

Flood v Kuhn: The Right to Free Agency in Major League Baseball

Process Paper

I saw Curt Flood and the Major League Baseball Reserve Clause as a suggested topic on the National History Day website. I love sports so I was immediately interested. After reading a little about him and his fight for Free Agency in Major League Baseball, I knew that this was a topic I would like to learn more about. Because it was sports related, I thought I might understand it better than some other historical topic. Also, most Americans enjoy sports of some kind, so I thought it would interest other people as well. Most of all, I chose this topic because I felt it was a serious problem in professional sports. If the change from the Reserve Clause to Free Agency had never happened, baseball players today would not have the same basic right that employees in other professions have—the right to choose where they work.

For my research, I used different online sources, the Orem Public Library, the BYU Library, and several people for interviews. I read the books and the online websites, taking notes to identify the different topics important to my subject. Then, I focused on the details for each topic. I used as few of my own words as possible so I wouldn't go over the limit. I found a bunch of primary source pictures on different websites, and I also found a number of good quotes that told the story as much as if I had used my own words. After I finished my research, I created the website pages for my topics.

I chose to do a website because it sounded fun. I don't know a lot about computers, so this project helped me learn how to use one to make a website. I used the Weebly-provided formatting and added some custom HTML code and PhotoShop illustrations to make a really

cool timeline that highlights the important events in Flood's life. I downloaded a song that is well known to baseball fans, "Take Me Out to the Ballgame," to emphasize the baseball-related topic. I had a problem with how slow Weebly worked for me sometimes, but other than that, it went very smoothly.

My topic relates to the theme of "Rights and Responsibilities" because Curt Flood's rights were violated by the Reserve Clause. With the Reserve Clause, Flood didn't have the right to choose where he played baseball, which basically made him a slave to Major League Baseball and its owners. He recognized this injustice and felt that it was his responsibility to do something about it even when other players would not. He sued Major League Baseball, and even though he lost the lawsuit, his efforts laid the foundation for others to later challenge and overturn the Reserve Clause. If Curt Flood hadn't sued Major League Baseball, the Reserve Clause might still be restricting the rights of Major League Baseball players today.

Flood v. Kuhn: The Right to Free
Agency in Major League Baseball

Process Paper
By Ryan VandenBos

Junior Division
Individual Website