**"IF IT DOES NOT MAKE MONEY, IT DOES NOT MAKE SENSE"**

**A MUST READ FOR BLACK AMERICA**

**THE BRAINWASHING OF BLACK AMERICA THROUGH RUNAWAY COMMERICALISM AND TELEVISION EXPOSURER THAT HAS MADE WHITE COLLEGE ATHLETICS SUPERIOR TO BLACK COLLEGE ATHLETICS IN THE POST INTERGRATION ERA**

**On this January 20, 2014, as the nation celebrates the MLK national holiday, I am sitting down to write this article on the economic state of historically black universities (HBCU's) versus historically white institutions (HWI) in the era of the two main income generating sports activities - basketball and football. Big-time college sports are fully commercialized. Billions of dollars flow through them each year. To quote Taylor Branch in his article, "The Shame of College Sports," "The NCAA makes money, and enables corporations to make money from the unpaid labor of young athletes. Slavery analogies should be used carefully. College athletes are not slaves. Yet to survey the scene, corporation and advertising agencies and universities are enriching themselves on the backs of uncompensated young men, whose status as "student athletes" deprives them of the right of due process guaranteed by the Constitution -- is to catch an unmistakable whiff of the plantation. Which the NCAA justifies its existence…"amateurism" and "student athlete"…are cynical, legalistic confections propagated by the universities so they can exploit the skills and the fame of young athletes. Here two leading civil rights historians, John S. Knight and James L. Knight, make the case of paying college athletes and reveals how a separate lawsuits working their way through the courts could destroy the NCAA. "**

**I need to first provide you with a historical overview of how the NCAA got control of television rights for colleges and universities in this country. In 1951, the NCAA seized upon a set of events to gain control of intercollegiate sports. First, the organization hired a young white college dropout named Walter Byers as executive director, a journalist who was not 30 years old.**

**Byers was able to see an opportunity in two contemporaneous scandals -- one at the College of William and Mary for counterfeiting grades of players, the other at five New York colleges and universities ,along with the University of Kentucky basketball team, point shaving in basketball. The scandals posed a crisis of credibility for collegiate athletics and nothing in the NCAA's feeble record would have led anyone to expect real reform. Byers managed to impanel a small infractions board to set penalties without waiting for a full convention of NCAA schools, which would have inclined toward forgiveness. Then he lobbied a University of Kentucky dean…A.D. Karan, former football coach and future university president… not to contest the NCAA's dubious legal position (the association**

**Had no legal authority to penalize the universities); pleading that college sports must do something to restore public support. His gamble succeeded when Kirwan reluctantly accepted a landmark precedent: the Kentucky basketball team was suspended for the entire 1952-53 basketball season. The Kentucky case created an aura of centralized command for the NCAA office that barely existed. At the same time, a colossal misperception gave Byers leverage to mine gold.**

**With new TV sets proliferating the nation in 1951, the NCAA convention voted 161-7 to outlaw television games except for a specific few licensed by the NCAA staff. Nobody could yet imagine the revenue bonanza that television represented. All but two schools complied; the University of Pennsylvania and Notre Dame protested the order contracts for home game television broadcast, claiming the right to make their own decision. In effect, Byers mobilized the college world to isolate the two holdouts in what sportswriters call "the BIG BLUFF."**

**In 1954, Notre Dame and Penn came into the fold. Two years earlier Byers conducted exclusive negotiations with the new televisions on behalf of every college team. On June 6, 1952, Byers, with the assistance of attorney Joe Rauh Jr., signed a one-year contract with NBC for $1.14 million for a carefully restricted 11 game broadcast package. Of course historically black colleges were left out.**

**In 1984 the Honorable John D. Dingell, chair of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigation of the Committee on Energy and Commerce had oversight hearing on**

**the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling invalidating the NCAA control. Over television football contracts and the consequences, this was first and the only congressional hearing ever held on the impact of that landmark decision and, its impact on the nation's black colleges and universities.**

**The Subcommittee On Oversight and Investigations of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, which focused on television contracts for colleges and universities under NCAA control. This effort was spearheaded by George Wilson, nationally syndicated news columnist and host of "G.W. On The Hill, nationally syndicated radio show" and I.**

**One of the participants at the hearing was Grambling State University legendary coach Eddie Robinson. His written testimony, which he submitted to the congressional record, including the statements that follow.**

**"From the offset, let me be emphatic in saying that I do not feel that there is any other organization that has the sensitivity possessed by the NCAA for college athletics.**

**This is not a criticism of the Court's decision, based on law; rather, it is a reflection of my experience with the NCAA College Football Television program over the last 30 years, and it is of great concern to all its membership.**

**The made provisions for dividing college television revenues among Division I-A, Division I-AA, Division II, and Division III football playing schools.**

**Here are a few important facts to support this contention. In 1982, schools in Division I - A, the nation's biggest football powers, received $52 million in television receipts under NCAA control.**

**Eighty-three members of this august group-- including the College Football Association (CFA), Big 10 and PAC 10 -- divided $49.5 million of the $52 million allocated for Division I-A schools that year.**

**Concurrently in 1982, Division I-AA College received $5 million for regular season appearances and $750,000 additionally for semi-final and championship play-off games.**

**Television shares for Division II schools amounted to $520,000 in play off money. Forty-five thousand dollars was paid to Division II for four regular season games.**

**For Division competition, Division III members received $150, 000 and $22,500 for four regular season games.**

**Under the NCAA formula, the nine I- AA conferences were guaranteed two regionals?? each year worth $620,000 per appearance. This was the same amount paid Division I-A schools for regional telecasts.**

**In 1983, teams in Division I-A received $54.6 - million in television revenues. Again as in 1982, the payoff for 83 schools-- including the College Football Association, PSC 10 and Big 10-- amounted to 53.3 million of the $54.6 allocated to Division I-A members.**

**During the same period in 1983, revenue for Division I-AA schools increased to $6.4-million for regional television.**

**It is very important to note that only Division I-A schools make national television appearances. The only exception being a nationally televised game between Grambling and Morgan State in 1971.The NCAA increased its coverage for \_\_\_\_??in 1982 and 1983 for Division I-A and Division I-AA through additional supplementary cable television packages, amounting to $385,000 per appearance Gentlemen, from the foregoing, I have provided access to an objective comprehensive overview of how the NCAA to the television market place for all segments of its memberships.**

**It was good for college athletics and reflective of the democratic process. To some degree, everyone received a piece of the pie.**

**We lost at a minimum $7,800,000 with the termination of the NCAA program and received nothing in return. Indeed, everybody loses, because television packages negotiated with the networks this year by the big schools fall well below what was received by the NCAA last season. Not only does hard times loom ahead for Division I AA, Division II, and Division III programs, but a number of Division I programs face major revenue shortfalls.**

**This situation is disturbing. Greed has replaced sound judgment. Revenues from television**

**have been the lifeblood for I-AA leagues like the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC) and the Southwest Athletic Conference (SWAC), the only two HBCU athletic conferences in Divisions IAA.**

**Naturally, the loss of these revenues will have a devastating effect. It will mean the curtailment of a number of programs and create funding problems for federal compliance with Title IX.**

**In the SWAC conference, basketball tournaments for men and women's golf, baseball, tennis and track and field championships -- all funded from television revenues, face serious cutbacks.**

**Indeed, money received from television since 1977, has enabled the SWAC conference to wipe out a $100,000 in operating debt, build a league surplus of over a half million dollars, and allow the SWAC to operate at the level of other conferences our size across this country.**

**Television has been the SWAC lifeblood. It was a public relations catalyst, enabling the SWAC to showcase our programs, and a boom for recruiting. It made possible a wide variety of programs for student participation.**

**Gate attendance of college football games has more than doubled since NCAA controls were instituted some 30 years ago. Our conference , the SWAC, led the nation in Division I-AA attendance last fall with 709,160 fans in 43 games, a direct spin-off of interest crested by television.**

**As a spectator listening to coach Eddie Robinson on the day of the hearing, I will never forget what former head coach of Penn State Joe Paterno, told coach Eddie Robinson.**

**" Eddie we don't run a welfare system for the Gramblings of this world. If you don't hire marketing people and go out and find your own advertising dollars, you will starve to death."**

**I have to put these issues in today's context; the public recently watched thirty-five bowl games, which featured 65 FBS universities in the 5 conferences that largely control college football -- the main financial driver being Division I, which are all HWI's institutions. The BCS bowl series has been controlled by the 5 major football power conferences from its conception. The series is made up of the** [**American Athletic Conference**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Athletic_Conference)**,** [**Atlantic Coast Conference**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atlantic_Coast_Conference)**,** [**Big East Conference**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_East_Conference_(1979%E2%80%932013))**,** [**Big Ten Conference**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_Ten_Conference)**,** [**Pacific-12 Conference**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacific-12_Conference)**,** [**South Eastern Conference**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southeastern_Conference) **and** [**Notre Dame**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Notre_Dame_Fighting_Irish_football). **is an** [**independent**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NCAA_Division_I_FBS_independent_schools) **of these 5 conferences, also make of the major division I power conferences in basketball. This year's ESPN's revenue sharing for BCS conferences in bowls for the 2013-14 football seasons was approximately $28.5 million. This year each of the six major conferences received $30 million for postseason play, with the SEC receiving the largest payout of $52 million.**

**For this 2013 post season, according to an article by Chris Smith in Sports Money dated 12/10/13, the six automatic qualifying (AQ) conferences are each guaranteed one slot in a BCS bowl. Each automatic bid is worth about $23.9 million. The four remaining BCS bids are ordinarily doled out as large berths. This year's recipients are Alabama and Oklahoma in the Sugar Bowl and Ohio State and Clemson in the Orange Bowl. Each of those four teams' conferences receives an at-large payout of 6.3 million. That means the ACC, Big Ten, Big 12 and SEC were each guaranteed $30 million from this past bowl season. These payouts had nothing to do with the payouts for the major networks like Fox, CBS or ABC.**

**Because there are no HBCU conferences classified as FBS in division I football, the Mid Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC) and the Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC) are classified as FCS, formerly known as division IAA. Games that are televised by ESPN during regular football season that are HBCU's receive very small payouts for appearing on ESPN. The only annual network contract game is the Bayou Classic, which is televised by NBC. Grambling and Southern University split a $1.3 million, which is not all the revenue from appearing on NBC television network. I recently learned talking to a source that is very familiar with the current ESPN contracts with the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC)) and the South Western Athletic Conference (SWAC). The contract payout for the football and basketball range from $80,000 up to range $130,000 over seven years.**

**The New Bounce Network based out of Atlanta, Georgia, which is company is majority owned and operated by African-Americans, with Martin Luther King III and former U.N. ambassador and Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young part of the initial ownership team. That carries basketball and football games for the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association ( CIAA), the payout for the HBCU's. Appearing on the Bounce is nothing not one dime they simply get the exposure.**

**We must turn our attention to another major revenue stream from which HBCU's receive nothing. According to an article, "The Shame of College Sports" by Taylor Branch. I'm not hiding,"Sonny Vaccarco told a closed hearing at the Willard Hotel in Washington, D.C. in**

**2001. "We want to put our materials on the bodies of your athletes, and the best way to do that is to buy your school. Or buy your coach."**

**Vaccaro's audience, the members of the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, bristled. These were eminent reformers-among them the president of the National Collegiate Athletic Association, two former heads of the U.S. Olympic Committee, and several university presidents and chancellors. The Knight Foundation, a nonprofit that takes an interest in**

**college athletics as part of its concern with civic life, had tasked them with saving college sports from runaway commercialism as embodied by the likes of Vaccaro, who since signing his pioneering shoe contract with Michael Jordon in 1984, has built sponsorship empires successively at Nike, Adidas and Reebok. Not all the members could hide their scorn for the "sneaker pimp" of school yard hustle, who boasted of writing checks for millions to everybody in higher education. "Why," asked Bryce Jordon, the president emeritus of Penn State, "should a university be an advertising medium for your industry?"**

**Vaccaro did not blink, "they shouldn't, sir," he replied. You sold your souls, and you're going to continue selling them. You can be very moral and righteous in asking me that question, sir, " Vaccaro added with irrepressible good cheer, "but there's not one of you in this room that's going to turn down any of our money. You're going to take it, I can only offer it."**

**But what Vaccaro said in 2001 was true and it's true now: corporations offer money so they can profit from the glory of college athletics, and the universities grab it. In 2010, despite the faltering economy, a single college athletic league , the football - crazed Southeastern Conference (SEC), became the first to crack the billion-dollar barrier in athletics receipts.**

**The Big Ten pursued closely at $905 million. That money comes from a combination of tickets sales, concessions sales, merchandising, licensing fees, and boasters and other sources-- but a great deal comes from television contracts.**

**All these facts and figures relate to revenue generated for historically white colleges and universities. How in the hell did our historically black colleges and universities end up in such**

**financial straights?**

**Let me sum it up in one word "integration" and this was stated by one of greatest legendary black college coaches of all time FAMU's the late Jake Gaither. When he was asked by a local news reporter, what was his position on integration, Coach Gaither answered, "The worst thing that could happen to black college football".**

**I totally agree when you look back at the reality of the times, the top black athletics had to attend black colleges and universities, because it was the law of the land --segregation. There were no flood gates on in leagues like the Southern Conference (SEC) or Big Ten. The top talented athletes in football and basketball could not attend those universities.**

**This point is clearly documented in the film "BLACK MAGIC" coproduced by Earl "Pearl" Monroe and ESPN, which does an outstanding job telling the history of blacks in basketball in this country and the racism and struggles the black athlete had to endure, which was true in all areas of sports. For fifty years the HBCU presidents have been asleep at the wheel, when it comes to television contracts in intercollegiate sports involving basketball and football.**

**In 1984, my company was asked by Mr. Niles White to prepare a Position Statement On The Impact Of The 1984 United States Supreme Court's Ruling Invalidating The NCAA And The Effect On Historically Black Colleges. I worked very closely with Dr. Wilma Roscoe, at that time the Vice President of the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, which represents all of our HBCU's in legislative matters in Congress and the White House. My company worked without any compensation, because I relealized the importance of the hearing and the impact it would have for the future of black college football.**

**Dr. Roscoe said something to me that was truly profound "You have to get one of the black college presidents to buy into the idea and sell it to our HBCU's presidents "Their Ego's Will Not Allow Them to except the Idea from You." After wasting several months with that approach, we got no takers. We simply invited 30 black college presidents to the hearing; only two showed up: former FAMU president Dr.**  **Frederick S. Humphries, and Norfolk's former president Dr. Harrison B. Wilson, with the former CIAA and MEAC commissioners with Coach Eddie Robinson from Grambling. The congress was packed with presidents from historically white universities, who were also invited because the ruling also impacted on the smaller white institutions. The bill was converted into a Title nine bill H.R.3233; nothing of substance came from the hearing on television contracts. But Grambling got the NBC contract for the Bayou Football Classic, because there was not enough support from our HBCU presidents demanding that the revenue from the television contracts be replaced by the networks.**

**In my next article, I will provide several plans of action and possible solutions to the television revenues going to the five major FBS conferences; and several strategies that HBCU's could implement to make a big difference today.**