

Steroids in baseball essay



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The Greatest Players of All Time*In recent history American culture has become more and more dominated by sports. Out of all of these sports baseball is considered to be Americas pastime. Over the last couple years Americas pastime has come under scrutiny about some of its players using anabolic steroids and other performance enhancing drugs. In an interview with Sports Illustrated, Major League Baseball commissioner Bud Selig said, ... hopefully we can figure out ways to solve this problem. It needs to be solved. There is no one Ive talked to who can say it is not a problem. Now the question is, What can we do about it? (41). The commissioner is absolutely correct in saying that the steroids issue is a problem. Without a doubt the steroid issue is bringing the integrity of the game into question. This steroid problem reaches farther than one might think. This issue was drawing so much interest President Bush mentioned it in last years State of the Union address (Random and off season). If the President of the United States feels that this is a big enough problem to mention in his State of the Union address, then this problem effects all Americans. Another way it effects all Americans is that US tax dollars are being used by the federal government to investigate the players who have been accused of using anabolic steroids. Finally, the steroid problem effects anyone who is a sports fan because these are the sports stars of our generation. If all of their accomplishments are negated by steroids, then we will have no one to represent our generation. I have been watching sports, including baseball, for almost my entire eighteen years of living. When I was little I played baseball and wanted to grow up and be just like the players I saw on the television. I also collected hundreds of baseball cards all through my childhood. Through all of this I have become very knowledgeable on the

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game of baseball. To see steroids challenge the integrity of the game deeply concerns me. The reaction of many people is to find all of the people who have used steroids and ban them from the game and the record books.

These players are cheaters and do not deserve to hold records, be hall of famers, or even continue playing the game. By allowing these players to go unpunished, society is setting a bad example for the youth of America who admire these sports icons. Accomplishments of players decades ago are being falsely smashed by these athletes who are being assisted by illegal, performance enhancing drugs. I do agree that the players who are using anabolic steroids are cheaters. It is sad that great accomplishments and records set by honest players are being smashed by juiced up athletes. In his Sports Illustrated column Rick Reilly states, I believe Barry Bonds should go straight to the Hall of Fame, too, even though I know that hes a cheater and that the second half of his career was as phony as Cheez Whiz (118). I also sympathize with players who are playing the game honestly only to be outdone by dishonest players. The youth of America cannot be shown that cheating is bad, but it is also okay and you can get away with it.

If these players arent going to be totally axed from the game, record books, and hall of fame then we should let the world and future generations know that there is an asterisk next to these accomplishments. That asterisk would say: Records are in question because of widespread use of anabolic steroids (Verducci 38). This way we are punishing cheaters while not totally obliterating their accomplishments. Players who have played the game honestly will see the accomplishments of dishonest players marred by this historical asterisk. The youth of America will learn from this that there is no

honor in cheating. Let all the people today and of future generations know that this era of inflated numbers and hall of famers is under scrutiny of widespread anabolic steroid use. I understand that anyone opposed to putting an asterisk in the records books and in the hall of fame would say that this is not enough. These players cheated, and cheaters should be totally wiped out of the game just as Pete Rose was for betting on baseball. Rick Reilly expresses this opinion when he says, Hey, at least he (Barry Bonds) didnt cheat like Pete Rose by betting on his team several times to win. Now that will kill a sport. While I recognize that players who used steroids are cheaters, they cannot be removed entirely from the game because that would destroy an entire generation of baseball. Instead of destroying an entire generation of baseball I suggest that we place an asterisk next to all of the accomplishments and records of players who have used steroids. This asterisk would let everyone know that these achievements may not be one hundred percent authentic. However, this still allows athletes of my generation to be recognized for what they have accomplished. This asterisk would also still keep intact the integrity of the game which has fallen under attack during this steroid debate. The main reason we cannot totally erase all players suspected of using steroids is that steroids arent the only reason for the inflated numbers of the past ten to twelve years in baseball. Tom Verducci states in his article that, The decade also has witnessed an unprecedented boom in the building of ballparks, many with reduced foul territory, closer outfield fences and improved lighting each a condition that improves hitting. There is also better manufacturing of equipment, a tighter strike zone, four expansion teams and continued advances in nutrition and training (39). Another reason we

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cannot erase these players from the game is that this is not the first time in baseball history that players were accused of cheating. In 1919 the Black Sox betting scandal challenged the integrity of the game as much, if not more so, than steroid use. Teams and players were accused of fixing games so that sports gamblers could make the most money possible. These gamblers would then kickback money to the players for fixing the game. At least with steroid use the outcome of entire games isn't fixed. Also in 1985 several Pittsburgh Pirates players were accused of using and trafficking cocaine. Cocaine is just as illegal as steroids in the eyes of the law. By not entirely erasing these suspected cheaters from the game, baseball can save its integrity while punishing wrongdoers. By just asterisking the accomplishments of steroid users everyone benefits. Baseball players of this generation and of older generations will still be recognized for what they have accomplished on the field. Players today won't have their accomplishments erased. Players of past generations will still see that their accomplishments have no asterisk placed next to them. Fans will be able to trust the statistics they see without having almost our entire generation of players erased from the history books. Finally, the youth of America will learn that cheating is wrong. Bonds blasts media for continued steroid questions. CNN 22 Feb. 2005: n. pag. 22 Feb. 2005 . Path: MLB; Bonds Blasts Media.

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