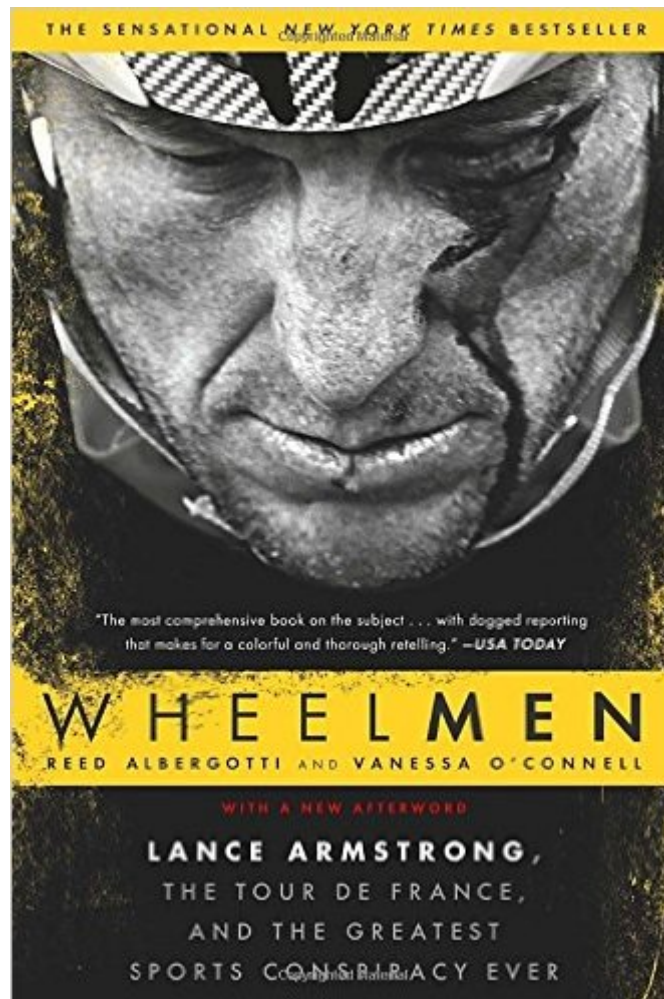


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Wheelmen: Lance Armstrong, The Tour De France, And The Greatest Sports Conspiracy Ever



Synopsis

The sensational New York Times bestselling in-depth look at Lance Armstrong's doping scandal, the phenomenal business success built on the back of fraud, and the greatest conspiracy in the history of sports. Now with a new afterword. Lance Armstrong won a record-smashing seven Tours de France after staring down cancer, and in the process became an international symbol of resilience and courage. In a sport constantly dogged by blood-doping scandals, he seemed above the fray. Then, in January 2013, the legend imploded. He admitted doping during the Tours and, in an interview with Oprah, described his "mythic, perfect story" as "one big lie." But his admission raised more questions than it answered "because he didn't say who had helped him dope or how he skillfully avoided getting caught. The Wall Street Journal's reporters Reed Albergotti and Vanessa O'Connell broke the news at every turn. In *Wheelmen* they reveal the broader story of how Armstrong and his supporters used money, power, and cutting-edge science to conquer the world's most difficult race. *Wheelmen* introduces U.S. Postal Service Team owner Thom Weisel, who in a brazen power play ousted USA Cycling's top leadership and gained control of the sport in the United States, ensuring Armstrong's dominance. Meanwhile, sponsors fought over contracts with Armstrong as the entire sport of cycling began to benefit from the "Lance effect." What had been a quirky, working-class hobby became the pastime of the Masters of the Universe set. *Wheelmen* offers a riveting look at what happens when enigmatic genius breaks loose from the strictures of morality. It reveals the competitiveness and ingenuity that sparked blood-doping as an accepted practice, and shows how the Americans methodically constructed an international operation of spies and revolutionary technology to reach the top. It went on to become a New York Times Bestseller, a Wall Street Journal Business Bestseller, and win numerous awards, including a Gold Medal for the Axiom Business Book Awards. At last exposing the truth about Armstrong and American cycling, *Wheelmen* paints a living portrait of what is, without question, the greatest conspiracy in the history of sports.

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Customer Reviews

This is an amazing period for cycling fans who followed the ascendance of Lance Armstrong and Tyler Hamilton and Floyd Landis in the 1990s and 2000s and marveled as they were discredited and fell from grace, condemned as cheaters. For those reading on the topic, the first great text is the USADA's own report on cheating at the U.S. Postal team. It's vivid, detailed, shocking (or was when it was released), and freely available online. Then came Tyler Hamilton's book, *The Secret Race*, which describes his own decision to cheat and how it all fell apart. If you are going to read only one book on this topic, Hamilton's is so far the best. Now we get *Wheelmen*, by two reporters from the Wall Street Journal. The last in this round will probably be *Cycle of Lies: The Fall of Lance Armstrong* by Juliet Mancur of the New York Times. That one comes out next year. These books overlap each other, and a reader might reasonably wonder whether or not it makes sense to read more than one. For me, the answer is very much yes. The USADA report is amazing as a primary source. Hamilton's book gives additional, vivid detail including an extended discussion of how and why great riders chose to cheat, and what it felt like when they did. It also provides some color on Thomas Wiesel, Chris Carmichael, and other players in the doping story who were not discussed in the USADA report because they weren't directly involved.

Simply stated, this is an absolutely terrific book that reads more like a novel than non-fiction. For those who think they know the story I think that you will be surprised. My reaction to this book is the same as to the Steve Jobs biography written by Walter Issacson, which my mother gave me as a gift about a year ago. I was a little concerned when I got it because I thought I knew enough about Jobs, Apple, PC industry history etc. for it to not be interesting. Of course, I was wrong because Issacson tells us all a lot of things that we didn't know about the man. In that regard, this book is similar in that there is much more depth and breadth to this story than I ever knew. I will give the reviewers who claim they learned nothing new the benefit of the doubt, but unless they were somewhere part of the inner workings of the cycling world in a profound way, it is hard to believe that this could be possible. The authors piece together the history of this "conspiracy" by starting at

the beginning and introducing the main characters that get the ball rolling. What is surprising is how the characters change but the "character" of Lance Armstrong really doesn't as his career ascends. From living here in Texas I knew to some degree what a jerk Armstrong was - anybody paying attention could tell that he was as ruthless as a mob boss in trying intimidate people who were working with the investigators responsible for his case based on the things that came out over the last couple of years.

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