

Chapter One: The National Football League and America: Inherently Connected

As the National Football League (N.F.L.) season was about to commence in August of 2005, the nation was anxious for the beginning of the football season. As an article in *Sports Illustrated* pointed out; “Fans are so skeptical of steroids-tainted baseball, so put off by the ego-driven N.B.A. [National Basketball Association] and so indifferent toward the lockout-scarred N.H.L. [National Hockey League] that they are hungrier for the upcoming N.F.L. season than for any of the previous 85”.¹ 2005 marked a distinct time in professional sports. Baseball was marred by the use of steroids by its most pivotal and high profile players, therefore dropping attendance from the already long and mundane one hundred and sixty two game season. As well, the N.B.A. was still reeling from the fight, rap stars dropping from the league and general “fan” indifference that had put off spectators. The N.H.L. did not even have a 2005 season so that organization did not have much going for it in terms of fans. The N.F.L. seemed as if it was the last refuge for the professional sporting fans and it did not disappoint. Training camps and regular season games had numerous fan centers that made a day out at the football game more enjoyable for every member of a family.

Yet, professional football was not always seen as the top sport on the American landscape. In fact, at its inception in 1920, the N.F.L. was seen as an abomination of American society as a whole, perverting the whole concept of football being a teacher and promoter of the ideals that had been traditionally held by amateur sports. As well, college football and professional baseball had been the top spectator sports in America ever since the turn of the twentieth century. With the negative connotations of the pro

¹ Peter King, “Bigger Than Ever”, *Sports Illustrated*, Volume 103, Number 5 (August 8, 2005), pp. 39-40.

game and the popular trend of spectators going against the NFL, it is hard to believe that the founders of the league had the gall to go against the grain of current thinking and keep at it long enough to make sure that the league had a firm hold onto the American psyche.

To truly understand why the growth of professional football is so relevant to American society, and the other way around as well, is to understand how a form of entertainment can capture the hearts and minds of a people. So many other forms of entertainment have followed the route that the N.F.L. initially traveled and have had such an impact on their individual societies. Back in the times of Emperor Vespasiano in 72 A.D., the Roman Coliseum held numerous battles between gladiators and slaves, animals and other such beings.² These battles, although first done in market places in front of only a hand full of spectators, grew to epic proportions and venues. These bloody combats to the death made were a testament to the Roman society and their desire to promote a militaristic and powerful image and the people of Rome bought into it completely. In fact, some historians say that when Christianity came in and took a hold of the Roman Empire and ended gladiator contests, the state of Rome instantly soured and soon was over run by outside pressures.³ To say that an empire's collapse is due to the halting of a form of popular entertainment is a bit short sighted, yet the impact that these games had on Rome cannot be denied. Professional football, as well, cannot be denied in how it has impacted the culture that it grew from.

The National Football League was made by men who earned their money by gambling, an all to accepted and allowable practice during the early part of the twentieth

² "The Coliseum," <http://www.cap.nsw.edu>.

³ "Warrior Challenge," <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/warriorchallenge/gladiators/time.html>, 2003.

century, and these men played upon the ideals of the time to make professional football go over with the American audience. These men saw football as having the classic characteristic of embodying the two things America loves, “it’s the ultimate team sport, and it’s violent”.⁴ With these two qualities, the owners of the original N.F.L. teams found a way to make money. People would pay to see these hulking giants beat up on each other because, just like the Roman’s who packed the Coliseum to see gladiators cut each other up, it is a part of human nature to want to witness pain and suffering, as well as joy and triumph. As well, the owners saw that America was desperately looking for heroes ever since the ending of the First World War. Disillusionment had crept into the social mindset of America and role models were being sought out from just about any avenue of society. Football players were no exception. From here the social mindset began to change and the game and its members became more widely accepted with each and every high profile name to come along. It took time, but the perseverance of the N.F.L. won out, as did the American society for allowing football to truly take hold of the social consciousness during its formative years.

Even from the beginnings of the N.F.L., many indelible parallels can be made between it and the issues effecting American society. Whether it be the 1960s and the race relations within the league, or the 1980s and the prevalence of cocaine use by its players, the N.F.L. had to deal with all of these issues that effected American society. Yet, all of this began with the ideals of the 1920s, the time in which the league got its start. With the beginnings of the National Football League, an inherent connection can be made between how the league was run and American society on a whole.

⁴ Peter King, “Bigger Than Ever”, *Sports Illustrated*, Volume 103, Number 5 (August 8, 2005), p. 40.

Chapter Two: Historiographical Review

To bring validity to the idea that the N.F.L. was, and is, connected with the culture and society of America, much research was required on the topic. Opposite of public opinion though, there are many avenues for research when exploring the topic of professional football. There is the Professional Football Researchers Association, run by Bob Carroll, who publishes historical articles about pro football six times a year. As well, seeing as professional football is so closely related to American society, many scholarly articles, such as Steven Mintz *The Jazz Age: The American 1920s*, goes into how professional football adapted to the times that it was created in. The research also is dependent upon primary source documents, and with the 1920s not being so archaic; many databases have newspapers that can documents articles from back then. One such is the ProQuest Historical Newspapers The New York Times (1851 - 2003). An enormous storeroom for information can be accessed at this database, much of which deal with professional football and the times before professional football was even thought of. Yet, with all of these sources still other books were crucial to the writing of this paper.

One such book is Bob Oates' Football in America: Game of the Century. The main arguments of this book can be seen in the title itself. This work chronicles football from the inception of the game back in 1869 as Princeton and Rutgers faced off in the first collegiate game, all the way to Terrell Davis, the incomparable Bronco's running back who anchored two Super Bowl winning teams. It is a book that skims the surface of many of the focal points of the history of football but, in the end, deduces that football has become so popular in America because both share similar values, such as hard work and change, and because of the academics of the game are so fine tuned that it cannot

help but amaze and stun an audience. Oates writes in a manner that is extremely related to his profession, a sports writer on the West Coast. He offers many points that came from his extensive interviews with numerous legends of the sport, and these pearls of wisdom are exclusive to him.

David Maraniss, the author of When Pride Still Mattered: A Life of Vince Lombardi, a book which numerous historians cite as the most definitive biography's on the fabled head coach of Green Bay, views football through a social perspective. Although the book focuses on Vince Lombardi, who was not only a football coach, but a teacher whose classroom spread as the popularity of his rigid coaching style began to win him championships, Maraniss delves into football and America and how they are inherently connected. All of America in the 1960s and on became familiar with this man, enough to make him a "pop-icon" which surely shows how the popularity of the game was taking over the nation. Yet, by looking at the relationship that the United States had with the traditional Lombardi, a parallel can be made to how the nation felt about the men who embodied the traditional aspects of society that played in the early N.F.L.

Michael MacCambridge's America's Game: The Epic Story of How Pro Football Captured a Nation is an authoritative look at football from the 1940s to the present. MacCambridge describes the National Football League's meager beginnings to being the top professional sport in the nation. His work picks up in the 1940s as the N.F.L. had just crowned the Cleveland Rams as their champions. These champions did not celebrate as the Steeler's did right after Super Bowl XL, they came out in the "red" and were forced to either close their organization or change venues. Football had encompassed the east coast and mid-west for two decades and the appeal of the game was on a steep decline.

The N.F.L. was facing many challenges and it needed to make revolutionary moves to right the direction they were headed in. It is from when the Rams moved from Cleveland to Los Angeles that sparked a sixty-year series of changes that led the N.F.L. to become something more than a sport in America. This book also describes how the race relations of the U.S. impacted the game.

When it comes to primary source documents, George S. Halas' Halas: An Autobiography is rich in view of early professional football from one of the men who actually started the league. As Halas was an innovator and a pioneer who saw his creation, the N.F.L., rise from regional fame to national prominence. In his autobiography, he discusses the exact means he took to help make this league, and his Chicago Bears excel. He does so by quoting other men who helped form the league, providing documents to support his claims and giving exclusive thoughts about the entire process from small band of vagues to a multimillion-dollar business.

Supplementing the autobiography of George Halas, Jeff Davis' Papa Bear: The Life and Legacy of George Halas describes just where myth and fact met and crossed in Halas' earlier work. It is a commentary on Halas' words, but it also gives some insight as to what the Papa Bear may have left out or not alluded to in his book. Davis shows how this stern patriarchal figure helped pave the way for the N.F.L. to be as popular as it is today. Through his four decades as coach and a six-decade tenure as owner of the Chicago Bears, Halas has influenced just about every decision the N.F.L. made from 1920-1981. Yet, it is during his time in the 1920s that really paved the way for the stubborn nature of the NFL that made it so hard to give in to the financial and social attitudes that worked against the sport.

In Chris Willis' Old Leather: An Oral History of Early Pro Football in Ohio, 1920-1935, Willis shows the historically "Ohioan" roots of pro football by using the people who played it, watched it and administered it all in this "Fertile Crescent" of professional football. Such a primary source tool was essential to the research involved in this paper and to add to that, Willis adds commentary and some revisions to whenever the interviewee may have forgotten a piece of information.

All of these sources have helped solidify the argument that professional football is deeply connected with American society in various eras.

Chapter Three: The Stage Was Set For Professional Football

Before the posh offices on Park Avenue, before the multimillion-dollar contracts, even before the glitz and glamour that has become the Super Bowl, there was Ralph Hay's Hupmobile showroom located between Second Street and Cleveland Avenue in Canton, Ohio. On September 17th, 1920, this little automobile showroom was occupied by twelve representatives of established semi-professional football teams and teams that had yet to be fielded. The representatives were primarily from small industrial towns such as Decatur and Racine, Illinois, Canton, Columbus and Dayton, Ohio where football had already won over the crowds of blue-collar workers.⁵ As the men sat on the running boards of the newest Jordan Hupmobiles and Pierce-Arrows, they were busily discussing the reasons as to why they were called to the meeting.

Professional Football's Beginnings

For years professional football was played in small confederations, mostly in small towns like the ones represented in Hay's automobile showcase, and never actually had an organized league to show off the best and brightest that the post-collegiate game had to offer. Besides that, many different authorities of the college game dismissed professional football from the time of its inception.

Professional football had been stagnating on a substandard level ever since November 12, 1892 when William W. "Pudge" Heffelfinger accepted five hundred dollars by the Allegheny Athletic Club of Pittsburgh to play, making him the first

⁵ Chris Willis, *Old Leather: An Oral History of Early Pro Football in Ohio, 1920-1935*, (Lanham, 2005), pp. 3,4.

professional football player.⁶ The floodgates had opened and through them came any man who had little more than a speck of athletic ability and a need for cash. Not only that, but the collegiate rankings began to feel the negative effects of paid professionals. Many college players would play for their university on Saturday and then play for as many as five professional teams for the rest of the week. It only made sense for these college kids to go out and exploit their talents for cash while they still could. The rigors of college practices, games and classes, had made time short for these young men. Jobs were hard enough to come by without adding to that the time constraints these men had. Logically speaking, for only two hours of toil, the players could receive anywhere from twenty-five to one hundred and fifty dollars. It was too much for a college student to turn down, especially because the attitude of the time urged them to be taking their professional status in their own hands. All the while, in the back of their minds, these collegian athletes knew that they were a part of an era that advocated a “better” life for all and to make their lives better professional football was a viable outlet.

As professional football was beginning, the Progressive Era in the United States was in full swing. Democracy was being spread to nations outside of America, social reforms such as regulations on big business and its abuse of their labor force were beginning to seem as if the lives of the average workers was getting easier and corrupt governmental officials were being ousted from their positions. The Progressive Era gave many Americans a renewed, if not just perceived, sense of the “self”. People were changing various aspects of society for the, assumed, better and this inspired others to change parts of themselves to make a difference within the nation. Theodore Roosevelt, a Progressive himself, saw this era as a way for the nation to improve upon itself and what

⁶ William W. Heffelfinger, *This Was Football*, (New York, 1954). p. 13.

better way to do that than to improve the physical health of the youth. He saw football as the vehicle to do so; “While they study they should study just as hard as they play football in a match game. It is wise to obey the homely old adage, ‘Work while you work; play while you play’”.⁷ If the president of America promoted working hard and playing hard, a valid case could be made for college players to play for money; to meld both work and play. As well, if football helped focus the physical abilities of the youth and teach them the values of hard work, why should these lessons end upon graduation? Roosevelt says that, “we have a right to expect of the American boy ... that he shall turn out to be a good American man”, so why should football, as a profession, be so looked down upon?⁸ If “good” American boys were learning the right way to live on the gridiron, would they not be benefited to continue this education throughout their entire working career?

Critics of the Professional Game

Many college coaches viewed professional football and a poor way to create “good” American men. Amos Alonzo Stagg, a pioneer of the development of football throughout the early part of the twentieth century and coach of the University of Chicago football program, was a staunch protester of the professional game. Although he held similar beliefs to those held by Roosevelt in regards to football being an excellent teacher of character and morals, he felt that that was better suited for the collegiate level. A statement by Stagg captured the feeling he held towards paid professional football players: “Under the guise of fair play but countenancing rank dishonesty in playing men

⁷ Theodore Roosevelt, *The Strenuous Life; Essays and Addresses*, (New York, 1900), p. 28.

⁸ *Ibid.* p. 23.

under assumed names, scores of professional teams have sprung up... These teams are bidding hard for college players” and by doing so this breaks “the influences of the game (which) are predominantly on the side of amateur principles, right ideals, proper standards and wholesome conditioning”.⁹ In Stagg’s view, the early professional ranks used underhanded tactics to draw attention to their teams. They would lure “innocent”, but needy, collegiate athletes out of school to play for money. By doing so the athlete receives money and the team receives more gate receipts because they are touting these players who have gained reasonable fame on the amateur level. Although such a practice did exploit the names of college men, it served as a way for students to make money. Stagg, an advocate for the higher ideals of sport, is looking through “rose colored glasses” when he looks at football. He sees the sport solely as a way for young men to reach their potential as full functioning members of society upon graduation from school. Although this idealistic attitude towards football inspires awe and a determined mind-set, it does not change the fact that to be successful in the real world, one must make money. As it was told to Red Grange, one of the National Football League’s first true “superstars”, when he pondered whether to become a professional; “(You) may bring into a butcher shop many books of clippings but after (you have) exhibited them all, the butcher will say ‘The chops are still 68 cents’”.¹⁰ As long as money was being given to these young men, they would rarely shy away from it. Such a progressive attitude set up the growing popularity of professional football.

⁹ “Pro Elevens Hurt Sport, Says Stagg,” *New York Times*, November 2, 1923.

¹⁰ George S. Halas, *Halas: An Autobiography*, (Chicago, 1986), pp. 102-103.

Hero Worship and America After World War I

Ever since the Cincinnati Red Stockings went on a whirlwind sixty-five game win streak beginning in 1869, America's love affair with professional baseball had only increased.¹¹ Young men from all over the country had looked up to the pitchers and sluggers of the National and American Leagues for years, and in the early part of the twentieth century, the love affair with college football had been growing. Men like Camp, Stagg, "Pop" Warner and Knute Rockne were household names. These two giants of the sporting world dominated the headlines and gate receipts. Sports writers, such as Grantland Rice, portrayed baseball and college football players as larger than life idols, and the public fell instantly for these new icons of society. The way that these poets of the press box wrote about teams and individual athletes captivated a nation that was in a search for idols ever since the First World War had made a whole generation weary of any idealistic prose, whether it was from the government or the daily press. This new generation wanted something different from their society. War had left them bitter and wanting of heroes who did not speak of sport in terms of life and death, but who possessed "superhuman" athletic ability. So when Rice wrote about the heroes of the 1922 Notre Dame and Army game, in this way;

Outlined against a blue, gray October sky the Four Horsemen rode again. In dramatic lore they are known as famine, pestilence, destruction and death. These are only aliases. Their real names are: Stuhldreher, Miller, Crowley and Layden. They formed the crest of the South Bend cyclone before which another fighting Army team was swept over the precipice at the Polo Grounds this afternoon as 55,000 spectators peered down upon the bewildering panorama spread out upon the green plain below.¹²

¹¹ Sean Lahman, "A Brief History of Baseball: Part I: Origins of the Game," <http://www.baseball1.com/bb-data/e-hist-1.html>.

¹² William A. Harper, *How You Played the Game: The Life of Grantland Rice*, (New York, 1996), pp. 27-28.

he grabbed the collective mind of the nation and made them open their minds to a new type of hero, one who plays a game for the intrinsically good values associated with the sport.

The hero worship of athletes after World War I fostered a strong bond between those in the sporting world and the American public. With this bond, promoters and owners of professional football teams saw a way to make unheard of profits. After World War I, the economy of the United States was “booming” and investors were determined to sink their newly found capital into revolutionary and different ventures. The war-time economy of the United States had switched the nation that before was a debtor nation to a creditor nation within the span of five years. Munitions building and war related production had increased the trade that the U.S. was involved in and therefore the economy got a huge boost.¹³ Investments helped fuel the stock market and with this came more expendable money for a great portion of the population, a population that was more willing to spend on more risky investments than ever before.

A professional football league seemed at that moment an ideal place to invest. Many American people were engaging “in the rise of a consumer-oriented economy and of mass entertainment” due to the postwar notion that one should live for the moment because tomorrow was not guaranteed.¹⁴ Also, as noted by scholar Claude S. Fisher, Americans during this time period went through “a ‘commodification’ of leisure: the ascendancy of commercial recreation, such as vaudeville, movies, and professional sports

¹³ Hugh Rockoff, "US Economy in World War I," <http://eh.net/encyclopedia/article/Rockoff.WWI> 2005.

¹⁴ Steven Mintz, “The Jazz Age: The American 1920s,” http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/article_display.cfm?HHID=437, 2003.

over free pastimes, and indulgence in blatant consumerism”.¹⁵ Rather than going to play sports for themselves, the age of the spectator began to dawn. The rationale behind this shift in “doing” and “watching” lies within the shift in heroism that the nation was going through. Their heroes were men among boys, and to watch them inspired awe. People were willing to spend their hard earned dime to see these legends in the making tote around the pigskin.

Hence, when the meeting in Canton on that late summer evening in 1920 presented twelve such men with the opportunity to pool their resources to make a united football association, they were eager to join in. Whereas in the past many entrepreneurs would not sink the one hundred dollars it took to obtain a franchise in this new football league, now they had the money and the will to do so.¹⁶ If these investments were too risky with one’s own money, many of these men who met in Canton were willing to buy franchises with money that was not theirs. Men such as George Halas were backed by outside corporations, such as the A.E. Staley Starch Company and the Acme Meat Packing Corporation of Green Bay, Wisconsin, to fund their investment.¹⁷ These companies saw this new league as a form of public relations and advertisements and were willing to foot the bill for a team, just as long as their name was connected to the team. It was a risk, but for the first time in American history, people were willing to go out on that limb. It is with this cultural phenomenon that these twelve men in Canton formed the American Professional Football Association (A.P.F.A.), soon to be renamed the National Football League (N.F.L.). These men were on shaky ground with their investment, but

¹⁵ Claude S. Fischer, “Changes in Leisure Activities, 1890-1940,” *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 27, (1994), p. 36.

¹⁶ George S. Halas, *Halas: An Autobiography*, (Chicago, 1986), p. 60.

¹⁷ *75 Seasons: The Complete Story of the National Football League*, (Atlanta, 1994), p. 123.

the time was right for such a risk. The newfound wealth, the potential for an expanded audience, the new emphasis sports as a viable form of mass spectator entertainment—everything pointed to the possibility of a the success of the N.F.L.

To counteract all of the regionalism that had doomed previous semi-professional football leagues, the men who met in Canton that night believed that if they consolidate their efforts they might be able to make a decent return on their money, as well as showcasing the college players after they had graduated. Although new talent kept replacing the old in the college game, many fans still wanted to keep in touch with the heroes of past college seasons like Wilbur “Fats” Henry, Frederick Douglass “Fritz” Pollard and the incomparable Jim Thorpe. Professional football gave such fans a viable outlet for continuing to watch their favorite collegiate players after their graduation.

The Appeal and Fan Base

As college football had already grown interest in the game, it was a logical step for the professional game to evolve. Small towns on the eastern seaboard began to develop many professional organizations. These teams would travel to various other town athletic associations to have matches. Promoters of fields and stadiums began to take advantage of the ever-growing crowds attending football games and scheduled powerhouses of the nation to come and compete. One such event was entitled the “First Football World Series” held at Madison Square Garden in 1902. The Phillies and Athletics of Philadelphia, the Stars of Pittsburgh, and the Watertown, N.Y. Red and Blacks were the three most known teams to compete in this first world series. Other

teams from New York and New Jersey came out of relative obscurity to take on these more powerful opponents. Yet, as was the trend of the day, a little known team from Syracuse, aptly named the "All- Syracuse" team, went out and took on as many collegiate all stars as they could. Such infamous names as Glen (Pop) and Bill Warner, Bemis and Hawley Pierce, and Jack Wright were all taken on by the coach of the Syracuse team, Frank "Buck" O'Neill to help ensure that the title of "World Champions" would be theirs. These names drew crowds that were unheard of before within the professional football community. The teams got recognition, the promoter received a hefty sum of the gate, and the players got paid for a weekend's worth of football.¹⁸

As teams began to be known due to various "World Championships" being won, more and more interregional action could be seen in professional football. The Ohio teams would venture to Pennsylvania to try their luck against elevens from other towns. As could be seen with American society at the time, a need for a "true" champion was ever present. All of the competing regional leagues claimed they had the best and most fierce competition. With the exception of rare "World Series" between teams from different leagues, no true champion could be named. Yet, if the talent of the play of the leagues were evaluated, Ohio had, by far, the most extensive wealth of pre-National Football League talent.

The era of the A.P.F.A./N.F.L. between 1920 and 1946 could most likely be compared that that of the age of the Articles of Confederation in the United States. Just as there was no centralized power to dictate which direction the new nation would go in, the N.F.L had a whole bunch of teams that were loosely configured into one league. These

¹⁸ PFRA Researchers, "The First Football World Series: Experiment in the Garden," <http://www.footballresearch.com/articles/frpage.cfm?topic=1902ws>.

teams were still operating under the “semi-pro” mindset. Such a mindset saw one team look out solely for themselves and try to take as much from the league as possible. By basing a team around such an individualistic attitude hurt not only the team itself by making it vulnerable to outside perils such as a lacking gate and sponsorship, it also disabled the league as a whole. These teams wanted the most money that they could get so they all rushed to schedule the powerhouses of the early N.F.L. These mighty teams not only brought a superior level of competition, they brought more fans and therefore more money to the gate. Adversely, those teams that were weaker were often pushed aside when teams created their own schedules for the upcoming year. Many times, these feeble teams received no commitments for games and had to disband before the season even began. Hence, it was difficult to promote a unified league when there was no guarantee that all the teams who signed on initially would be there on opening day. Due to the problems with scheduling and other perils of the early professional game, finances were not streaming in as some of the “starry eyed” investors had hoped they would. The enthusiasm associated with the original investments in professional football was beginning to wane by the mid-1920s. For those owners who went into professional football knowing that it was a risky venture, especially one that financed a sport that had never truly won over a huge portion of the public, generally came out of the 1920s by the skin of their teeth. Yet, those investors who had decided to throw their money into a new and exciting business proposition, they were generally out of the league within two to three years. Yet, when those who could not fulfill their financial obligations were weeded out, there were always new ones who would take their place. During the 1920s over forty teams played at least one game for the A.P. F. A./ N.F.L.¹⁹ It was a time of immense

¹⁹ James Adler, “NFL Franchise Genealogy: Team Origins, Franchise Movement, and Name Changes,”

transition and change for the league and it truly lived up to the ideals of the *Roaring Twenties* that was spawned from. Even though a set team chart could not be made until the mid-1930s, the N.F.L. had something going and that something dealt with how they judged their athletes.

Race and the Early N.F.L.

Since its beginnings, the N.F.L. has been a catalyst for racial harmony. Unlike many of the other mainstream sports that dominated the day, professional football seemed to be more about what abilities a player had as opposed to a player's race. With such a mindset, players of varying backgrounds were able to shine if they possessed the ability to do so. Jim Thorpe, a Native American, was in a class all to himself. After the 1912 Olympics, where King Gustav V of Sweden gave him the distinction of being the "greatest all around athlete of the world", not even the scandal of getting his gold medals taken away due to the amateur rules of the Olympics could tarnish his value in the eyes of many Americans.²⁰ It was one of the first big breaks for the N.F.L. when Ralph Hay decided to recruit Thorpe to his Canton Bulldogs. His gifted moves and dominating field presence attracted thousands of new fans to the gridiron each and every weekend in the autumn.

Jim Thorpe was the envy of just about every person that followed football in America during the 1910s and 1920s. The actual records that he held are either broken or antiquated as of 2006, but his legend was that of timeless myth; Homer could not have

http://football.about.com/library/weekly/bl_genealogy20s.htm. 2005.

²⁰ "Indian Athletes No Longer Win Great Fame in Sports: Passing of Old Stars of Gridiron, Track and Diamond Leave Few of Note," *New York Times*, November 28, 1926.

made this Sac and Fox any larger than life. George Halas, founder of the Decatur Staleys, who later became the Chicago Bears, said of Thorpe “ I had long been a Thorpe fan. Thorpe was a tremendous man, a giant with a vast chest, broad shoulders and tree-trunk arms, capped with a shock of black hair. He was perfectly coordinated, faster than the wind, as sure footed as Indians are reputed to be”.²¹ With extremely limited press for professional football, it’s the descriptions and stories like these that made Thorpe so attractive to the average sporting enthusiast in America during the 1920s. It is a tactic that the National Football League has used for years to come to emphasize players and teams; first find a person that is appealing to the public and then create a myth around them to make them something just less than a Greek god. Thorpe was the first in a long line of players that were immortalized by the league, yet for the league to survive, he had to be. His was the name that brought in the New York Times, the Chicago Tribune and the Canton Repository to league games. His was the name that brought crowds in the tens of thousands of fans to this new brand of football. His was the name that the owners of the new N.F.L saw as their meal ticket in a time of uncertainty and change. As the league opened their season, Thorpe was their president; a figurehead who just wanted to play football as oppose to run the day to day operations of the league, and the owners were content with this prospect.

Thorpe and other high profile names guaranteed the N.F.L some sort of draw at the gate, but almost as importantly, it is here where the regionalism of the sport truly defined itself. Out of the twelve teams represented at Hay’s car showroom, all were from northern states. In fact, the N.F.L did not branch out below the Mason Dixon line until

²¹ George S. Halas, *Halas: An Autobiography*, (Chicago, 1986), pp. 50-1.

1960 with the formation of the Dallas Cowboys.²² Many scholars cite that this anomaly of leaving out over fifty percent of the nation is due to costs of travel and time spent away from home, which is where most of the players found steady jobs during the week. Yet, there is something that can be said that the differing mindsets of the nation could have been the divisive force in leaving the South out of this new professional football league. With teams such as the Oorang Indians, a team outfitted with ninety-nine percent Native Americans, and players such as Fritz Pollard, a black man whose ability usually surpassed any negative racist attitude directed towards him, the attitudes of the South may not have completely embraced this new league. Especially during the late 1910s and 1920s when the revival of the Ku Klux Klan was underway, minorities “taking jobs away from white professionals” would not have gone over. By not including the South in the early N.F.L., the owners cut out various racial problems that would have hurt their gate receipts, which in the long run was the rationale behind a majority of all the decisions made by N.F.L. owners. As well, it allowed anyone who could prove themselves athletically to become star.

Racism in the North was not an uncommon sight, but for varying reasons, these beliefs were easier to control in towns that held N.F.L. teams. In America at the time “rapid technological and social changes, high rates of immigration and internal migration, postwar nationalism, rapid urbanization, and the migration of large numbers of Southern blacks to the North heightened the appeal of the Klan's open racism and nativism to Northern and urban white Protestants”.²³ The trend of open racism in the North was an issue to the N.F.L, but it was far more difficult to discern. An entire Ohio community

²² *75 Seasons: The Complete Story of the National Football League*, (Atlanta, 1994), p. 126.

²³ Kathleen M. Blee, “Women of the Klan: Racism and Gender in the 1920s,” <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~ug97/blues/klan1.html>.

embraced Pollard for his athletic prowess; “I didn’t have any problems playing with Akron. They adopted me very well. I think it wasn’t any different than Jim Thorpe and Pete Calac [both Native Americans] playing in Canton”.²⁴ When young men would play games in sandlots, Thorpe was the man that they would base their game around. Young William Guthery, Sr., an end for the 1922 LaRue (Ohio) High School team learned all he knew about football from these men who he once just considered wild; “We didn’t know the rules. We didn’t really know how to handle the ball or how to catch it. Jim Thorpe and the Indians showed us how to do it”.²⁵ These men were considered “poster boys” for professional football, something that would have been unheard of only ten years prior, or ten years later for that matter. Although from 1933 (Joe Lillard and Ray Kemp) until 1946 (Kenny Washington and Woody Strode) there was not a single black player in the N.F.L., there was still hope for equality due to the exploits of the blacks who played in the 1920s. Such a hope felt that their efforts would pay dividends in the long run, which it did.²⁶ The N.F.L. was the first professional league to integrate its teams with minorities and it started at the inception of the league.

The N.F.L. and America’s Perception of a Gentleman

As the National Football League began to sink into the territory of other professional and semi-professional football leagues that had withered away in the early portion of the twentieth-century, such as the Ohio Football League (1903-1919), it

²⁴ Chris Willis, *Old Leather: An Oral History of Early Pro Football in Ohio, 1920-1935*, (Lanham, 2005), p. 15.

²⁵ Ibid. p. 54.

²⁶ Michael MacCambridge, *America’s Game: The Epic Story of How Pro Football Captured a Nation*, (New York, 2004), pp. 19-20.

seemed almost certain that those men who had met up in Ralph Hay's automobile showroom had done so for no avail. Gates were down, players switched teams with such regularity that no permanent roster of many of the teams of that era could be validated and the fans of football had the collegiate game to root for, which took complete preeminence to professional football at the time.

By the time that the N.F.L. started to really branch out, college football in had truly solidified itself as second only to major league baseball in the hearts of the sport fans of the nation. With the college coaches advocating the elements that were vital to the character building process for young men, and the era of "athletic tramps" was one that they saw as unfit for society. The harking of college football's main principles were hard work, discipline and teamwork, all of which were supposed to be taught to young men to better them in their future career aspirations; they were not meant to be sustained as the aspirations themselves. Camp describes the professional game as ungentlemanly²⁷; "A gentleman does not make his living, however, from his athletic prowess...if the silver mug becomes a silver dollar, either at the hands of the winner or the donor, let us have the laurel back again". Yet, it was in the pure attitude of capitalism and rouse professionalism that the nation saw a rare form of beauty. Such a beauty was derived from a foregone era that saw an added emphasis on romanticism of those who worked the hardest at any endeavor, whether they received a payout or not.

The advocates of America wanted to build morals that would produce more men of high character to empower society. Out in the "real world" were the industrialists who took all they could from the economy to better their financial positions and were, in general, respected for it. Andrew Carnegie, the steel magnate of the turn-of-the-century

²⁷ Walter Camp, *Walter Camp on Sportsmanship*, (New York, 1893), p. 1.

United States, epitomized the era's love affair with hard working individuals. Born to a poor Scottish family that had recently immigrated to the United States, he worked his way up to becoming the richest man in the world at one point. Yet, Carnegie was not working simply to enrich himself. He felt the need to give back to the community and did so by giving much of his fortune away to educational programs and agencies that promoted peace. By putting his money where his pen was, he made good on the theories of his essay, *The Gospel of Wealth*, in which he called for all of the wealthy of the nation to give back to the public. In between the years of 1881 and 1911 he financed the construction of 1,681 public libraries that were meant to serve the general public and they have.²⁸ As of 2006, many of these libraries still function by giving free and unlimited access to many educational functions and sources to the public. Carnegie stepped up and gave of himself for the betterment of society in which made him an ideal role model for the era at the turn of the twentieth-century. It is in the blood that pumped through Carnegie's veins that the coaches of colleges wanted to transfuse into their players. What these college coaches produced was a redheaded young man who would change the national landscape for generations to come.

The Savior From Wheaton

Harold "Red" Grange had the ability to follow in the footsteps of great men such as Andrew Carnegie. As of October 1924, Grange was the one of the most recognizable faces in America. By scoring an unheard of four touchdowns in twelve minutes against a perennial national championship club such as Fielding "Hurry-Up" Yost's Michigan

²⁸ "Carnegie \$.5 Million to ALA Reaffirms Library Commitment," *American Libraries*, Volume 20, Issue 6 (June 1989), pp. 483-483.

squad was the act of a “superhero” in the 1920s. In what was considered by Chicago University head coach, Amos Alonzo Stagg, as the “the most spectacular single-handed performance ever made in a major game,” Grange took over every aspect of this game from kicking to passing to running.²⁹ Even after he asked Coach Zuppuk to substitute him out of the game for the entire second quarter, he came back in during the second half of the game to engineer two more drives that swelled the score to 39-14 in favor of the “Fighting Illini”. In a game that was initially dubbed the “Game of the Century” in college football by the media, this one young man captivated an audience that had sold out the 66,609 seats at the newly created University of Illinois stadium.³⁰ His dazzling runs were the actions that became myths, especially in the eyes of the sport reporters who made normal college players into legends with the simple stoke of a typewriter key. As the accounts of this game were being spread through word of mouth and through the medium of the newspaper, Paul Bunyon could not stop the surge of popularity, or instantaneous legend, surrounding the “Wheaton Iceman”, as Grange was sometimes called.

Creating legends out of mere athletes was a new phenomenon that was becoming more accepted by the United States public. During the 1920s, the “country was booming. Pay was going up and working hours were coming down, leaving time, energy, and money for sport”.³¹ All of this was relatively new to the American landscape. Prior to the 1920s, people watched sports for almost purely entertainment. It is not until a void that was left by World War I turned American society more in favor of making a legend of a

²⁹ Bob Oates, *Football in America: Game of the Century*, (New York, 1999), p. 105.

³⁰ *Ibid.* p. 103.

³¹ George S. Halas, *Halas: An Autobiography*, (Chicago, 1986) p. 98.

gifted athlete. Before the war, emphasis was placed on the morals that the collegiate coaches were trying to promote; yet there was little hope in the return of this “innocence” of moral thinking. The disillusionment of war had crept into American society and had stolen from it many of the preconceived notions that were taken for granted before the conflict. These notions were the ones that placed hard-working men like Carnegie in such a bright light. American citizens moved away from the traditional concept of “hero-worship” being about men who truly make a difference in the community to one of “worship” in people (not just men anymore) who grab the national imagination, regardless of their field. Scholar Andrew R. Heinze writes:

Americans moved from a “culture of character” to a “culture of personality”. The former was a nineteenth-century entity rooted in producer values of hard work and self-discipline, while the latter was a distinctly twentieth-century phenomenon of consumer values emphasizing individual self-fulfillment.³²

For many Americans, self-fulfillment was broadening and watching a sporting event or rooting for a particular team became that fulfillment. To add to this, these sport writers who witnessed the change in society played to the emotions of their readers, who were turning to different walks of life for a “hero”.

As the heroes of this “Golden Age of Sport”, such as Babe Ruth, left people wondering "who let old Doc Thor or the bolt-heaving Jupiter into the show," and it was the men who penned such metaphors that truly built up the aura of “the Bambino” and other sporting celebrities of the 1920s.³³ These writers had the ability to turn the public either for or against a person, team or sport. Ruth was a perfect example of this type of

³² Andrew R. Heinze, “Schizophrenia Americana: Aliens, Alienists, and the “Personality Shift” of Twentieth-Century Culture,” *American Quarterly*. Volume 55, Number 2, (June 2003), p. 227.

³³ Grantland Rice, from Chris Yeung’s, *The Written Word: The Rise of Sportswriting and the Culture That Gave The Babe Life*, <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~UG02/yeung/Baberuth/writers.html>.

legend made out of the sport pages. An otherwise large oaf of a man, the “Babe” had little sense of manners or how to behave within the public setting in regards to the society of the 1920s. In fact, the press hardly ever covered Ruth’s antics off the field. Baseball needed a sound representative to recapture the public eye after the “Black Sox” scandal of 1919. More importantly though, America’s needed someone who was considered pure while still possessing “super human” attributes to look up to and keep track of. Ruth excelled at hitting the rawhide, and his personality attracted people to him. He possessed all of the qualities of a legend; all he needed was a little push from the poets of the press box to truly make him “over” with the American public.

Red Grange possessed the same qualities, as did Ruth, that could be found as the “traditional” American hero: he came from a meager background, he overcame adversity with his wit and physical prowess and he had a personality and charming good looks that made him fawned over by the public. So when the famous Grantland Rice penned the poem: “A streak of fire, a breath of flame/
Eluding all who reach and clutch;/ A gray ghost thrown into the game/ That rival hands may never touch;/ A rubber bounding, blasting soul/ Whose destination is the goal — Red Grange of Illinois!” a legend was born.³⁴ With such a rich metaphor and mysterious new nickname, the Galloping Ghost, Red Grange would be forever branded into the American psyche. Even though Rice was not in the crowd for the Michigan game, Grange’s feats on the gridiron bought him instant fame and celebrity and everywhere he went he was confronted by hoards of amazed people just trying to reach out and touch a “modern day hero”.

³⁴ Larry Schwartz, “Galloping Ghost Scared Opponents,” <http://espn.go.com/sportscentury/features/00014213.html>.

George Halas was one of these adoring fans. For one Saturday in November of 1924, Halas would brave an onslaught of pouring rain to travel to the University of Illinois to “see Red run”;

It is strange I don't remember the game. Perhaps I was living in my own dreams. I assume Illinois won. I do know that all evening Florence and Min were talking about the exciting, handsome Red. We had seen the “Galloping Ghost” in the flesh. As an owner, manager, coach and player, I was determined to have Red on the Bears.³⁵

Halas was looking at this nimble runner through the eyes of a member of the society in which he came from, yet he was also looking at Red as an owner looking to make money. As a member of the American society, Halas was naturally impressed with the skills possessed by the “Wheaton Iceman”. Such a powerful runner, bowling over opponents, while still as graceful as a gazelle, Grange captured any audience that he played in front of. Halas knew that he had a meal ticket for years to come just as long as he could sign Grange to a contract with the Bears. Yet, no contract would be signed until Grange's last game against Ohio State University had been played. New legislation from N.F.L. commissioner Joe Carr stated “no college player could turn professional until his class had graduated”.³⁶ Such a rule helped alleviate some of the pressures from college coaches to keep the professional hands off of their athletes. Yet, this rule did not come into play until after Halas nabbed the boy he so coveted. After Illinois downed the Buckeye's 14-9, Red signed with the Bears for an unheard of amount of \$100,000.

The N.F.L. had a chance to revamp some of the weaker teams on their club list. This was the chance for the league to truly get over in places where attendance had lagged, and the biggest of all of these places was New York.

³⁵ George S. Halas, *Halas: An Autobiography*, (Chicago, 1986) p. 102.

³⁶ Jeff Davis, *Papa Bear: The Life and Legacy of George Halas*, (New York, 2005), p. 81.

The New York Giants football club had been created in 1925 out of necessity, not out of sound planning. The N.F.L. had begun to shift out of the same town persona that had driven the league for its infancy and saw the need to branch out into bigger market that would attract more people to the professional game. Tim Mara, a bookmaker, had been coaxed by the visionary Carr to sink the now five hundred-dollar franchise fee to join the league.³⁷ Although the Giants had signed on the aging Jim Thorpe to their roster, the losses during that first year deterred many fans from going out to watch the Giants play. By the time for the Chicago Bears to make the trip to the Polo Grounds to play the Giants, the New York team was already \$40,000 in debt.³⁸ Yet, as fate would have it, by the time the Giants were to square off against the Bears, Halas had signed the incomparable Red Grange.

On December 6th, 1925, sports writer Damon Runyon described the events at the Polo Grounds in New York;

Seventy thousand men, women and children were in the stands, blocking the aisles and runways. Twenty thousand more were perched on Coogan's Bluff and the roofs of apartment houses, content with just an occasional glimpse of the whirling mass of players on the field far below and wondering which was Red Grange.³⁹

Up until that day, no larger crowd had ever seen a professional football game. The curiosity of the New Yorkers drew them out to see just what the nation had been clamoring about when talking about the young red head from Illinois. Although Grange only scored one touchdown in the Bears 19-7 victory, the people of New York had become believers in the Galloping Ghost. Not only did the people of New York get a chance to see the newest star of the American pop culture scene, they also provided

³⁷ Richard Whittingham, *Illustrated History of the New York Giants*, (Chicago, 2005), p. 1.

³⁸ *Ibid.* p. 4.

³⁹ *Ibid.* p. 6.

enough income for the Giants to keep in business, and actually turn a profit of \$18,000.⁴⁰ All of this due to one man and a nation's love affair with him. Grange would soon be able to be seen all over the media through various advertisements and movies. Although his playing career was cut short due to the exploitation of his name and body during his first couple years in professional football, his initial storming into the N.F.L. saved the league from bankruptcy and brought a fan base to the league like it had never seen before.

The End of the Roaring Twenties and Its Effect on the N.F.L.

Just as easy as it was to buy on margin and sip illegal cocktails, it was equally as easy to see that every height must have an apex. On October 24, 1929, the economy of the United States reached its zenith and began a dizzying spiral into the abyss of depression. Absolutely no area of American life could be spared from the effects of the Stock Market crash of 1929 and the depression that it had left. Banks closed with alarming regularity and there was seemingly nothing that could be done to rid the nation of the oncoming of the Great Depression. As a result many businesses could not finance their payrolls and by 1932 approximately a quarter of all Americans were unemployed.⁴¹ These were dire times in the history of the United States and its people. No longer were people running out to spend their scarce resources on frivolous items; they were scrimping and saving just to get by.

⁴⁰ Ibid. p. 7.

⁴¹ Cary Nelson, "The Depression in the United States--An Overview," <http://www.english.uiuc.edu/maps/depression/overview.htm>.

One of these superfluous things being cut from the average American household was a trip to the local professional football stadium on Sunday afternoons. By the end of the 1929 N.F.L. season, crowds that had reached in excess of 25,000 people in earlier seasons had dwindled to just above two thousand.⁴² Many of the teams in the league had to disband after the season because of the red ink that they were drenched in. Yet, unlike before, these teams were not as readily replaced. The now \$2,500 entrance fee to the N.F.L. was seemingly more difficult to manage.⁴³

As the decade turned though, many differences in the league could be seen. The days of teams such as the Decatur Staleys and the Dayton Triangles were all but history. These teams were replaced by the Chicago Bears and the Detroit Lions of the world. Bigger audiences were attending professional football games and bigger venues and areas were needed to accommodate them. As well, the Southern influence had begun to shut out African-Americans from the game. By 1933 there was not a single African-American in the league. Above all though, more and more Americans began to take a liking to professional football for the first time. Although it would truly take until the invention of the television and the 1958 Championship Game to win over America as a whole, the N.F.L. had made strides during its first ten years.⁴⁴ Without the progressive spirit of its founders and the society of the twenties to promote its potential as a risky, but rewarding, investment, the National Football League would have folded like so many other professional leagues. Yet, as 2006 N.F.L. is about to commence, the legacy of its beginnings lives on.

⁴² Jeff Davis, *Papa Bear: The Life and Legacy of George Halas*, (New York, 2005), p. 94.

⁴³ George S. Halas, *Halas: An Autobiography*, (Chicago, 1986) p. 155.

⁴⁴ David Maraniss, *When Pride Still Mattered: A Life of Vince Lombardi*, (New York, 1999), p. 78.

Chapter Four: Rebuttal

When writing a paper that involves the research that a colloquium demands, the tendency to be “biased” towards one side of an argument is generally high. Usually the blatancy of this is not conscious to the author of a work due to the pure affection one has for their topic. Yet, to complete a work that is too one-sided is unfair to the subject. To look at all of the sides of a moment in history is to have a more complete and objective look into the past. Hence, there are some valid limitations in the argument made between the connection of professional football and America.

Although many different types of sources were utilized while researching the connection between professional football and America, there were some sources that have been left out that could have solidified the argument that the author is trying to make. Yet, due to the limited time constraints and the lack of available help in finding some of these resources, it was difficult to lock down these “missing pieces of the puzzle”. Some of these sources include actual game film from the 1920s, artifacts from the players themselves (jerseys, equipment, etc.) and game programs. These sources are not all that rare, but it takes time, and money, to track them down. A good number of these resources can be found in Canton, Ohio, at the Professional Football Hall of Fame (and the location of the Hall of Fame is no coincidence, it was placed there in 1963 to commemorate that first meeting of the soon to be NFL at Hay’s Auto Showroom). As well, game film and other manuscripts can be located at the National Football League Films department. It is here where there are literally thousands of games, interviews and other interesting perspectives on the game of professional football. Although these would

have been excellent sources, the actual availability of access to them hindered their usefulness to this paper.

Sources are not the only limitation to the thesis of this work; other writers have documented their rebuttal to the inherent connection between professional football and America. As described in Chapter Three, the early advocates of college football, such as Walter Camp and Amos Alonzo Stagg, were thoroughly against professional football and all of those who participated in it. These men had valid reasons to be so against the professional version of the sport though. These men had seen the development of football from “birth to toddler years” and they worked diligently to promote the positive aspects of the game. Stagg believed that football was so beneficial to not only the players, but to college campuses, that after losing some big games in 1879, Princeton students “so criticized the football squad for smoking that the players gradually gave up tobacco during the season”.⁴⁵ Such was the effects of football on Americans; it gave them drive and ambition to be better than what they initially thought they were. It was during this time that we see idealistic young men join numerous campaigns to spread the American ideal all over the world (the Spanish-American War is a prime example of this). To these men, the odd mixture between rugby and soccer was far too rich in character building ways to just let go of.

Yet, as the popularity of football grew on campuses all across the country, so did the number of critics. These men had to fight these cynics who cited that the game was nothing more than a “homicidal pastime” that “has degenerated into a savage, brutal, bloody fight between men animated with the passions of pugilists”.⁴⁶ All of the effort that

⁴⁵ “College Football, 1884,” www.eyewitnesstohistory.com.

⁴⁶ “The Homicidal Pastime,” *New York Times*, November 29, 1905.

these men had exerted to clean up the game from its most abysmal year in 1905, “18 deaths and 149 serious injuries were attributed to football,” was being washed away amid a sea of protest.⁴⁷ Although change was needed, these men were willing to change rules and cut out parts of the game just to keep it alive.

With all of the sacrifices that Camp and his cohorts made, to see men who wanted to pervert the sport by making it an occupation made them sick. All that they had worked for to make the public conscious of the goods attributed to the play of football seemed to be on the verge of collapse with the advent of professional football. The pioneers of the collegiate game wanted to protect their investment so they went commenced with smear attacks through various publications, all-trying to denounce the new post-collegiate game. It only made sense to these men. The same type of tendency can be seen in the wild as the mother bear does all she can to protect her cub. These men made football and they were extremely protective over it, especially when men that they had groomed began to become advocates of the professional game.

The point of view of these men did have some contradictions though. Being a part of the society that they were, they were all fans of professional baseball. In fact, when Camp set out to revise the rules of football to keep it going, he used a number of edicts that professional baseball had instituted into its own game.⁴⁸ These men saw another professional league as a non-threat to American society, especially because a overwhelming majority of the American population emulated baseball stars such as Honus Wagner and Ty Cobb for decades before professional football was thought of. Did time in the spotlight of American society allow for one professional athlete to be more

⁴⁷ Jacob Leibenluft, “100 Years of Modern Football,” *Yale Daily News*, November 18, 2005.

⁴⁸ “Revision of Football: Walter Camp Collects Much Material to Inject Into the Code,” *New York Times*, November 16, 1910.

moral or have more character than another of a different sport? Obviously the men of the college game thought so, but again, they were trying to keep their game in their hands. With the popularity of football ever growing, it makes sense that these men would stop at nothing to remain in control, even if it meant contradicting themselves.

It is not a scholarly rebuttal, but it is one that affected the sports world during the 1920s. Both sides had strong arguments, while each had limitations. For a complete view on the topic, all sides must be brought out and mediated upon to truly comprehend the issue. Regardless though, the impact that professional football had on society, and vice-versa, is central to both sides.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

“Professional football in America is a special game, a unique game...” as the voice of N.F.L. films, John Facenda said.⁴⁹ Although he stated this in the 1960s, it still held true back in the 1920s when the game was in its formative years. It was during this time that the N.F.L. truly build the bonds that make it such a strong league now. Seeing as it was inherently connected with the society that spawned it, it was a progressive league that was composed of men who loved to play the game and was more than willing to do so for the money. Many advocates of the amateur game denounced football, but these voices began to fade away as the nation bought into the message of football, whether amateur or professional. Such an all-encompassing sport can teach no matter if the pupil is paid or not.

All of these points tend to lend themselves to the reason as why America has grown so attached to the hybrid sport that was made in New Jersey (at the first collegiate game when Rutgers faced Princeton) and refined in Ohio (with the advent of the A.P.F.A./N.F.L.).⁵⁰ Professional football has grown up with the nation. When the times were easy and the money flowed during the 1920s, the N.F.L. grew and prospered just as millions of citizens did. When the Great Depression hit, the common bond between professional football and the average American were that they had no money, but both kept persevering. Even now, during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the New Orleans Saints have been the only spot of regional pride and hope for those who lost everything

⁴⁹ Tom Hedden, David Robidoux, Sam Spence (composers), “The Power and the Glory,” *Power and the Glory: Music and Voices of NFL Films*, 1998.

⁵⁰ Bob Oates, *Football in America: Game of the Century*, (New York, 1999), p. 5.

due to the storm.⁵¹ Both nation and sport feed off of each other and it this is extremely necessary for the success of the N.F.L. With all of the aforementioned problems of the other professional sport leagues in the United States, the N.F.L. needs to stay based in tradition and based in the conscious of the American way. From the past to the present, the N.F.L. and America have been connected inherently and this has been a benefit for both.

⁵¹ “National Football League will donate \$1 million to the American Red Cross to assist victims of Hurricane Katrina,” http://www.redcross.org/pressrelease/0,1077,0_172_4548,00.html, September 04, 2005.

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