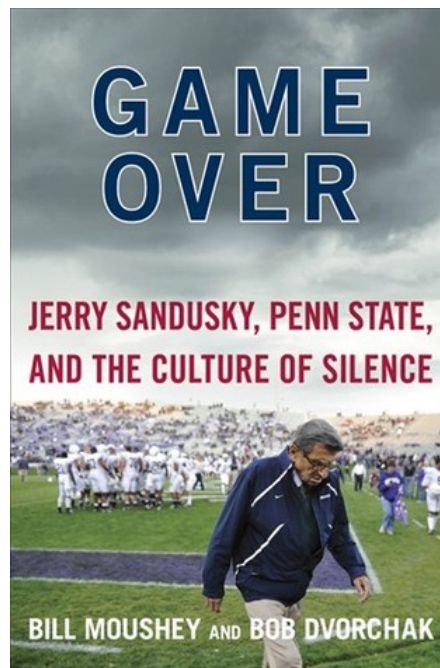




Game Over: Jerry Sandusky, Penn State, and the Culture of Silence

Bill Moushey , Robert Dvorchak , Lisa Pulitzer

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The shocking details chronicling how a beloved coach and esteemed university became enmeshed in one of the worst scandals in U.S. sports history

It's a scandal that began in a place called Happy Valley. But it's not as happy as it once was, as the child-sex-abuse charges against a longtime coach and the conspiracy of silence surrounding the allegations have rocked America and Division 1 college sports.

The shocking stories started to pour out after the November 6, 2011, arrest of Jerry Sandusky, a former coach under the Penn State football legend Joe Paterno. Sandusky had been Paterno's top lieutenant for thirty-two years. He was also the founder of a charity, The Second Mile, that devoted itself to helping disadvantaged youth. It turns out Paterno was told about an incident involving an underage boy showering with Sandusky in the football locker room, but reported the incident to school officials rather than the police.

The numerous boys in Sandusky's program who have come forward told a grand jury lurid stories of a sexual predator who stalked and abused them, sometimes even in the showers of Penn State's football complex. In *Game Over*, journalists Bill Moushey and Bob Dvorchak investigate claims of a startling cover-up within the Penn State hierarchy that attempted to protect its football legacy, quite possibly at the expense of disenfranchised children.

Game Over is filled with the shocking details of how a culture built around one deified coach with a glorious vision to have "success with honor" fails to act in the best interests of the most vulnerable. University president Graham Spanier has been consumed in this firestorm along with Joe Paterno himself in what spiraled downward into the worst scandal in the history of college sports.

Game Over: Jerry Sandusky, Penn State, and the Culture of Silence Details

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Bill Moushey , Robert Dvorchak , Lisa Pulitzer

From Reader Review Game Over: Jerry Sandusky, Penn State, and the Culture of Silence for online ebook

Kelly says

Moushey and Dvorchak's book is obviously not the final authority on this tragic situation, but does shed a little light on the events leading up to the trial of serial child abuser Jerry Sandusky. The book was a little disjointed at times, with most information available coming from news reports and information that the public already had available. It did, however, give unflinching accounts of the abuse perpetrated by Sandusky on his victims - so sensitive readers should be forewarned. Discussion of Joe Paterno's involvement was minimal, and the focus seemed to be more on his coaching legacy and the rabid fanaticism and reverence of "JoePa" held by Penn State alumni and fans. The miscommunication and muddying of the waters by Penn State staff and administrators in charge of reporting the earliest of Sandusky's behaviors was deplorable and disheartening at best, and their collective mishandling of Sandusky's horrific behavior allowed a child sexual predator to continue to operate right under their noses.

I doubt that I will return to this story again, knowing that Sandusky has been convicted of his heinous crimes and the NCAA has levied its punishment on the university, however I don't believe the whole story has been (and maybe will never be) told. As for JoePa, I think the words that he uttered in his final days before passing were most telling - saying that he wished he could have done more. Wins, losses, and on-field successes aside, perhaps he would have earned his legacy if he had done just that. Instead I hope that we all learned a valuable lesson in all of this - and that is that he was just a man after all, and that protecting our children from evil is far more important than the idolatry associated with winning football championships.

Kunal says

This is a interesting read and is arguably one of the biggest criminal scandals in sports of all time. The book details in depth the various times where several people had caught Jerry Sandusky sexually molesting young kids who were part of his Second Mile Charity organization, and how they got reported to various individuals within Penn State, but how it never reached the proper police authorities.

In 1998, a graduate assistant on the football team saw Sandusky and a 10 year kid in the Penn State locker room with the boys hands up against a wall and he heard a slapping sound. He subsequently reported this to Paterno and Paterno reported this to the AD, but after Paterno's death the AD and president testified that Paterno said Mike Mcquary told him that it was just horseplay.

A few years later, a janitor claimed to see a similar incident in the mens lockerroom and reported this to his boss. His boss told him who the proper authorities were to notify this to if he wanted to, but the janitor declined to do anything as he was afraid he would lose his job.

Another incident consisted of when a young boy came home and told his mother about how Sandusky made him shower with him and rubbed his leg in the car. When the mother confronted him, Jerry said, "I wish I could die right now" and he continued to apologize. Somehow, when she reported this to the police, again they never took any action. It turned out that the police officer who this was reported to was actually Sandusky's next door neighbor.

No one can deny Paterno was a great coach. Having graduated from Brown on a full athletic scholarship and forgiving law school to follow his college coach over to Penn State to be his assistant, JoePa transformed the program. He put in place the "Grand Experiment" which represented only recruiting kids who were both athletic standouts and also Academic All Americans. He was the winningest coach in college football and owned the town of State college. However, when he was fired after the allegations and said, "I wish I would have done more", it is hard to argue that he wasn't fully aware of what Sandusky was up to and chose not to resolve the issue himself in order to preserve his and his organization's reputation of the highest morals.

JoePa's reputation has been ruined forever and rightfully so. No matter what he accomplished for that school, him allowing his former Defensive Coordinator who was a mastermind continue to be around campus with kids just shows that he was not as good of a guy as we all thought.

Jake Fouch says

I liked the style and how intense it got at some points

Bridget Morse says

Laboriously detailed story of the rise of Coach Paterno, financial & program success of Penn State football and the culture that valued the university & football program's reputation above outing the sexual abuse of young boys by long term coach Jerry Sandusky.

Chilling events from the first knowledge of abuse and subsequent unexpected resignation of Sandusky, to the abuse and silencing of victims, witnesses and whistle blowers that continues to this day.

Left me troubled for days.

Alex says

Overall the book does a good job giving information about the Sandusky Scandal. It includes biographical information on Sandusky and other key parties to the scandal and investigation, most notably Joe Paterno. It discusses events starting from Paterno's youth through the end of 2012.

While the book summarizes a good deal of information, the author's personal feelings on several matters are extremely visible. This is well within the authors right - he did write the book after all. I was trying to find an impartial summary of events and this wasn't always impartial, though it is difficult to remain so in a matter ranging from law to ethics. The book also has segments praising Paterno or Penn State that sometimes seem out of place and over celebrated. One passage will speak to how amazing Paterno was while the next chapter will tear apart his involvement. Additionally, some segments of the book are extremely repetitive as they explain the same circumstances viewed at different times (such as an account of an event brought up chronologically, then when discovered during investigation, then again on another charge). It's likely written as so because many of the legal proceedings depend on prior events and statements, so it's hard to fault the author too much for this.

If you're interested in the scandal, Penn State, or the legal/ethical proceedings of this case and larger child abuse cases I'd recommend the book. If you aren't already interested in these things, the book will probably not hold your attention

Rich Meyer says

Game Over is a less-than-flattering look at the Penn State scandal. While it isn't as up-to-date as it could be, ending before the actual trial began, it does do a very good job elaborating on the "Culture of Silence" that pervades Penn State (and most universities that seem to value athletic superiority over academics). With the exception of one State Trooper, no one in the administrative or legal chain of commands really seemed to do their job here, all too afraid of rocking the boat that was Joe Paterno's now-justifiably blemished legacy.

The book is fairly well-written for one of these "tell-all" exposes, but as I said, does not follow the situation to the logical conclusion, nor does the book contain any updates on Jerry Sandusky's subsequent convictions and the righteous hammer leveled at Penn State by the NCAA.

Not a book for everyone, but a good look at how a child sex predator can work a system under the guise of nobility...and get away with it for decades because of being associated with a winning football team.

James Blain says

I was a good read, but written before the dust had settled. While they sided more with the victims, understandably, they also gave Jerry and his lawyer a voice.

Stephanie says

Two books in one weekend!

Anyway, I'm giving this a lackluster score. There's nothing wrong with this book. Well... it gets repetitive in some cases, and sometimes the writing is very blatant. But I've given other books four stars before despite having these same faults, because they've offered things to make up for them.

Not so in this case. I suspect this will be a good primer for people who are new to this incident. But, well, State College was my home town and I was glued to coverage of this event. This book ultimately boils down to a paraphrasing of the Freeh report, news articles, and wikipedia pages on the main players involved. The only part that was new to me was how an investigator tracked down victims by using Sandusky's memoir.

Honestly, I just think that overviews of huge true crime events need to wait for at least a decade. And the Sandusky case spans decades and has tons of moving parts. This book tries to cover all the things it mentions in the title (plus Paterno) and it tries to do it in a rather small number of pages. Speaking of Paterno, the book's attitude towards him seems endemic of the problems inherent in writing a true crime overview months after the fact. Some chapters laud him. Others excoriate him. Sometimes both things happen in the same chapter; I basically give no fucks about Penn State football (in fact, State College's sports obsession made me miserable many times as a kid) but is it really any surprise that his funeral service made no mention of the Sandusky case? This kind of back and forth feels like the representation of the conflicting moods a lot of us felt in the months after the charges came to light. It lends it an odd quality of emotional verisimilitude, but it's still kind of... eh.

I would much rather have read the author's take on what the hell happened in that game of telephone between Patern and Schultz and Curley. But the book is silent on that, save saying that it happened. Actually, that's probably the BIGGEST fault of this book; lots of facts thrown at the reader, with very little analysis. Compare this to something like Columbine which has gotten critiqued, sure, but the author takes on massive amounts of primary evidence and brings his own hypotheses to the table. But that's probably easier to do once the dust has settled.

I can tell you right now that Penn State is fascinatingly weird place, with a lot of good and bad things about it. Someday we'll see a book or documentary that is as incisive as this topic deserves. But I think we'll need to wait a while for it.

Christie says

So I was going to get on my soap box and voice my opinion. But I think I will at least start with the book. I did find the book a bit repetitive, you where told the same thing the same way in a few different areas in the book. However I did learn more then I knew and I think that Moushey presents as much of the story as he could. I did find that it tried to shed a short of positive light on JoePa. However I left the book thinking he probably knew more than he let on...however was he okay once he reported it. It is such a complex situation with who knew and when they knew and who they told and what the authorities were or were not told and there is even missing people involved. I would like to end this review with a quote before I get on a soap box. "It's the act of one person. you can't condemn an entire university for it" (78). I will say I believe it is more that one person, but the acts of a group of people is punishing a whole university and everyone is letting it happen. I hope this review don't know make it sound like I don't care about what happened I think what occurred there was disgusting and I can not put into words what I think should be done to Sandusky, but why punish more?

Darren says

This is such an important story ... that was so badly told in "Game Over". The book is extremely choppy, features several grammatical errors and you'll wonder at times if you have re-read pages.

I suspect this was rushed to the publisher and what happened appears to be chapters that were written independently and then dropped into book form. There are several stories that are repeated throughout the book and every time they're re-told as if we're first learning of them - the basement screams not heard by Dottie, the janitor who now has dementia, the McQueary account of telling his father, the fact that players stay at a hotel before their home games - all stories that were repeated throughout the book in painful detail every time.

In fact, the chapters detailing the pre-trial hearings are so painful as they rehash mostly everything already laid out in earlier chapters. It was painful to read from a moral point of view but also from a literary one.

There were some elements of the case that I wasn't aware of but for the most part this was a collection of journalist's stories (with no source notes at the back of the book!?) thrown into various chapters with little regard for continuity.

There were also omissions from the book including the irony surrounding Paterno's death and his consideration for retirement. Years before the crisis broke into the public light and Paterno considered retiring he told sports journalist Brent Musberger he was afraid to retire for fear he'd die shortly after retirement like his colleague Bear Bryant. Sure enough that's exactly what happened to Paterno when he was turfed by Penn State's board. That's the sort of stuff you put into books like these to add some colour!

The other glaring omission was the Sandusky verdict. Apparently the authors couldn't wait to release the book for another couple of months and wait for the verdict which makes this book not exactly a solid historical resource on the crisis. Keep it on the shelves.

It's a shame that this awful story wasn't told better in this book because it's a story that needs to be told.

Jo Anne says

I was at Penn State in the late 80s. Long before I got there it was known as a football school. I didn't care for Penn State; I attended because I was paying for my education on my own and it was the only school I could afford that offered my program. I never drank the "Happy Valley" Kool-Aid. It was a big school in a small town and if you weren't there to study engineering, agro or football, you were just wasting your time.

Anyway, if you followed the Sandusky stories in the newspapers, you have already read this book. I didn't discover anything new. It WAS a good book and well-written and if you somehow managed to miss it the first time around, the book will fill you in nicely.

It ends before Sandusky's trial and it's obvious the book was rushed to print to capitalize on the scandal while still fresh.

I don't bleed blue and white. The football players I came into contact with were entitled and arrogant. I'm heartbroken that little kids got hurt but not surprised. Protect the king (JoePa and football) at all costs was the attitude at PSU and I truly believe all the stories. A lot more people beside Sandusky should be in jail.

Sam Sattler says

Bill Moushey and Bob Dvorchak, authors of Game Over: Jerry Sandusky, Penn State, and the Culture of Silence, have definitely struck a nerve with thousands of Penn State alumni and Happy Valley residents. It appears, based entirely on the "reviews" of the book I see posted on Amazon, that the pair faces a vicious backlash based more on emotion than on reason – and that almost all of the negative "reviews" posted there have been written by people who did not bother reading the book before damning it. It seems that it will be left to those without ties to Penn State, and a minority of Penn-Staters themselves, to gauge the objectivity and effectiveness of the book.

On one level, Game Over is an excellent recap of the news that starting leaking out of Happy Valley, PA, in early November 2011. Those that may have come to the story a little late will find the chronology presented to be especially helpful. Others are likely to focus more on the additional details attached to the original revelations, disgusting as some of those details are. Readers should, in fact, be forewarned that several descriptions of Jerry Sandusky's alleged assaults of the young boys under his sponsorship and care are disgustingly graphic in nature and leave little to the imagination.

On a second level, what Game Over reveals about the culture espoused by Penn State administrators, its athletic coaches, its students, and the community that supports and benefits from the school's presence, is almost as disturbing and horrifying as the crimes Sandusky is alleged to have committed against his young victims. That there was, and to a lesser degree still is, a "culture of silence" surrounding Penn State that allowed this kind of criminal behavior to continue for decades, cannot be disputed. Moushey and Dvorchak present their case in detail, naming names and shaming those who deserve it, in the process. Only the court system can determine the guilt or innocence of the various parties involved in all of this, but Jerry Sandusky should not be the only one facing a judge and jury of his peers before this is over.

From what the Game Over authors have to say, it appears that the second worst "crime" committed during this whole period, may lay at the feet of Coach Joe Paterno, the man who really ran Penn State while all of this was happening. If true, Paterno helped bring shame to the university and forever sullied his own reputation and famous catchphrase: "Success with Honor." Paterno's silence seems to have been the signal to Penn State's coaches, administrators, and others that the entire Sandusky matter should be kept within the confines of the Penn State "family," and that outsiders were not to be trusted with this information. Joe Paterno had just that much clout in Happy Valley – he had, in fact, almost been granted sainthood by the locals, making a cover-up of this magnitude a relatively easy thing for the school to pull off.

Much remains for the courts to determine, including: the culpability of two principal university administrators in the cover-up; the part in the cover-up of some inside The Second Mile (Sandusky's charity for poverty stricken boys); how much Sandusky's wife knew of crimes said to have taken place in her home; and whether Sandusky remained at Penn State (even after resigning from its coaching staff in 1999 while at the top of his game) simply because his charity provided him with a ready supply of victims of just the right age.

As James Murtha, a 1977 Penn State graduate, put it, "...in retrospect, you could almost predict how this would turn out because of the way Penn State does business. Isolation is one of its charms, but it's also part of the problem. They all drink the Kool-Aid up there. They lost all focus. The only way to solve a problem is to admit that you have one. It's crisis management 101. When I saw the way they handled it, I wanted to projectile vomit."

So did I.

Colleen says

I'm not sure how to take the lack of notations, so I'm going to assume this is highly editorialized. It's also not particularly well written, either. Seems rushed to print maybe?

It's a shame that someone seems to have capitalized on the tragedy of such a scandal and spends more time talking about the "glory" that is Penn State and it's "tragic downfall" then on the rot in an environment where such a thing can go unnoticed and unreported for so long. Hopefully stories like this help break the code of silence for institutions like Penn State, the Catholic Church, et al.

Jodi says

First of all - you have a book about Jerry Sandusky and who's picture is on the front of the book...Joe Paterno. Because he sells more then a picture of Sandusky. As I'm reading how this scandal first started to

come out I couldn't help being outraged over the flippant attitudes of the kids parents and school officials. One parent saw her kid w/ wet hair and just settled for a scolding to Sandusky as repercussions. Another parent suspected things weren't right but admits (pg 64) "the boy thoroughly enjoyed the gifts he received from his mentor. He also gained entry into the exclusive world of Penn State football because of his Sandusky connection. ...there were times when his mother became somewhat concerned at Sandusky's behavior ..she choose to let those issues go however because of the benefits her child was getting." McQuery saw Sandusky with a child in the shower and walked out of the building. A school principal told a sobbing child to go home and rethink about things before filing a complaint about the sexual abuse. The high school let Sandusky pull kids out of classes and take them off campus -- all these people let these kids down. But the only thing everyone wants to scream about is that it was "Penn State's fault".....that high school principal is still employed at that school and McQuery has the audacity to blame the University because he can't get employed now. I hope somehow during their lives these victims can begin to heal knowing that Sandusky will rot in prison for life.

Jtfreeman says

I would have liked to see some source notes (there are none) and the authors could've used a couple more months to clean things up a bit. That being said the book is a decent overview of the tragic happenings that occurred at Penn State over the last two decades. The Harrisburg Patriot-News won a Pulitzer for their coverage of the scandal and their outstanding work is readily available online.
