminate hypocrisies throughout an organization, the organization runs the risk of moral deterioration.

Grant (1997) further discusses Machiavelli’s question of whether or not hypocrisy is always such a bad thing. It is possible that a degree of immorality resulting from hypocrisy within an organization must be accepted to realize the potential overall benefits from an organization. In other words, from a Machiavellian standpoint, it might be argued that the greater good from the organization cannot be gained without accepting the hypocrisies inherent to political organizations. If hypocritical action strengthens “the republic,” according to Machiavelli, that action might be considered praiseworthy (Grant). Care, however, must be taken so as to not go beyond the threshold of hypocrisy that allows for the provision of the most good for “the republic” or an organization.

Amateurism

The NCAA and the sports teams of its member institutions, including college basketball, claim to operate under the principle of amateurism (National Collegiate Athletic Association 2010). In this article when the term “amateurism” is used as the remuneration based definition of the NCAA, it will be made clear by phraseology such as “NCAA amateurism,” or “amateurism as defined by the NCAA.” When the term “amateurism” is used as a stand-alone term it is meant to represent the general definition of amateurism as defined by sources including but not limited to Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary (amateur, n.d.b) and the Collins English Dictionary (amateur, n.d.a).

NCAA definition of amateurism

A brief explanation of the NCAA legislative process is helpful when attempting to determine who shares responsibility for defining NCAA amateurism. The adoption of NCAA bylaws, including the amateurism bylaw, is a legislative process driven by votes of NCAA member institutions. Member institutions control the direction of the NCAA. University chief executive officers carry final authority over NCAA legislation including but not limited to the tenets of amateurism (National Collegiate Athletic Association 2010). When the term “NCAA” is used it represents the views of colleges and universities that are members of the NCAA.

Bylaw, Article 12 is entitled “Amateurism” in the “2010-11 NCAA Division I Manual” (National Collegiate Athletic Association 2010). As a section, the amateurism bylaws might best be described as a convolution of compensation related “do’s and don’ts” that are not a product of a clearly articulated amateurism definition but rather a series of selective reactions to behaviors by member institutions’ athletic programs that are not considered by the NCAA to be in its own best interest.

Under the amateur status of athletes, specifically addressed in bylaw 12.1.2, prohibited forms of payment to players include salary, gratuity, compensation, splits of surpluses, i.e., game receipts, selected educational expenses, excessive or improper expenses, awards, benefits, payment based on performance, preferential treatment benefits or services, prizes for promotional activities, and participating and receiving pay for overall athletic skills. In total, there are over 40 bylaws that describe and define amateur status but no common basis for the bylaws is readily identifiable. As supporters of basketball programs successfully discover new ways to remunerate players, the NCAA’s past reactive practice of adding preventative bylaws will continue and result in even more bylaws to prevent new forms of remuneration to players.

NCAA bracketed amateurism

Included in the array of bylaws are exceptions to selected prohibited forms of remuneration. These exceptions allow players to maintain their “amateur status” while, in effect, being remunerated under particular conditions, as determined by the NCAA. Thus, NCAA amateurism might be considered a “bracketed amateurism,” where selected components of the general definition of amateurism are used. The NCAA restricts its definition to the compensation component of amateurism and does not address various other views of amateurism.

Regarding the NCAA’s amateurism, if it is bracketed to the point where it does not meet the commonly understood definition of amateurism, it is questionable as to what form of amateurism, if any, is represented. At some point it could be argued that “bracketed this” or “bracketed that” becomes a convenient excuse to act, indiscriminately, beyond the parameters of amateurism that have been previously developed and commonly accepted. Arguably, the NCAA has conveniently created its “bracketed” definition of amateurism for reasons of self-interest.

NCAA Amateurism as a False Premise

The NCAA and member institutions have defined the term amateurism in a way that delimits its operational definition primarily to compensation related components, failing to address the “whole” definition of amateurism. In other words the amateurism principle of college basketball is based on a false premise because the NCAA’s definition of “amateur status,” is incomplete, not considering the “whole” definition. Based on the NCAA and member institutions’ exclusive focus on the non-compensation component of amateurism, the NCAA’s labeling of college basketball as an endeavor of amateurism and its players as amateurs, is inherently flawed and thus, susceptible to rejection.

Amateurism general definitions

Further supporting the rejection of amateurism as a defining principle of college basketball are the contradictions that exist between the general definitions of amateurism and the actual realities of college basketball. General definitions of amateurism provide a baseline helpful in determining to what extent, if any, college basketball is an endeavor of amateurism and whether its claims of amateurism are hypocritical. The Collins English Dictionary and Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary serve as two general definition resources.

The Collins English Dictionary defines “amateur” as a person unskilled or having superficial knowledge of an activity (amateur, n.d.a). The Merriam-Webster general definitions of “amateur” include participating in a sport as a pastime, one who does not play for pay, one who is an inexperienced but puts forth a conscientious effort, and one lacking in experience and competence (amateur, n.d.b).

An amateur according to Merriam-Webster’s dictionary is a person who attains a pursuit without attaining proficiency and one practicing an art without mastering its essentials, which is in direct contrast to what takes place in college basketball. The following terms are synonyms to the term “amateur”: dabbler, dilettante, hobbyist, layman, non-expert, nonprofessional, potterer, putterer, tinkerer (amateurism, n.d.b).

Amateurism general definitions and college basketball contradictions

Myriad contradictions exist between the general definitions of amateurism and the composition of college basketball, which consists of the actions of those involved in its production. Players must master and be proficient in the skills of basketball or they will not be of the elite status necessary to play at the Division I level. Those who dabble or whose work habits are desultory and lack persistence, as would be the case with an amateur, will be rejected from participating at the Division I level. Head Division I coaches demand skill mastery and a persistent work ethic of their players.

The term dilettante depicts an amateur and may apply to a lover of an art rather than a skilled practitioner and an absence of serious commitment. Division I basketball players certainly love the art of playing, and would play with or without structures imposed by athletic departments. However, in the current Division I intercollegiate setting, players’ love of the game, which supports amateurism, is tainted by the full-time, year round commitment demanded of today’s players. In fact, the players’ commitment to structured participation is secured by the athletic scholarship, a signed contract that reflects professionalism, by providing room, board, and tuition for them. Even if players are of an amateurism mentality, the structures imposed on them by universities to generate enormous amounts of revenue, lay a firm foundation for professionalism.

Baron Pierre de Coubertin, founder of the Modern Olympic Games, expressed concerns against the encroachment of professionalism in the Olympics. He also provided insight to amateur athletics from the perspective of the love of an art. As amateurs, Coubertin professed that Olympic athletes should play for the love of the game and in the interest of maintaining amateurism he was against paying participants (Hill 1996). As the gradual onset of professionalism entered into the Games, Hill also pointed out that Coubertin believed it destroyed the games morally.

The term hobby, which is a descriptor of amateurism, does not reflect the strict demands and rigors of college basketball. The amateur related terms of layman, non-expert, and non-professional are the antithesis of college basketball players, as they are some of the highest skilled players in the world. Synonyms of amateur, including potterer, putterer, and tinkerer, in general describe someone who pokes around and takes more time than necessary. Such behaviors are a far cry from player characteristics necessary to meet the sometimes grueling demands of college basketball. Players who lag behind and/or lack a sense of urgency will not meet the rigors necessary to be part of a college basketball team, as the expectations of college basketball players include being aggressive throughout training, practices, and games.

Specific amateurism hypocrisies/realities of college basketball

Thus far, discussions have centered on hypocrisies based on how the NCAA’s compensation based definition of amateurism and the general definitions of amateurism both are disconnected to the actual composition of college basketball. Narrative follows that discusses additional contradictions between the general definitions of amateurism and the following four specific aspects of college basketball: a) requiring players to fully engage in formally structured basketball activities (i.e.,

practice, and games) as a priority over education; b) expansion of the March Madness tournament regardless of the fact that players will miss more classes, c) compensating basketball coaches with salaries contingent on success defined by winning, and d) the athletic scholarship.

Requiring formally structured basketball activities as a priority over education. Requiring and increasing the amount of time college basketball players are engaged in formally structured basketball activities, i.e., conditioning, practices, and games, does not support amateurism. Moreover, prioritizing basketball related activities over academic related activities is hypocritical to the academic emphasis that defines higher education, and the first listed purpose (1.2) of the 2010-11 NCAA Division I Manual that states, “the purpose of the NCAA as an organization is to promote and develop athletics participation as a recreational pursuit” (National Collegiate Athletic Association 2010, p. 1).

Prioritizing college basketball over academics is evident in the case where players who are NBA prospects stop attending classes during the second academic semester of their first year in college. They, however, are still eligible to play for their college’s basketball team (Wilbon 2009, Patel 2011). To maintain athletic eligibility during a current semester, players only need to maintain academic standards during the previous semester. Thus, despite not attending a single academic class or fulfilling any academic responsibilities during a second semester, players are still allowed to participate in regular season games, post-season league tournament championships, and NCAA post season tournament championships during that second semester. Reinforcing the amateurism hypocrisy, at the time of this writing, is the lack of action by the NCAA and member institutions to legislate against the eligibility of players who do not attend classes during their second semester.

Continued expansion of the March Madness tournament. Disconnects exist between amateurism and the real environment of college basketball that is driving the expansion of the March Madness post season college basketball tournament. The primary purpose of continued March Madness tournament expansion is to further increase the generation of revenue, which in its current state generates nearly all of the NCAA revenue (Thamel & Sandomir 2010). As a multi-billion dollar enterprise that continues to expand its post season tournament for the purpose of generating revenue, the claim that college basketball is an endeavor of amateurism is hypocritical.

The current 68 team tournament model causes some teams to be away from their universities during the semester for an entire week (Feinstein 2010). Tournament expansion that results in players missing an entire week of academic classes reinforces the amateurism hypocrisy because it does not reflect higher education’s inherent purpose of placing the education of students first and foremost, but rather makes the top priority revenue generation.

Aspiring to increase revenue streams through March Madness was acknowledged by Wieberg and Berkowitz (2009) who pointed out that seating plans were modified to accommodate more ticket buyers. March Madness also represents the revenue driven commercialistic featuring of players through several mediums including logos, products, naming rights, trademark and licensing fees, digital media rights, and advertising (Wieberg & Berkowitz, 2009). Pursuit of additional revenue streams has also driven an increase in the overall number of games in the regular season (Johnson, 2007), and the realignment of conferences that pays little attention to the effects on academic schedules (Bozich 2010, Feinstein 2010).

Most likely the amateurism hypocrisy will continue to be reinforced, as Feinstein anticipates the tournament field to be increased to 96 teams in the future.

Compensating basketball coaches with salaries based on winning. Basing coaches’ salaries on their ability to produce revenue for their university is contradictory to the NCAA claim that college basketball is an endeavor of amateurism. Overall, coaches are paid disproportionately high salaries

when compared to most all other university employees including professors, head coaches of most other sports, and university staff (Smith 2010). As some of the highest paid employees at a university, men's Division I basketball coaches' salaries often surpass the salaries of the top administrators, including the president. It was also reported by Smith that at least nine NCAA Division I men's head basketball coaches earned more than \$4 million per year in 2010.

In return for exorbitant salaries, college basketball coaches are expected to generate revenue by winning games, which they embrace by making winning their highest priority. They demand a full commitment to excellence on the part of their players. Practices are formally organized with a rigor and intensity conducive to team and individual proficiency at maximum levels of mastery, which directly contradict the general definitions of amateurism. College basketball coaches' behaviors support their primary goal to win games, which in turn generates money.

The athletic scholarship. Despite the NCAA's emphasis, through legislation, on maintaining the non-compensation component of amateurism, they allow the granting of athletic scholarships to college basketball players. Punishable by ineligibility, NCAA amateurism rules restrict the compensation of college basketball players. The athletic scholarship, however, *is* a form of compensation to players. It provides benefits to players through the provision of room, board, books and tuition (Wiebert 2011). Further, according to Weibert, players can also draw modest amounts of money from special assistance funds set up by the NCAA. The hypocrisy lies in the fact that the NCAA places a premium on maintaining amateurism by not allowing players to be compensated, yet the athletic scholarship does just that.

In addition to compensating college basketball players, the athletic scholarship influences a second hypocrisy in that it often works against the academic integrity of the university. It supports the admission of players who would, in many cases, not be admitted to the university under normal academic admission standards. A financial investment, on the part of the university, the athletic scholarship helps generate revenue by enticing the most talented players to play on the university's team, irrespective of its general academic admission standards.

Utilitarianism and the moral state of college basketball

The NCAA and its member institutions' presentation of college basketball as an endeavor of amateurism is reflective of hypocrisy if not hypocritical. In light of the hypocrisy, however, it is not to say that college basketball is immoral. From a utilitarian standpoint, happiness and unhappiness of the sporting community seem to be unaffected or minimally affected by the previously discussed hypocrisies.

To truly gain an understanding of the moral state of college basketball, the aspects that compose it must be reviewed. From a utilitarian standpoint, the extent to which all aspects of college basketball generate happiness or unhappiness is the measure used to determine its moral state. Unfortunately, the task of identifying and reviewing "each and every aspect" of college basketball is unrealistic and thus, conclusions pertaining to the moral state of college basketball cannot be considered absolute. A sense, though, of the extent to which hypocrisy plays a role in shaping the moral state of college basketball is realistic.

Providing a framework for utilitarian moral analysis are classical philosopher John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) and his predecessor Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832). Mill's greatest happiness principle provides a basic understanding of morally good actions: "actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness" (Mill 1863/1969, p. 36). Jeremy Bentham's hedonic calculus (Bentham 1789/1961), if applied holistically to issues, is also useful in shedding light on the degree to which issues are moral.

Measures of happiness and unhappiness

When measuring happiness resulting from college basketball, the sporting community's happiness and unhappiness is the basis of the measurement. In general, the sporting community might be described as those directly and indirectly related to sport. Members of the sporting community directly related to sport might include players, coaches, team managers, athletic directors, and additional support personnel such as sports information directors, statisticians, and sport marketers. Members of the sporting community who are indirectly related to sport (one layer removed from those directly related to sport) might be friends and families of players, and fans.

Overall, the sporting community does not seem unsettled over the contradictions between the general definitions of amateurism and actions within college basketball that are not supportive of those definitions. College basketball, in its current state, seems to emit a degree of happiness among members of the sporting community that outweighs sentiments of dissatisfaction relative to college basketball. Some of the satisfaction, however, may be a result of the image (hypocrisy) created by the NCAA and member institutions' masking of the realities of college basketball through public relations efforts. Discussion follows that addresses happiness and unhappiness, among members of the sporting community, relative to the aforementioned four specific examples that contradict general definitions of amateurism.

Requiring formally structured basketball activities as a priority over education. The structured basketball activities that support a model of professionalism more so than amateurism do not seem to be of noteworthy negative concern to the sporting community. Perfectionism, highly conditioned elite college basketball players, and an outstanding game day performance resulting from structured basketball activities bordering on professionalism do not seem to cause high levels of unhappiness among members of the sporting community.

There is little indication of unhappiness among the sporting community resulting from college basketball players not attending class. Viewing games on television and attending in person seem to bring about a degree of happiness that overwhelms dissatisfactions expressed by the few persons, i.e., academicians, who are disgruntled over universities recruiting and signing players who are academically suspect and often do not attend classes. The hypocrisies that portray education as a priority over mandatory structured basketball activities also do not seem to bring about conspicuous levels of unhappiness among members of the sporting community.

Continued expansion of the March Madness tournament. Keeping utilitarianism in mind, it is difficult to dispute the notion that the happiness brought on by college basketball and its post-season tournament is widespread throughout the sporting community. Enthusiasm sweeps across the nation during the 68 team single elimination tournament, which after three weeks culminates in a four team playoff resulting in the crowning of a national champion. The atmosphere is festive and most all associated with the tournament seem to thoroughly enjoy the experience.

Win or lose, players embrace the competition. Coaches thrive on assembling and coaching teams in the pursuit of flawless execution. Team managers enjoy being part of the production. Athletic directors take pride in leading an athletic department that is represented by a successful basketball team. Support personnel of teams usually hold a passion for their job. Across the country the tournament brings positive energy to businesses, as employees attempt to predict the winner of each tournament game in office pools. Fans from near and far look forward to each and every game and take special satisfaction in the March Madness post-season tournament.

According to University of Hartford president and one time chair of the NCAA Executive Committee, Walter Harrison (as cited in Wolverton 2006), sport has a galvanizing effect on communities in that persons are brought together over sport. As a sport, college basketball's unifying

effect on communities is readily apparent, especially during March Madness. The tournament, in particular, generates happiness among a wide sphere of people including those in the sporting community.

Compensating basketball coaches with salaries based on winning. Coaching salaries, which are often the highest of all employees on a college campus, are based on winning and are hypocritical to the ideals of higher education; however, they do not seem to result in waves of unhappiness among the sporting community. Unhappiness is sometimes vented by members of the university community who believe monies from high coaching salaries might better be spent on direct academic interests, i.e., research assistants, professors, and increasing the library reserves. A counter perspective, though, might suggest that high coaching salaries driven by winning would allow for the reinvestment of additional revenues into the educational system, bringing about happiness across both the sporting and academic communities.

The athletic scholarship. Unhappiness brought to the sporting community by providing college basketball players with athletic scholarships seems to be minor. Although providing athletic scholarships does not reflect amateurism, it also does not seem to bring about negative sentiments from the sporting community. Few persons affiliated with college basketball seem to be unhappy over the athletic scholarship. Certainly as recipients of the athletic scholarship, players are happy. By helping attract the most elite players, the athletic scholarship also enhances the overall product of college basketball, to the satisfaction of the sporting community. An enhanced product brought on by elite players who are enticed to play for a university by the athletic scholarship, generates revenue that can be used for good purposes. Attempts to uncover unhappiness resulting from the athletic scholarship in college basketball are difficult.

Happiness, hypocrisy, and Machiavelli

The NCAA's self-crafted, selective compensation based definition of amateurism is hypocritical in that it portrays a false perception of what college basketball and the NCAA represent. In itself though, false perceptions and hypocrisies of the NCAA do not make college basketball an undertaking of immorality. Machiavelli's view that political hypocrisy is necessary for effective leadership (Grant, 1997) supports the view that the NCAA is leading effectively by creating façades through numerous public address opportunities, i.e., press releases, conventions, and advertising, to portray college basketball as an amateur sport that does not place the generation of revenue as its highest priority.

Thus far, college basketball's resilience to its hypocrisies, including the amateurism hypocrisy, is surprisingly strong, which indicates that the extent of the hypocrisies is presently not threatening the moral integrity of the sport, at least in a devastating manner. The widespread popularity of college basketball among members of the sporting community supports the observation that hypocrisies remain within morally healthy boundaries. At this point, despite the hypocrisies, the unhappiness associated with college basketball appears to be inconsequential. In this case, Machiavelli's point that hypocrisy is not always a bad thing and might even be considered praiseworthy if it strengthens "the republic" (Grant 1997) is supportive of college basketball's amateur(ism) hypocrisy because in its present hypocritical state, college basketball brings about a strong degree of happiness among numerous persons. Caution, however, must be taken by NCAA leadership to ensure that hypocritical behavior related to college basketball does not become the norm, as moral deterioration will follow, placing the sport at risk. To that end, a balanced approach as purported by Aristotle's Golden Mean should be respected, for if college basketball, and the NCAA and its member institutions become overridden with hypocrisies, the moral and structural integrity of both will be jeopardized.

Final thoughts

Amateurism legislation created by the NCAA is hypocritical to the realities of college basketball. Further, premises supporting stated missions of higher education that call for the learning and intellectual growth of students are secondary to the unstated predominate expectation of college basketball players to generate revenue. Public relation campaigns and the numerous advertisements that portray college basketball to be an endeavor of amateurism and to reflect academic ideals of higher education are hypocritical.

However, to find hypocrisies present in college basketball, amateurism or otherwise, does not in itself allow one to claim that it is an undertaking of immorality, at least from a utilitarian standpoint. Moreover, when weighing the overall happiness and unhappiness of the sporting community resulting from college basketball, it must be considered an undertaking of morality, from a utilitarian standpoint.

Machiavelli (as cited in Grant 1997), nonetheless, understood well that economic dependence is the source of hypocritical manipulation that leads to general moral corruption. Leaders of member institutions and the NCAA should be acutely aware of the moral effects of placing themselves in a position that requires the pursuit of more revenue through college basketball. Efforts to increase the already magnanimous amount of revenue generated by college basketball could very well result in the need to shield the public, from the professionalism reality of college basketball, through additional hypocritical behavior, extending beyond a healthy moral threshold. To do so, ultimately, could sway the sporting communities' sentiments of overall happiness to unhappiness, turning college basketball into an undertaking of immorality that in a worst case scenario could result in the sport's demise.

REFERENCES

- amateur. (n.d.a). *Collins English Dictionary - Complete & Unabridged 10th Edition*. Retrieved April 19, 2011, from Dictionary.com website: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/amateur>.
- amateur. (n.d.b). *Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary*. Retrieved from <http://www.merriamwebster.com/dictionary/amateur?show=0&t=1303262529>.
- Aristotle (1941). *Nicomachean ethics, Book II* (W.D. Ross, Trans.). In R. McKeon (Ed.), *The basic works of Aristotle* (pp. 927-1112). New York: Random House.
- Bentham, J. (1789/1961). An introduction to the principles of morals and legislation. In *Utilitarianism* (pp. 7-398). Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
- Bermuda, B. (2010, January 25). John Calipari: college basketball's very own hypocrite. *Bleacher Report*. Retrieved from: <http://bleacherreport.com/articles/332699-college-basketballs-very-own-hypocrite-cal-the-lip>.
- Bozich, R. (2010, June 11). Kansas could suffer most from shake-up. Retrieved from <http://msn.foxsports.com/collegebasketball/story/Conference-realignment-could-send-Kansas-into-shadows-061110>.
- Colombo, J.D. (2010). The NCAA, tax exemption, and college athletics. *University of Illinois Law Review*, 2010(1). Retrieved from: http://www.law.uiuc.edu/lrev/publications/2000s/2010/2010_1/Colombo.pdf.
- Feinstein, J. (2010, July 13). New NCAA 68-team tournament format could have been worse. *Washington Post*. Retrieved from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/07/12/AR2010071204889.html?nav=emailpage&sid=ST2010071205485>.
- Ferris, E., Finster, M., & McDonald, D. (2004). Academic fit of student-athletes: An analysis of NCAA Division I-A graduation rates. *Research in Higher Education*, 45(6), 555-575. Retrieved from EBSCOhost.
- Grant, R.W. (1997). *Hypocrisy and integrity: Machiavelli, Rousseau, and the ethics of politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Hill, C.R. (1996). *Olympic politics: Athens to Atlanta 1896-1996* (2nd ed.). Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.
- hypocrisy. (n.d.). *The Free Dictionary*. Retrieved from <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/hypocrisy>.
- Johnson, G. (2007, June 4). Extra game boosts basketball attendance to new levels. *The NCAA News*. Retrieved from <http://fs.ncaa.org/Docs/NCAANewsArchive/2007/Association-wide/index.html>
- Knapp, L. & Sreenivasan, H. (2011, March 29). The March Madness money trail. *PBS NewsHour*. Retrieved from <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/2011/03/the-march-madness-money-trail.html>.

- Mill, J.S. (1863/1969). Utilitarianism. In J.M. Smith & E. Sosa (Eds.), *Mill's Utilitarianism* (pp. 31-88). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- National Collegiate Athletic Association (2010). 2010-11 NCAA Division I Manual. Overland Park, KS: NCAA. http://grfx.cstv.com/photos/schools/beth/genrel/auto_pdf/2010-11NCAA.pdf.
- Noverr, D.A. (1983). *The games they played: sports in American history, 1865-1980*. Chicago, IL: Nelson-Hall Inc.
- Patel, N. (2011, March 25). March Madness: one and done. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved from <http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/sportingscene/2011/03/march-madness-one-and-done.html>
- Smith, S. (2010, April 2). As NCAA coaches get paid, schools pay price. Retrieved from http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-503983_162-20001638-503983.html.
- Suggs, W. (2004). Big money in college sports flows to the few. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 51(10), A46-A47. Retrieved from EBSCOhost.
- Sundram, J.J.R. (2010). The Downside of Success: How Increased Commercialism Could Cost the NCAA Its Biggest Antitrust Defense. *Tulane Law Review*, 85(2), 543-570. Retrieved from EBSCOhost.
- Swanson, R. A. & Spears, B. (1995). *History of Sport and Physical Education in the United States*. (4th ed.). Dubuque, IA: Wm. C. Brown Communications, Inc.
- Thamel, P., & Sandomir, R. (2010, March 13). Why would the N.C.A.A. expand its tournament? It's about the money. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/14/sports/ncaabasketball/14ncaa.html>.
- The National Collegiate Athletic Association Revised Budget for Fiscal Year Ended August 31, 2011 (2011, February 15). Retrieved from <http://www.ncaa.org/wps/wcm/connect/6d3874004e51aac96e0d622cf56f2f3/2010-11+Condensed+Budget.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CACHEID=6d3874004e51aac96e0d622cf56f2f3>.
- Wiebert, S. (2011, March 30). NCAA president: Time to discuss players getting sliver of revenue pie. *USA Today*. Retrieved from: http://www.usatoday.com/sports/college/mensbasketball/2011-03-29-ncaa-pay-for-play-final-four_N.html.
- Wieberg, S., & Berkowitz, L. (2009, April 2). NCAA, colleges pushing the envelope with sports marketing. *USA Today*. Retrieved from http://www.usatoday.com/sports/college/2009-04-01-marketing-cover_N.html.
- Wilbon, M. (2009, June 25). The 'one-and-done' song and dance. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/24/AR2009062403396.html>.
- Wolverton, B. (2006). Presidents flex their muscles. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 52(34), A48-A51.

AUTHOR'S ADDRESS:

Robert C. Schneider
Department of Kinesiology, Sport Studies and Physical Education
State University of New York
350 New Campus Drive
Brockport, New York 14420, USA
Email: rschneid@brockport.edu