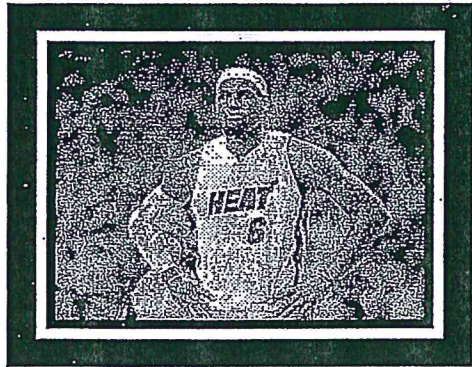


## LeBron James: Evil Villain or Hometown Hero?



*Cleveland, OH-* Is he the king of Akron or the enemy of Cleveland? A lot of Ohians have mixed feelings about this basketball icon. Love him or hate him, the mere mention of his name can always spark an argument or friendly debate. Many people feel that he is overrated and not worth the discussion, but with his known ability in the basketball world, and not to mention his celebrity status, he is always a prime candidate for daily conversation. LeBron James has received an exorbitant amount of criticism for making a decision that many Americans make every day, a simple job change.

In 2010, LeBron decided that his talents were no longer effective in Cleveland. He made a conscious decision to join forces with Dwyane Wade and Chris Bosh to form "The Big Three". Many Clevelanders showed their displeasure for the situation by resorting to the burning of his Cavaliers' team jerseys and other memorabilia. Of course, the Cleveland fans may have some reason to be upset. The fact that he made his job change announcement on national television, in front of millions, leaving Clevelanders to feel like a rejected and wounded lover, was probably not his best idea. However, don't we all make mistakes? Did anyone ever say that he was perfect, or the best decision maker outside of basketball? And sure, he could have taken the time to thank Cleveland for their many years of support. That would have been the more professional thing to do. But, does he really owe Cleveland anything? Didn't he put his "all" on the court when he worked for Cleveland?

It has been three years since "The Decision", and many Clevelanders are still very bitter and upset. In spite of his lukewarm feelings for Cleveland, he definitely has shown a lot of love for his small hometown of Akron, Oh. He has returned to the city every year to participate in a city-wide cycling event that allows many youngsters to receive iPads and computers to help with their education. He also made sure that the funds from "The Decision" television special were contributed to the *Boys and Girls Clubs of America*. Not to mention the fact that he has also received the NBA Community Assist Award for helping out in his community. In the past three years, he has demonstrated a lot of growth. He has apologized for his wrongdoings, and has tried to move forward. Unfortunately, a lot of people won't let him. Until Clevelanders can all realize that no one person in this world is perfect, and learn to accept people for who they are, and not what they do, they will always be the "scorned lover" of an athlete gone South.

-Anonymous-