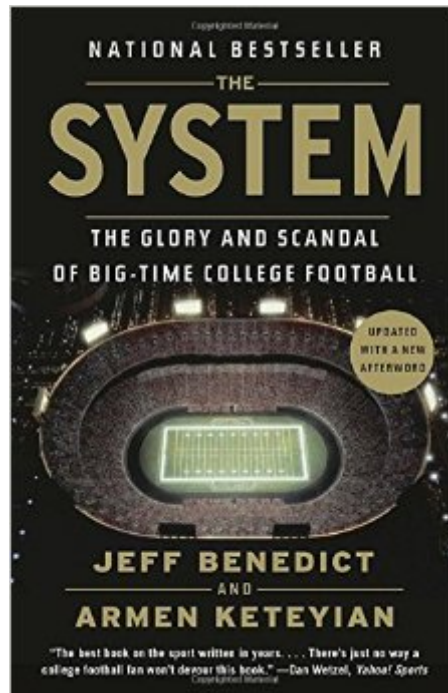


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# The System: The Glory And Scandal Of Big-Time College Football



## Synopsis

A Shelf Awareness Best Book of the Year— NCAA football is big business. Every Saturday millions of people file into massive stadiums or tune in on television as "athlete-students" give everything they've got to make their team a success. Billions of dollars now flow into the game. But what is the true cost? The players have no share in the oceans of money. And once the lights go down, the glitter doesn't shine so brightly. Filled with mind-blowing details of major NCAA football scandals, with stops at Ohio State, Tennessee, Texas Tech, Missouri, BYU, LSU, Texas A&M and many more, *The System* explores and exposes the complex, and perhaps broken, machine that churns behind the glamour of college football. With a New Afterword.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As a father of a 17 yr old athlete who is just now experiencing the recruiting process for a D1 program, we eagerly read this book to help us prepare for the next 12 months of chaos. While there were no blockbuster revelations, it has given us great insight into the inner workings of college football. It is very well written, and at times both heartbreaking and hopeful. I must point out, amid the scandal, rumor and secrecy of most college football programs, the authors have inadvertently shined a light on the program that stands in stark contrast to all the others. BYU deserves praise for their program that puts football well behind the spiritual, intellectual, and character building of their young men. All I knew about BYU was Danny Ainge, Steve Young and tea-totalling students. After my son and I read the book, without speaking a word, we moved BYU to the top of our list of potential programs. I believe that this exceptional book will be a catalyst for change and a long

needed overhaul of the college football system. Fantastic read for any fan--casual or diehard alike.

Released earlier this week, *The System: The Glory and Scandal of Big-Time College Football* is sure to raise our collective eyebrows. While this book is definitely a must read for college football fans, it is sure to grip even the most apathetic of sports fans. But this sports book isn't all fun and games. Instead, it takes a hard look behind the scene to widen our football lens. The authors cover seat-squirming topics with unprecedented research into issues like the use of college co-eds (or Hostesses) to lure high school recruits to big-time programs, or female co-eds using their physical assets to reward the student-athletes they tutor. The ugly story of a rape case is followed by a good story of faith and second chances. Finally, *The System* addresses the elephant in the locker room: money. Is college football all about money? The money it takes to build multi-million dollar football stadiums and facilities? The millions it takes to hire big-time football coaches? The millions most college football programs lose every year? Meanwhile, college tuitions rise to help cover athletic department budgets, student-athletes receive injuries to last a lifetime, and the NCAA gets their knickers in a twist over dollars received by student-athletes while these players endure boot camp-like experiences in the name of conditioning while receiving zero pay. Perhaps *The System* will leave you scratching your head: almost everyone involved in the game of college football has a paycheck--except the guys with the numbers on their jerseys receiving concussion-causing hits. *The System* includes stories of players who make it Pro, but it also makes clear that most college football players will never play on Sundays. *The System* is a well-written, painstakingly detailed book for both the sports fan and the indifferent onlooker as its research illuminates the good, the bad and the ugly of the religion America calls college football.

I bought "The System" then I immediately began to read. Eleven hours later I put it down too sleepy to hold the Kindle up any longer. If you love college football you will love "The System". It's a fly on the wall look at the best coaches and programs what they stand for, and how they operate. The authors had incredible access to both the players and coaches. Jeff Benedict is a very gifted writer for SI and maybe a dozen other books. You may not recognize his name but you have read his work. You won't have to deal with Buyer's Regret when you purchase this one.

It's promoted as a book about the scandals in college football, which it has...but I really liked the human-element stories about the struggles and personalities of some college football coaches and players. Good read, but be prepared for a lot of profanity.

This superb effort examines college football from numerous angles - coaching, scholarships, injuries, corruption, boosters, female hostesses, under-the-table-cash-payments, fan mania, sexual assault, athletic directors, scandals, etc. Readers come away with an enhanced view of NCAA football in all its glory and rampant corruption. We see what it takes to win in this ultra-competitive, multi-billion dollar industry - recruit top athletes, hold endless intense practices, and spend money on top facilities and coaches. Also vital is for college administrations to ignore the sordid abuses while charging the entire student body those hefty academic fees at tuition time to mostly fund the sports teams. Authors Jeff Benedict and Armen Keyetian write excellent journalistic prose without being preachy, and put in enough on-field game action to keep fans excited. Along the way readers meet top players like Kyle Van Moy (Brigham Young) and Matt Ryan (Boston College), top coaches like Mike Leach (Washington State) and Nick Saban (Alabama), plus boosters, fans, media, etc. And for us readers who are also fans, we learn many angles to this scandal-ridden but exciting sport we enjoy so much. Despite their achievement the authors don't delve deeply into many areas of concern, including doctored transcripts, lasting injuries, crimes by athletes, etc. They note how winning teams boost funding for athletic departments, but miss how those victories seldom increase funding for academics and the college as a whole. Nor do the authors suggest meaningful reforms. Perhaps none would succeed unless the NCAA allows players to be paid their market value in cash, or conversely, forces coaches to forgo their lucrative salaries and also toil for scholarships. Not likely. Whatever your views and level of fan attachment, this is an excellent book, one that could use a follow-up volume.

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