

Sack, Allen L. Counterfeit amateurs: an athlete's journey through the sixties to the age of academic capitalism. Pennsylvania State, 2008. 200p bibl index afp ISBN 9780271033686, \$24.95

A person who feels strongly about a particular subject is often tempted to dash off a letter, an op-ed piece, or a book. This title is the result of such a passion. A trained sociologist, Sack (now sports management, Univ. of New Haven) played football for Notre Dame in the 1960s, and here he integrates his personal athletic and academic odyssey (from high school through college) with the politics and issues of the era, mainly race relations and the Vietnam War. Early in the book he begins to build a case against the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), which is today one of the most efficient, ruthless special-interest groups in the US. Sack is a longtime battler against corruption in intercollegiate athletics, and in this book his political leanings take center stage. His contempt for commercialization and capitalism is inescapable. Many others have written about these topics in a more objective, dispassionate way, and the reader will find little that is new, insightful, or helpful in Sack's accounts of the past and remedies for the future. The cesspool that is college athletics today certainly deserves to be exposed and condemned; Sack just does not do it very well. Summing Up: Optional. Lower-division undergraduates, professionals, general readers. -- A. R. Sanderson, University of Chicago