1919 Black Sox Scandal

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Outline

Introduction

Overview of topic
Thesis statement

Background of the Scandal

Who was involved
Chronology of main events
Why the players fixed the game

What Joe Jackson did/did not do

Rumors
He took $5,000 but did not participate in fixing the game
Proof – his stats & court testimony

Conclusion

He should be allowed into the hall of fame
He did not participate in fixing the World Series

In 1919, the Chicago White Sox were unarguably the best team in baseball. In fact many people consider them one of the best teams ever assembled in professional baseball history. With America just coming out of the first World War, baseball was seeing a boost in popularity with attendance records being set in all ball parks. In 1919 the two teams in the World Series were the superstar Chicago White Sox and the Cincinnati Reds. The Chicago White Sox, in most people's opinions, were expected to win the extended nine game series in only five games. The White Sox were that much better than the Cincinnati Reds, yet somehow they lost the World Series five games to four. The World Series had been fixed. It was bought by a group of gamblers for $100,000. To this day there are very few people who would disagree that the 1919 World Series was fixed. In fact, the eight men on the White Sox who were accused of fixing the 1919 World Series admitted to it, except for one person, outfielder "Shoeless" Joe Jackson (1www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/blacksox/blacksoxaccount.html).

There is a great deal of controversy around Joe Jackson because he did receive who he is?
$5,000 from Chick Gandil. However his statistics for the 1919 World Series do not suggest that Joe Jackson participated in the fixing of the 1919 World Series. Joe Jackson's batting average of .375 led all players in the World Series from both teams. He committed no errors, and had a World Series record 12 hits, among his other outstanding statistics. Joe Jackson even attempted to alert White Sox owner Charles Comiskey of the fix, but Comiskey ignored him. (2www.blackbetsy.com/jrelate.htm). "Shoeless" Joe Jackson did not participate in the fixing of the 1919 World Series, therefore he should be allowed into the Baseball Hall of Fame.

The World Series between the Chicago White Sox and the Cincinnati Reds was fixed by a group of gamblers and eight players on the White Sox. The plan to fix the World Series was hatched by White Sox first baseman Chick Gandil, and professional gambler "Sport" Sullivan in a hotel room in Boston. Sullivan was going to find a way to get the $80,000 that Gandil had demanded for himself and the other players that would be needed to make the fix possible, while Gandil recruited the necessary players. Gandil first recruited the team's best pitcher, Eddie Cicotte, then, shortstop "Swede" Risberg, utility infielder, Fred McMullin, pitcher Claude "Lefty" Williams, and the teams three best hitters, Buck Weaver, "Shoeless" Joe Jackson, and Oscar "Happy" Felsch. All of these players agreed to meet in Gandil's hotel room on the night of September 21st. On the morning of September 21st, Gandil meet with "Sport" Sullivan regarding the $80,000. At their meeting Sullivan said that it would be hard to come up with the $80,000 so quickly.

Things started to become complicated when another gambler, "Sleepy" Bill Burns, having heard of the fix, approached Chick Gandil and Eddie Cicotte and offered them $100,000 upfront to fix the World Series. Gandil, and Cicotte agreed to this deal. In order to fund this fix, "Sleepy" Bill Burns, and his partner Billy Maharg traveled to New York to meet with another gambler, Arnold "Big Bankroll" Rothstein. In New York, Burns and Maharg met with Rothstein's right hand man, Abe Attell, who agreed to fund the fix.

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(3www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/blacksox/blacksoxaccount.html).

There are many reasons why some of the players on 1919 Chicago White Sox agreed to fix the World Series. Charles Comiskey, the owner of the White Sox made

many promises that he did not keep. He promised the team a large bonus if they won the pennant. When the White Sox won the pennant, all that the team received was a case of cheap champagne. Comiskey charged all of the players to have their uniforms cleaned. In protest of this, the players wore their same dirty uniforms for days until Comiskey removed the uniforms from the player's lockers, and fined every player on the team. There was also the famous "reserve clause" which upset all of the players. This clause let the players be underpaid. It said that any player who refused to accept a contract was prohibited from playing baseball on any other professional team. The clause also prohibited players from changing teams without the permission of their team's owner. (4www.chicagohs.org/history/blacksox/blk1a.html).

Connection to your thesis

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Many of the players on the Chicago White Sox were very underpaid. "Shoeless" Joe Jackson, and Buck Weaver, two of the best players in baseball at the time, were paid only $6,000 per season, while players on other teams with half their talent were getting more money. On road trips the average amount of money given to a player for his food and expenses was $4.00 per day, while the White Sox players only got $3.00 per day. Ed Cicotte had the best reason of all of the players to want to throw the World Series. In 1917 White Sox owner Charles Comiskey promised him a huge $10,000 bonus if he had a thirty-win season. After Cicotte had twenty-nine wins during the season, Comiskey benched him so that he would not have to pay him the large bonus, which he had promised. (5www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/blacksox/blacksoxaccount.html).

You could make Commentary on motive here.

So far, you have not analyzed any of your information

Transition

"Shoeless" Joe Jackson was not involved in the fixing of the 1919 World Series. Joe Jackson never attended any meetings of the players and the gamblers that were accused of fixing the games. Joe Jackson did receive $5,000, but he never said that he

was going to take part in the fixing of the World Series. The $5,000 was left on the bed in his hotel room. He admitted that he never did try to return this money but when he confronted Chick Gandil, and said "I am not going to be in it", and that "I (Joe Jackson) can go to the boss and have every damn one of you pulled out of the limelight" (6www.blackbetsy.com/jjtestimony1920.pdf p.10). He was warned that it would not be wise for him if he did that (6www.blackbetsy.com/jjtestimony1920.pdf).

When Joe Jackson received the $5,000 he was told that he would receive an additional $15,000. He never received this money, nor did he try to get it. It would make sense for someone who did participate in fixing the game to try to get all of the money that was originally promised to him. Joe Jackson did not do this. When asked in court if he was mad that he only received $5,000 while almost all of the other players got $20,000, he answered, "No, I was ashamed of myself" (7www.blackbetsy.com/jjtestimony1920.pdf p.10). Another piece of evidence that supported Joe Jackson in court was that he had no errors; one hit, and drove in two runs in a game that people believe was fixed. These kinds of statistics do not sound like those of someone who was involved in fixing the game (8www.blackbetsy.com/jjtestimony1920.pdf).

Even before the start of the series, Joe Jackson was concerned that he was going to be accused of fixing the World Series. He therefore asked if he could be benched for the series. Of course this request was denied. What team would bench one of its best players in the World Series? Sometime around the fourth game in the series, Joe Jackson went up to Comiskey's office to talk to him about the fix. He waited for over an hour, but was denied a chance to talk to Comiskey. In fact it would not have mattered if Joe

actually got the chance to talk with Comiskey, because he was already in the process of covering up the fix so that he could protect his players, which were very valuable to him.

In meetings with Joe Jackson, Comiskey's lawyers actually tried to get Joe to lie about the fact that he tried to talk with Comiskey. It was easy for Comiskey's lawyers to do this to Joe because he did not have a lawyer from the beginning, and because he had very little education. Joe Jackson never graduated from High School. This allowed many people throughout this scandal to take advantage of him.

"Sleepy" Bill Burns, who was the gambler that put the players and gamblers in contact with eachother, testified that he never talked to Joe Jackson. "Sleepy" Bill Burns only listened to "Lefty" Williams, who had claimed to be the spokesperson for Joe. Also testifying in court, "Lefty" Williams said that he never got Joe Jackson's permission to include him in the fix. "Lefty" Williams only did what he did because he knew that the gamblers would change their minds about the fix if Joe Jackson, who was the best hitter on the team, was not going to be a part of it.

Joe Jackson's statistics for the 1919 World Series are one of the most solid pieces of evidence that Joe Jackson did not participate in fixing the World Series. Joe Jackson had zero errors; he batted .375, leading all other players in the series. He also hit the only home run, and had 12 hits in the series. This set a World Series record. These statistics, plus all of the other information about Joe Jackson, led to two juries acquitting him of taking part in the fixing of the 1919 World Series. One jury acquitted him in 1921 of all criminal charges, and the second in 1924 acquitted him of all civil charges (9www.blackbetsy.com/jrelate.htm).

Although the evidence proves that Joe Jackson did not participate in the fixing of the 1919 World Series, he was still banned from professional baseball for life in 1921 without any kind of hearing. His name is also the first one that people come up with when they talk about the 1919 World Series. Whether people believe anything that is said about this scandal or not, they should believe one thing, Joe Jackson's Statistics. Statistics cannot be altered; they should be all the proof that people need to believe that Joe Jackson did not participate in fixing the 1919 World Series. But, regardless of what people believe, Joe Jackson had already paid for what he had done by being banned from baseball for life. There has never been any dispute about the quality of his play. Joe Jackson died in 1951, and now fifty years latter it is time to do what is right and induct Joe Jackson into the Baseball Hall of Fame.

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You did a good job of pulling the Joe Jackson Story together to illustrate that he did not participate in the scandal - Since he was acquitted in both Civil and Criminal Court, that issue seems to have already been decided — Since your thesis stated that he should be inducted into the Hall of Fame, you should have brought up reasons for that — Starting with explaining why he is being kept out - I'm not sure I understand why he was banned from baseball if he was found innocent — Research on this topic and coming up with a convincing argument of why he should be let into the Hall of Fame would have addressed your thesis more directly.

Did baseball not believe the courts? Did he ever appeal to plead again? What proof did baseball have to keep him out?

I didn't hear your analysis in this paper — It was basically the story of Joe Jackson retold. Good job with sentence structure and use of primary sources in your story - You need more focus on your thesis and more of your analysis to make this a strong thesis paper.

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Works Cited

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