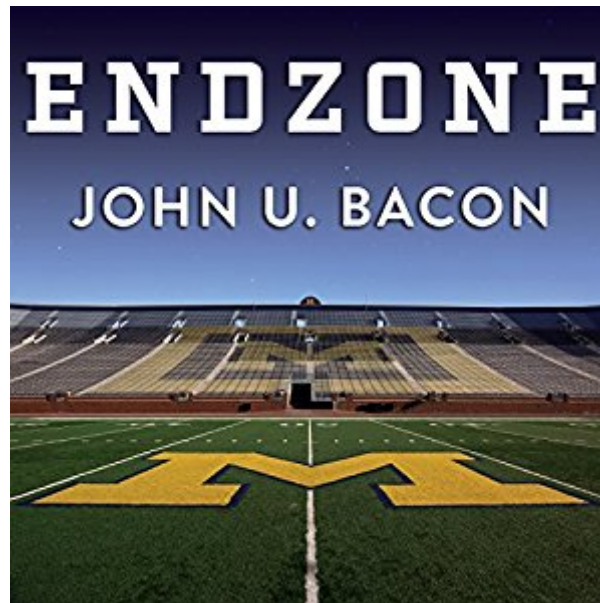




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# Endzone: The Rise, Fall, And Return Of Michigan Football



## Synopsis

Endzone tells the story of how college football's most successful and respected program nearly lost it all in less than a decade and entirely of its own doing. It is a story of hubris, greed, and betrayal, a tale more suited to Wall Street than the world's top public university. Author John U. Bacon takes you inside the offices, the boardrooms, and the locker rooms of the University of Michigan to see what happened and why, with countless eye-opening, head-shaking scenes of conflict and conquest. But Endzone is also an inspiring story of redemption and revival. When those who loved Michigan football the most recognized that it was being attacked from within, they rallied to reclaim the values that had made it great for over a century. The list of heroes includes players, students, lettermen, fans, and faculty - and the leaders who had the courage to listen to them. Their unprecedented uprising produced a new athletic director and a new coach who vindicated the fans' faith when he turned down more money and fame to return to the place he loved most: Michigan.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book is stunning - maddening, disgusting, shocking, and ultimately joyous - a deep dive into what was going on during what we Michigan fans like to term "The Horror" or the "Dark Times".

Bacon has written a carefully researched and balanced book that at first glance may seem like an indictment of Dave Brandon as Michigan's Athletic Director. But it's not that at all, although later in the book Brandon pretty much indicts himself. Bacon gives him his due for his stint as a U-M Regent and for his open-door policy for student-athletes as AD. Before even going there, the book first

establishes the concept of the "Michigan Man" from the earliest years of Michigan Football and sets the bar for what values and traditions are dear to generations of Wolverines. It then tackles the recent history of the program and Brandon's history, laying out the timeline of the program's increasing peril beginning sometime after the death of Bo Schembechler in 2006 through the recent hiring of Jim Harbaugh, Bo's protege. There's a lot of drama between those bookends of time. Lots of division, duplicity, and very "un-Michiganlike" thinking (and doing). What you read, no matter your school affiliation, will have you scratching your head. In the end, this book shows how a great institution lost its way through questionable leadership, loss of perspective on the things that are important to the university's students, alumni, employees, fans, and athletes, and the placing of self before the whole. It also shows how a grassroots effort by those very people set in motion events that look to restore Michigan Football to a position of respect and power nationally. Do NOT ignore this book if you're not Michigan fan. This could happen anywhere. There are lessons here aplenty for everyone in a leadership position in any type of organization. This cautionary tale should be required reading for every university president, regent, athletic director, or coach. No organization or the people it serves should ever have to go through something like this again.

Great book on the debacle that was Dave Brandon's tenure as Michigan's athletic department. An absolute primer on what not to do as either a business executive or as an athletic director. The book is most appealing to Michigan fans but will be of interest to anyone involved in making decisions about selecting university athletic directors. There are many unanswered questions because the author does little speculating or rumor mongering, if it is in the book I am convinced he vetted the fact with more than one source. One key question was why a seemingly competent University President (Mary Sue Coleman) would pick someone like Dave Brandon who was so ill suited for the position and why she continued to support him even after it was becoming clear that Dave Brandon was mean, vindictive, full of hubris and quite possibly inept. The book attempts to balance things by relating the positive side of Dave Brandon, but since he is just a complete jackass much of the time it's difficult to feel much sympathy. Dave obviously has skills and intelligence to have had the success he has had, but he could be much more effective if he was introspective and practiced the golden rule "treat others as you would like to be treated", rather than his mantra "if it's not broken, break it!". His apparent glee in firing people and bloating the athletic staff for no reason, are among his many errors, let alone his "yes men/women" hiring practices. I do not think Dave is evil, but he comes close to it. And as a fellow marketer I can tell you Dave Brandon SUCKS at marketing by completely and willfully misunderstanding his constituents. I also love his out the door

FU by resigning but taking every cent he can (\$3M) from his supposed beloved University. He has a net worth many many millions of dollars (\$20M from Domino's alone) yet after abject failure he still grabs his \$3M. I feel sorry for the employees of Toys-r-us (where Dave is currently CEO) and will sure as hell short the stock if it becomes public again.

One of the most fascinating sports books I have read. It gives you a blow-by-blow of the inside of sports management and sports marketing at a major college. This provides valuable information and insight for anyone in sports management and I recommend it to anyone in the field or any field closely related to it. You cannot learn everything in the classroom and this book goes behind the facade of college sports to show you how and why decisions are made, sometimes correct, often not. It's a valuable tool for my sports & entertainment business as well. You've heard the line: All that glitters is not gold! So true here! The fan is the most important commodity in sports and should be catered to and if Dave Brandon, former Michigan Athletic Director had catered more to the fans than to his own ego, he'd probably still be at Michigan.

Riveting behind the scenes story telling. I can relate to Prof. Bacon's research. A couple of times in my life I had the good fortune to spend personal time with Bo and this book captured what I experienced while with him and much more. While my time with the Coach was limited, you sensed that the words spoken would not be lost on the many, but the few. Many characters in play here. Ugly and exciting at the same time. The net of all this, Brandon's motifs were about Brandon and not "The Team, The Team, The Team". His true character played out from the beginning to the end. Surely the antithesis of Bo's other saying above the door to his office, "Those Who Stay Will Be Champions." Brandon's imperious attitude and motivation could never be his salvation in the eyes of those with maize and blue blood. Go Blue!

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