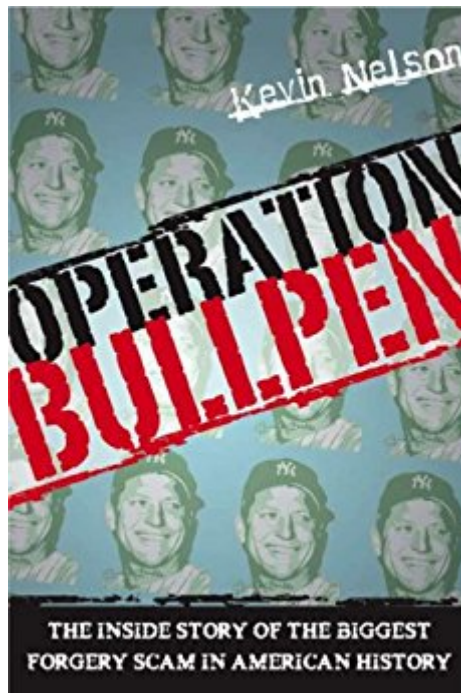




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# Operation Bullpen: The Inside Story Of The Biggest Forgery Scam In American History



## Synopsis

The amazing true story of the high-flying national forgery ring that forged the autographs of sports stars and celebrities and ripped off the American public for more than \$100 million, before being busted by a dramatic three-year FBI undercover investigation. As seen on ESPN, Tru-TV, and now being developed into a feature film.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A fantastic read that takes you on a criminal journey that started from a simple idea and developed into one of the more complex and lucrative criminal enterprises in FBI investigation history ... that did not involve drugs! However, it did involve fraud, deception, lies, greed and a steady hand! Kevin Nelson (author) develops the characters from the beginning and shows their flaws as well as their insecurities. He really provides an insider view of how a criminal organization grows and eventually turns into an uncontrollable beast. In the end, the conspiracy becomes an entity on its own and cannot be corralled! This is followed by internal back stabbing and the opportunity by the more cunning, to flip for the government, in order to take care and protect themselves at the expense of

their "once" friends and co-conspirators. The book is an enjoyable piece of autographing collector's history that opens ones' eyes to the dark and more sinister side involving greed #TheHobby can bring out of people.

I had seen Operation Bullpen referenced many times on various card and memorabilia sites, so I was familiar with the basics of the case. I am mostly into cards, but if you are into any type of memorabilia, especially autographs, this book will open your eyes to how rampant the fraud is in the industry. Until I read Operation Bullpen, I didn't realize just how massive the Marino forgery network was or that it reached all over the country. The damage done to the hobby by the Marinos and others like them is permanent. The book really drives home just how dirty a business selling autographs is. How can a collector ever buy an autograph of Babe Ruth or Mickey Mantle or Ted Williams and really feel secure in what they bought? The book is a fast read, and Nelson does a wonderful job talking to numerous sources involved in the investigation, as well as the forgers and dishonest dealers themselves. Read this book and you will think twice about ever paying for an autograph sold by a dealer. For me, the guy that really comes off like a scumbag in the book is boxer Chuck Wepner. People like Wayne Bray and Greg Marino are largely anonymous to the general public, but Wepner used his fame from the Muhammad Ali fight to outright rip fans off with fake Ali autographs. At one point in the book, Wepner goes out to his car in the parking lot of an autograph signing and is prepared to forge Ali's name to some pictures before being advised that the signatures would not match the phony Ali autographs on pictures he had been hawking inside the building. The author also does a great job driving home the point of no matter how many forgers or dishonest dealers are arrested, the problem will never be stopped. The sad reality for collectors is that there is just too much easy money to be made by peddling phony autographs.

A well-researched and well-written book. Even though there were numerous characters in the volume, Nelson managed to make each one an individual, and I could keep track of them. Of course, reading his book makes me not want to purchase any sports autographs.

The FBI's main purpose for Operation Bullpen was to educate the public on memorabilia collecting. The book details the extent criminals will go to, in order to make a buck. The FBI knew that forgeries will continue no matter what law enforcement does. It is impossible to eliminate forgers or the forged items that are currently out in the market. Kevin did an outstanding job in articulating what we did or try to do. Now his book is the talk among memorabilia dealers throughout the world...GREAT JOB

KEVIN. As far as myself, I enjoyed working as the FBI Undercover Agent to help in a little way to correct the wrong in this industry. HIGHLY RECCOMEND THE BOOK AND THE AUTHOR..

I have been collecting sports memorabilia and working autograph shows since I was 14. I learned a lot from this book, specifically how the criminals actually fake autographs. We would always know which dealer at a show had fake items, etc, but this book really shows you just how widespread fakes were and still are in the market. This book is well researched and quite frankly shocking and eye opening, you really never know if an autograph is real unless you get it personally. I always thought the "Authenticiation" companies were a lot of hype and this book proves that. A master forger such as Marino is too good to be caught by a run of the mill employee of an Authentication Company. Again, bottom line, if you have, collect, or are thinking about starting an autograph collection or even just sports memorabilis collection read this book. You have no idea how many baseball cards, etc are fakes too.

This has to be one of my favorite books. It brings a real insight into the sports memorabilia industry that still is rampant with fraud and shady characters. If you like cards and sports this is a good read. Also if you are from So Cal this is interesting as well due to the local of the events. Highly recommend.

I have been interested in autographed sports memorabilia for a number of years, and I have a decent collection. Having heard about this case, I found the book. This was a good read, and very interesting. Some of the stuff that happened, particularly with the "vintage" stars, was amazing. I'd recommend this for anyone interested in memorabilia, but particularly if you collect it. Be careful where you get your goods from. A deal that sounds too good probably is. And anybody that has a large amount of stuff signed by Ruth or Mantle or those sorts of guys, be very suspicious of.

Excellent book. Well written story. A real page turner. I have collected sports memoribila for over thirty years and now I have doubts about every card and autograph in my collection. I thought COA's were the gold standard, now I realize after reading this book for autographs and the books Mint Condition and The Card about card condition and authenticity, that I cannot be sure about anything in my collection. The sad part is these books have taken the fun out of collecting for me.

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