



The Agent: My 40-Year Career Making Deals and Changing the Game

Leigh Steinberg , Michael Arkush

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A *New York Times* bestseller!

The real-life "Jerry Maguire," superagent Leigh Steinberg shares his personal stories on the rise, fall, and redemption of his game-changing career in the high-stakes world of professional sports

Leigh Steinberg is renowned as one of the greatest sports agents in history, representing such All-Pro clients as Troy Aikman, Bruce Smith, and Ben Roethlisberger. Over one particular seven-year stretch, Steinberg represented the top NFL Draft pick an unheard of six times. Director Cameron Crowe credits Steinberg as a primary inspiration for the titular character in *Jerry Maguire*, even hiring Steinberg as a consultant on the film. Lightyears ahead of his contemporaries, he expanded his players' reach into entertainment. Already the bestselling author of a business book on negotiation, the original superagent is now taking readers behind the closed doors of professional sports, recounting priceless stories, like how he negotiated a \$26.5 million package for Steve Young—the biggest ever at the time—and how he passed on the chance to represent Peyton Manning.

Beginning with his early days as a student leader at Berkeley, Steinberg details his illustrious rise into pro sports fame, his decades of industry dominance, and how he overcame a series of high-profile struggles to regain his sobriety and launch his comeback. This riveting story takes readers inside the inner circle of top-notch agents and players through the visionary career of Leigh Steinberg, the pre-eminent superagent of our time.

The Agent: My 40-Year Career Making Deals and Changing the Game Details

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From Reader Review The Agent: My 40-Year Career Making Deals and Changing the Game for online ebook

Patrick Weseman says

It was good

A good read if you like the business of football from one of its too agents. Enjoyed this very much.

Matt Simpson says

Leigh Steinberg's patented formula for writing an autobiography:

- 1) Look at how awesome I am at School!
- 2) Let me tell you how I signed a #1 Draft pick to a record-setting deal
- 3) Look at how awesome I am at life!
- 4) Let me tell you about these other record-breaking contracts I signed
- 5) Name drop!
- 6) Name drop!
- 7) - 376) Name drop!
- 377) Thoughtful, in-depth look at concussions in Football
- 378) Look at how awesome I am at being an alcoholic!
- 379) My house had mold. Twice.
- 380) - 385) Name drop! I'm Awesome!
- 381) Oh yeah, my Dad died.
- 382) I guess some other bad stuff happened to me too...

Did Michael Arkush (a real writer, who helped Leigh with this book) get any real say into the content or the voice with which this story is told? I doubt it, but if so shame on him.

This gets two stars because I was actually interested in the chapter on concussions. Sadly it is only 11 pages long.

285 pages of bragging, while glossing over any real struggle he had in life. Give it a miss.

Julie says

Ugh. I generally refrain from trashing books because I can't imagine how hard it is to actually write one, but THIS GUY. Come on. I know there is a certain amount of cockiness required to be a sports agent, but this guy is just the worst. Or at least that's how it comes across in his "memoir" (and I use that term generously, since it is mostly just a detailed version of his childhood followed by a name-dropping list of everyone he ever represented), where he brags about the high-profile deals he negotiated and self-aggrandizes his charitable contributions to the world as if he is Mother Teresa. And how about the fact that he glosses over anything remotely personal, instead alluding to the fact that he made mistakes without ever really explaining

them or expressing genuine remorse?

I received a free copy of this book through the GoodReads First Books program

Chuck Herrera says

What a wonderful biography by one the leading professional sports agents today. A glimpse into the working of professional sports and look in one person's heart and soul. 5/5 stars, a must read even if you aren't a sports fan.

Shaun says

This was an interesting book about one of the high power sports agents ever. He has worked with and signed many of the highest profile athletes in every major sports. He signed Steve Young among many other NFL quarterbacks. It was interesting to hear how he did the work of signing athletes to big money contracts. Overall, I enjoyed this memoir.

Danny Ruchalski says

I thought this was a great story that showed us the type of life we usually do not get to see. Most of the time we here about athlete's lives but in this biography the story of the sports agent was told. Arguably the greatest sports agent of all time, Leigh Steinberg was never looking to become as powerful as he became, he did not even plan on being an agent. The book tells stories about all his relationships with his former celebrity clients in baseball, basketball, and the sport he dominated, football. He even represented a record 8 number one overall picks in the NFL Draft. However, the great thing about Leigh was that he made his clients give back to the community and make plans for life beyond their athletic careers. He was not looking for as much money as he could he was just trying to do whats best for his clients that he cared for dearly. The story also talks about things more important than sports such as his struggles with his family, home and alcoholism and how even to this day he keeps fighting with some of these problems. If you love sports and want to read about a man who changed the whole business of the sports agent, this is the book for you.

Andrew says

Imagine that you've been invited to a multi-course dinner with sports agent Leigh Steinberg. This book is the conversation you might have with him if you didn't try to get a word in edgewise.

At time it's meandering, and often self-serving, as Steinberg comes across as desperate to present himself in the most positive light possible. He also makes sure to mention every single moderately famous person outside of the world of sports that he's ever come into contact with, and there's lots of name dropping. And very often, the simple, conversational prose comes across as dumbed-down.

But on the other hand, the man's had a very interesting life, and if you're interested in the business side of sports, it's hard to find a better source. It will be a fast read, and you'll learn some interesting things from behind the scenes of sports. If you're looking for juicy gossip, you'll be disappointed, as Steinberg declines to name any of the individuals involved in anything remotely controversial, but there are some interesting stories of sleazy agents, entitled athletes, and the like.

Steve Peifer says

Holy cow this was dull. It shouldn't be; he lived an extraordinary life, but wow what a boring book. They need to find a real writer to do a biography of him. This wasn't even so bad it's good bad. Just boringly bad.

Eric says

Good read and cool insight into the life of the agent that inspired or at least influenced the movie Jerry McGuire. Leigh was not the typical sports agent, and instead lived and worked with higher goals and standards than just bottom line dollars as the objective. He made positive influences on the sport of football as well as in many lives through his charitable contributions and those of his clients. This book also offers a lot of insight to the contractual negotiations for many famous athletes, which is worth reading if for no other reason.

Claire says

I received The Agent as part of a Goodreads giveaway.

Representing an impressive range of athletes, mostly in football but in other sports as well, Leigh Steinberg was the main inspiration for the Jerry Maguire character. Having fallen into sports agency somewhat by accident, in the ensuing 40 years, he has gone on to represent an impressive portfolio of athletes, developing personal relationships with them along the way.

In the age of sports scandals ranging from performance enhancing drugs to concussions, Steinberg is a breath of fresh air in his principled approach to the game, and it was interesting to learn about the player/agent relationship from the latter's perspective, one that we rarely get insight on. We also get to see some of the greatest superstars in modern sports--Steve Young, Warren Moon, Troy Aikman, Drew Bledsoe, Ben Roethlisberger--as young men in and just out of college, navigating their first taste of fame.

Steinberg's life was marred by difficulty in recent years, including a bout with alcoholism and financial troubles. While it's undoubtedly a difficult period for Steinberg to relive, I would have liked to hear more about his struggles in this regard (it only about 25 pages near the end of the book), if for no other reason than he is living proof that someone can conquer addiction and thrive in its aftermath. Still, an interesting read for a time when sports and athletes are coming under an increasingly powerful microscope.

Rob Warner says

He wrote the story, so he gets to write it his way. He tends to paint himself as a boy scout, delving deep into the glamour and glossing over the bad times. You get the feeling that he's telling the story because he needs money, having lost the fortune he built. Nevertheless, the story is usually interesting and brings back memories of great players from the past and providing insights into their roles in building the NFL into the juggernaut it is today. It's a good read that won't leave much impression.

Vincent says

This was Ok. Not really great and kind of disappointing when you think about how good it could be. This guy knows everyone and all the good stories yet it was pretty self serving and how smart he was. Although, talk about a guy who had it all and blew it all by hitting the booze. Although he says that he is making a comeback. A sad story.

Rob Perschau says

Interesting. Lots of personal insight into the workings of sports agents.

Lance says

Rating:

4 of 5 stars (very good)

Review:

Leigh Steinberg is a name that is very familiar name to fans of pro football. He could be considered the first "super agent", representing hundreds of NFL players. In one eight year stretch, he was the agent for the top pick of the NFL draft six times. He built a multi-million dollar business with the agency and was the inspiration behind the movie "Jerry McGuire." It all came crashing down when Steinberg decided to face his alcoholism. He is now four years clean and sober and wrote this book to reflect on his career and his life.

The book reads like many other biographies, starting with the day he realized what was happening, then it talks about his childhood, his education and how he got started in the business. That story is probably the best part of the entire book. Steinberg's recollection and accounting of how a recent graduate and former resident advisor to the top pick of the 1975 NFL draft, Steve Bartkowski became the player's agent is one that will have the reader laughing, smiling and realizing that even a simple connection may pay off down the road.

As Steinberg's career and reputation grow, so does the book's tales. They grow bigger and more famous, but the writing style wouldn't let you think so. Steinberg does stay grounded while writing these, not getting too caught up in the notoriety of being famous. He does take advantage of some of the perks that come with this territory, of course, but not too much because he doesn't come across as having the fame go to his head.

Where the book started losing some of its luster for me was after he entered rehabilitation programs for his alcoholism. I was actually surprised that there was not more written about this time for him, but his determination to be back in business is admirable. However, this is where I thought the book changed course and came across as preachy. Another change in the direction of the book here is that he talked about hot-button political topics and what he is going to do for them. Admirable, but if I wanted to read about the issue that he addresses, there are better sources for that than a sports book.

This ending did keep the book from a five star rating from me, but it was still a very good book. If you like to read about some of the NFL stars from the 1980's and 1990's, Steinberg has plenty of them to share here.

Did I skim?

No.

Pace of the book:

Very good. It was easy to read from start to finish and kept to the chronological order of his life. Unlike some other biographies or memoirs that tend to skip around as the writer remembers facts, this book stayed on the timeline and that made it very easy to read.

Do I recommend?

Yes, for any pro football fan as there are great stories on some of the biggest stars. Also a decent memoir for readers who enjoy reading biographies.

Ari says

This book is sort of dummies book for aspiring sports agents. . Leigh goes through his history of stories, including having a table thrown at him by a GM (General manager) a player who said he would sign if they bought him a watch, and more. He portrays the agent world as a grueling job not meant for the faint of heart. He explains the job as well in great lengths and explains how to make connection, how to not lose your cool, and most important , how to build a lasting relationship with your clients. All of these are key to becoming an agent. He created a new era in sports management by instilling a code of ethics in his players with involved giving back to the community from which they came. He believes community comes first and makes sure players volunteer for community service. Overall I think this book is great for aspiring sports agents like myself because he speaks from experience.
