



# **Cheated: The UNC Scandal, the Education of Athletes, and the Future of Big-Time College Sports**

*Jay M Smith, Mary Willingham*

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In 2010 allegations of an utterly corrupt academic system for student-athletes emerged from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill campus, home of the legendary Tar Heels. As the alma mater of Michael Jordan, Larry Brown, Marion Jones, Lawrence Taylor, Rashad McCants, and many others; winner of forty national championships in six different sports; and a partner in one of the best rivalries in sports, UNC–Chapel Hill is a world-famous colossus of college athletics. In the wake of the Wainstein report, however, the fallout from this scandal—and the continuing spotlight on the failings of college athletics—has made the school ground zero in the debate about how the \$16 billion college sports industry operates.

Written by UNC professor of history Jay Smith and UNC athletics department whistleblower Mary Willingham, *Cheated* exposes the fraudulent inner workings of this famous university. For decades these internal systems have allowed woefully underprepared basketball and football players to take fake courses and earn devalued degrees from one of the nation’s top universities while faculty and administrators looked the other way. In unbiased and carefully sourced detail, *Cheated* recounts the academic fraud in UNC’s athletics department, even as university leaders focused on minimizing the damage in order to keep the billion-dollar college sports revenue machine functioning. Smith and Willingham make an impassioned argument that the “student-athletes” in these programs are being cheated out of what, after all, is promised them in the first place: a college education.

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